

Town of Gilsum
PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 16, 2025

Board Present: Tom Julius, Chair; Kevin Barnes, Member; Heidi Bukoski, Member; Bill Whyte, Member; Brian Bazarnicki, *Ex Officio*, and Carol Ogilvie, Alternate

Public Present: Jody Terry and Jack Carlton (Residents); Dee Denehy (Fire Chief); Peter Granucci (Conservation Commission); Sang Curtis (ZBA); Eric Zablowksy (ZBA); and Lenoir (Resident and Librarian).

CTO: Tom called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

I. Procedures

- a. Meeting Minutes – November 25, 2025. Tom distributed the minutes for the Board’s review.

On a motion by Brian Bazarnicki/seconded by Heidi Bukoski, the Board voted to approve the minutes of November 25, 2025, with all in favor.

II. Public Hearing on Draft Solar Ordinance

Tom thanked the non-Planning Board members present for attending the meeting, and had the Board introduce themselves. Tom then provided some background for the public in the reasoning for the Board undertaking the adoption of a solar ordinance:

There has been interest in solar by individual homeowners as well as a large solar company. The Board had an opportunity for free technical assistance from Sol Smart, which included attendance at webinars, plus a consultant who met with the Planning Board and offered guidance. The Board reviewed ordinances from other towns, as well as a model ordinance that was developed by Sol Smart. From all of this a draft was prepared that was reviewed by the Board and a draft then prepared for tonight’s public hearing. The ordinance is intended to provide guidelines that support the installation of solar systems and outline a process for working with the Town so it can happen in efficient and effective manner. This ordinance is intended specifically to address large-scale systems. There are guidelines for accessory systems as well, but these would only need building and electrical permits.

To begin the hearing, Tom pointed to the definition section, so that everyone is clear on what constitutes a particular system. Brian read the four definitions out loud. Jody questioned where the definition came from; and the use of the phrase “...return of excess power...” Tom explained that the definitions were provided by Sol Smart in their model ordinance. Jack questioned the 25,000-kilowatt limitation on accessory systems. Carol responded that the guidance the Board received indicated that this level would be more than enough to power a home or small business.

Tom then noted that the eight sections of the ordinance could be viewed as four components: #1 – 5 were authorizing and permitting information; #6 was the Table of Permitted Uses; #7 was General Standards for All Systems; and #8 General Standards for Large-Scale Systems.

Tom suggested everyone read the first five sections. It was noted that under #2 “Authorization” needed to be underlined. Heidi asked about the Conditional Use Permit process; Carol explained that the CUP was used to allow the Planning Board to grant waivers or modifications to the ordinance without going to the ZBA. If those waivers weren’t granted, then the applicant would need a variance from the ZBA. Therefore, the application form for a CUP requires the applicant to state what provision they are requesting to be waived, and the justification for that request.

#6 – Table of Permitted Uses. A suggestion was made that the “Not Permitted” in the Table was misleading in that someone might think they could still have the use, but didn’t need a permit, as opposed to understanding that it meant the use was not allowed at all.

#7 – General Standards for All Systems. Questions were raised about glare, addressed in 7.d. Carol stated that this language was revised from the previous draft, which was more specific, based on guidance from the Sol Smart model ordinance; this ordinance cautioned against being too specific about glare since, after all, these are solar panels, and it is unreasonable to expect that there will never be any glare. Eric pointed out that there is new technology that is addressing this issue. Lenoir pointed to 7.a. and asked shouldn’t both systems be subject to the applicable permits, to which Carol responded, yes absolutely.

#8 – General Standards for Large-Scale Systems. Dee requested that the Board ensure that any access to a site would be constructed in accordance with the Town’s Driveway Standards.

Tom asked the ZBA members if they had any remaining concerns. Eric mentioned fire protection, and Sang referenced the electrical code. Dee mentioned that for roof-mounted systems, a civil engineer needs to approve the weight load on the roof.

There being no further questions, Tom closed the public hearing at 8:09 and opened deliberation by the Board. Tom then stated that they would go through each of the suggested changes and decide whether to make a change:

- #2: Underline the term “Authorization.”
- #6: Change NP = Not Permitted to NA = Not Allowed and change the title from “Table of Permitted Use” to “Table of Use.”
- #7.a.: Clarify that both roof- and ground-mounted systems are subject to the applicable permits.
- #8.b.: Add a reference to the Gilsum Driveway Standards.
- Definitions:
 - Revise the definition of Solar Energy Systems that reads “A device, array of devices, or structural design feature, the purpose of which is to provide for generation, or storage of electricity from sunlight, or the collection, storage, and distribution of solar energy” to read as follows:
 - “A device, array of devices, or structural design feature, the purpose of which is to provide for generation, collection, storage, and/or distribution of solar energy.”
 - Revise the definitions of “a”, “b”, and “c” to remove the word “return” to “sale.”

On a motion by Heidi Bukoski/seconded by Brian Bazarnicki the Board approved the proposed ordinance as amended and voted to move it to ballot for the 2026 Town Meeting, with all in favor.

III. 2025 NH Legislative Changes

Tom described the materials he provided relative to these changes. The handout included 11 changes that are relevant (or potentially relevant) to planning boards. The reviewed these and determined that no changes would need to be made to Gilsum’s land use regulations, with the following possible exceptions:

1. HB 413: Relative to the completion of improvements on approved plans.
2. HB 631: Relative to allowing multi-family in commercial districts.

Carol will follow up on these and advise whether any changes are necessary.

IV. Informational

- a. NH BEA – Online webinar “Best Practices for Planning Boards”

- b. UNH Extension Service – Online series January 15 – February 26, 10:30 – 11:30 A.M. “From Plan to Practice: A Community Engagement Workshop Series”.
- c. Citizen Planner Roundtable: Next meeting March 31 @5:30 P.M. in Stoddard. The topic will be a presentation on the NH Zoning Atlas by Alissa Margolin, Director of Saint Anselm's Initiative for Housing Policy and Practice.
- d. Southwest Region Planning Commission – Hazard Mitigation Plan for Gilsum. One more meeting and the Plan will be final

V. Next Meeting – January 27, 2025 – Draft Agenda Items

- a. Minutes of December 16, 2025
- b. Discussion of other potential land use amendments
- c. Review of Site Plan Review application fee
- d. Review Excavation Regulations
- e. Master Plan

On a motion by Heidi Bukoski/second by Brian Bazarnicki, the Board voted to adjourn at 9:10 P.M. with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Carol Ogilvie

Approved January 27, 2026



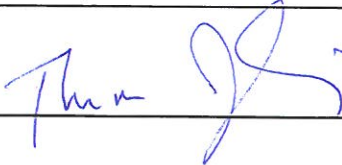
Kevin Barnes



Brian Bazarnicki



Heidi Bukoski



Tom Julius, Chair



Bill Whyte



Carol Ogilvie, Alternate

