

Salisbury Planning Commission
Minutes of the October 20, 2025 Meeting – DRAFT

Members present: Ariell Slater, Barrie Bailey, Morgan Cate, Deb Brighton

Also present: Pat Dunn, Jonathan Blake, Sue Reynolds, Kip Andres, Robbie Devold, Jim Andrews, Brenda Burchard, Preston Turner, Chris Turner, John Metcalfe, Sue Scott, Kathy Dick, John Dick, Greg West

Ariell opened the meeting at 7 pm with Public Comment.

Pat explained that this is an opportunity to combine local knowledge and expertise to review and improve the next set of zoning regulations that will guide development in the town.

Kathy said she was concerned about development in the second ring around the lake – particularly on the slopes which are visible from the lake. She pointed out that other lakes, like Lake George, are mostly surrounded by undeveloped land, and she would like to see the hillsides around Lake Dunmore—the second ring--protected.

John Dick said he is more discouraged by development around the lake than Kathy is, and the area is already over built.

Jim Andrews agreed that development in a second tier would cause septic and runoff problems and should be minimized.

Morgan said the town could have a sewer system to minimize the pollution and open the area up to growth, but he but he understands that the residents don't want to do that.

Sue Mackey pointed out that the main deterrent is paying for a sewer system, and that this isn't a zoning issue.

Jim Andrews pointed out that the goal should not be to open the area to growth, but rather to minimize pollution.

Jonathan said there is little developable land around the lake because of septic constraints. He doesn't think development on the lakeshore would be a problem, but he doesn't want to take away the rights of landowners.

Robbie mentioned that there is at least one large developable parcel on the lakeshore, and he is concerned about the effect of the minimum acreage in the LS districts.

Sue Mackey suggested extending the criteria of the Shoreland Protection Program (slope, clearing, impervious surfaces) to apply to areas outside of the roads surrounding the lake but within 250'.

Jonathan said that the western part of the area designated as LS2 on the south end of the lake doesn't drain into the lake and was previously zoned as MDR, yet the minimum lot size has changed from 1 acre to 10 acres.

There was discussion between Greg, Jonathan and Sue Mackey about the use of a density bonus to encourage people to cluster housing on smaller lots and keep space undeveloped. It was clear there was some misunderstanding about how the density bonus would work and how it could provide more flexibility. Sue indicated that she supported clustering, but she thought there could be another way to encourage it. However, she said she didn't know what to suggest.

Sue Mackey suggested continuing the Rural Mixed zone on the east side of Upper Plains Road so that it is on both sides of the road. She suggested extending the Rural Ag district between RT 7 and Lower Plains Road.

Barrie talked about the importance of wildlife. Greg said the bears eat out of his dumpster. Pat said that this is a balancing act and that we also need to think about the tax base and how to encourage young people to build here. Jim responded that the balance in the past has been too much in favor of development, and that the (human) population is finally starting to stabilize, which is a good thing. He added that the development we need should be truly affordable housing. Chris added that young people already can't buy there.

Morgan said we should be developing in the village. Kip wondered how the town could incentivize growth in the village. Morgan responded that ADUs are allowed.

Greg said there should be 1-acre lots on the east side of Upper Plains Road.

Morgan said we should provide incentives to conserve the existing building stock. Sue Mackey asked how that affected zoning.

Sue Scott said she agreed with Jim, and bears shouldn't eat out of dumpsters. She would like to see the map kept the way it is.

Preston said he was in favor of the approach of clustering housing and allowing wildlife corridors. He showed some photos of erosion and runoff. Pat suggested that he talk with the landowner.

Sue Mackey suggested we use regulations to deal with buffers.

Jim wondered about reutilizing farmstead structures for housing when farms go out of business.

Robbie pointed out that the aging population doesn't seem eager to give up its housing, and that drives up prices for younger families. Pat added that the aging population means we need more young people to work in teaching, nursing, and other services.

John Metcalfe said he was in favor of the balance of clustering and wildlife.

Chris said there will always be some people who don't like the balance. But, it will support the reputation of Salisbury with its wildlife and the lake. It will attract people who value that. Morgan agreed it will attract people who appreciate that balance.

Brenda said that we need wildlife corridors and we need working ecosystems and she likes the attempt to preserve them.

Sue Mackey pointed out that the regulations can be amended or updated at any time.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Next meeting Monday, November 3 at 7 p.m.