

## Heath Planning Board Meeting

Town of Heath  
Planning Board  
Via Zoom  
Feb 04, 2026, at 7:00 pm

### **Meeting called to order by the Chair at 7:03 pm**

#### ATTENDANCE:

Douglas Mason - Chair  
Cindie Garland – Boards Clerk  
Will Emmet  
Bob Dane  
Franklin Land Trust representative Will Sloan Anderson  
Ed Whitaker  
John and Claire (Solar installation representatives)

#### **New Business:**

##### **9 Branch Hill Road (Ned Wolf Solar Installation)**

- Ground-mounted solar array.
- Located north of the house, beyond septic system.
- Height approximately 10–11 feet (well under 25 ft maximum allowed).
- Setbacks comply with zoning requirements.
- Confirmation from the Conservation Commission that the project is not in wetlands.
- Submission of a list of abutters within 300 feet.
- Doug made a motion to approve the Site Plan Review contingent upon written confirmation from the Conservation Commission (via Bill Latrell) that the project is not within wetlands and submission of an abutters list. Will moved. Bob second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", and Bob "Aye". Vote: Unanimous approval.

##### **43 Knott Road (Ed Whitaker)**

- Approval Not Required (ANR) division of property.
- Application materials had not yet been submitted to the Town Clerk for stamping and review.
- Doug made a motion to pass over the ANR request until the next meeting (Feb 11, 2026), pending proper submission. Will moved. Bob second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", and Bob "Aye". Vote: Unanimous approval.

##### **12 West Branch Road (Franklin Land Trust Discussion)**

- Representative Sloan Anderson from Franklin Land Trust presented preliminary plans regarding the potential purchase of the Griswold property (approximately 48 acres).

- Place a Conservation Restriction (likely held by MA Division of Fish & Wildlife).
- Establish approximately 4-acre envelope around existing barn.
- Use barn for workshops and potential rental for weddings or private events
- Planning Board members discussed a business registration may be required with the Town Clerk. If business use over 2,500 sq. ft. may trigger Special Permit. Business non-industrial uses could fall under Special Permit category per bylaws.

### **New Kiosk in Heath Center**

- Bob discussed the relocation of an informational kiosk at Heath Center.
- Kiosk purpose is to display map of recreational trail connections (Deerfield River to North Adams). Additional information about Heath Center history.
- Current placement considered visually intrusive. The Select Board agreed kiosk should be moved.
- Under Section 4.6.7 (Sign Regulations), signs created or required by government bodies are exempt from special permit requirements.
- Doug made a motion that the kiosk is exempt from special permit requirements under Section 4.6.7. Will moved. Bob second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", and Bob "Aye". Vote: Unanimous approval.
- Doug made a motion to relocate the kiosk near the existing Community Hall sign, with final placement determined by Planning Board, Park and Rec Committee and Select Board. Will moved. Bob second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", and Bob "Aye". Vote: Unanimous approval.

### **FY27 Budget discussion**

- Current Planning Board budget: \$500. Recent public hearing advertisement cost: Approximately \$300–\$500.
- Doug expressed concern of upcoming public hearings may exceed available funds.
- Doug made a motion to request increase of FY27 Planning Board budget to \$1,000. Will moved. Bob second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", and Bob "Aye". Vote: Unanimous approval.

### **Submission of Warrant Articles**

- Select Board deadline for warrant article submissions: March 13
- Planning Board members agreed to meet February 11 to finalize language of the articles. Board agreed to hold Public Hearing March 11 and cancel March 4 meeting.
- Doug made a motion to hold a Public Hearing on March 11 and hold the monthly Planning Board meeting March 11 and cancel March 4th. Will moved. Bob second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", and Bob "Aye". Vote: Unanimous approval.

### **Old Business:**

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

- Awaiting final Town Counsel language review.
- Plan to include in March 11 Public Hearing if finalized.

#### Short-Term Rentals (STR's)

- Add to use table.
- Include 6% local fee.
- Reference compliance with state regulations.
- Draft to be prepared by Doug.

#### Large Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) & Data Centers

- To be added to use table as Special Permit uses.
- Include emergency response plan and equipment considerations.

#### Solar Bylaw Review

- Deferred to next year.

#### Subdivision Regulations

- Deferred to next year.

#### Zoning Cleanup / Definitions Consolidation

- Definitions consolidation may proceed to public hearing.
- Full cleanup may be handled via potential grant.

#### **Previous Meeting Minutes**

- Doug led a review of previous meeting minutes from Jan 07, 2026.
- Doug made a motion to approve the minutes with minor edits. Will moved. Bob second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", and Bob "Aye". Minutes pass unanimously.

**Next Meeting will be held Feb 11, 2026 @ 7:00 pm via Zoom.**

#### **Adjournment**

- Doug made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 pm. Peter Moved. Will Second. All in favor, Doug "Aye", Will "Aye", Bob "Aye". Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm with unanimous approval.