

CITY OF LEWISTON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES for April 13, 2026

- I. **ROLL CALL:** The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of City Hall and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Chairperson, Shanna Cox chaired the meeting.

Members in Attendance: Shanna Cox, Michael Marcotte, Alexander Pine, Amy Smith and Penthea Burns.

Member Absent: Lucy Bisson and Zoë Lidstrom

Associate Members in Attendance: Darren Gallant and Heidi Bertels

Darren Gallant and Heidi Bertels were appointed full voting members for this meeting.

Staff Present: Jonathan Connor, Director, Shelley Norton, Deputy Director, Craig Thibeault, Land Use Planner and Linda Tripp, Administrative Assistant

II. **ADJUSTMENT TO THE AGENDA:**

Shanna Cox polled the board to find out if they were in favor of taking the item concerning No Name Pond off the table for discussion. With the exception of Michael Marcotte, all board members were in favor. Michael Marcotte stated that the item would require a public hearing and Shanna Cox agreed that it would be considered as Agenda item "e" under public hearings.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Alexander Pine** that the item concerning No Name Pond be taken off the table and added to this evening's agenda for further discussion. Second by **Penthea Burns**.

VOTED: 6-1 (**Passed. Michael Marcotte Opposed.**)

- III. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Staff provided additional information related to proposed changes to the No Name Pond conservation overlay district including a memo from City Environmental Engineer John Kuchinski, P.E. on 4/9/2026.

IV. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- a. Reconsideration, on the chair's motion, of the March 23, 2026, Planning Board action to approve the Tree Street Youth, Inc.'s development review application for the construction of a new 7,250 sf building with classroom space at 143 -145 Howe Street on a 0.33-acre parcel. If the motion passes the Board will hold a public hearing, deliberate and vote on the application. Reconsideration is due to insufficient notice being provided.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Darren Gallant** to reconsider Agenda item A concerning Tree Street Youth. Second by **Alexander Pine**.

VOTED: 6-1 (Passed. Michael Marcotte Opposed.)

Craig Thibeault reviewed the request then welcomed questions from the board. Alexander Pine requested clarification regarding parking which was provided by Craig Thibeault. Michael Marcotte inquired why two items have been returned to the board. Shelley Norton answered that abutters notices were not sent out as is required. Julia Sleeper of Tree Street Youth and Mark Lee of Harriman Associates introduced themselves and welcomed questions of which there were none.

Shanna Cox opened the discussion to the public. No public spoke. The public session was closed.

Michael Marcotte clarified that apart from the abutter's notice, his reasons for voting in opposition to this item at the last meeting, (financial capacity, parking and the role of the school department) still exist.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Alexander Pine** that the application submitted by Julia Sleeper of Tree Street Youth for the construction of a new 7,250 sf single-story educational building on an approximately .3-acre parcel at 143-145 Howe Street meets all of the necessary criteria contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code, including, but not limited to Article XIII, Section 4, Approval Criteria, and that approval be granted with the following conditions.

1. The applicant will coordinate with Public Works on the sewer and water connections.
2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall provide documentation demonstrating financial capacity.
3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant provide staff with documentation from the registry of deeds verifying the granting of the 15' sewer easement.
4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant provide staff with documentation from the registry of deeds verifying that the lots have been combined.
5. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall demonstrate that continued availability for parking has been provided meeting the standards of Article XII, Section 17(e).

6. Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, a professional engineer shall provide a stamped statement indicating all site improvements have been completed in accordance with the approved plan.

Second by **Heidi Bertels**

VOTED: 6-1 (Passed. Michael Marcotte Opposed)

- b. Reconsideration, on the chair's motion, of the March 23, 2026 Planning Board action to recommend to the city council the rezoning of 860 Lisbon Street to a Contract Zone, which would allow all the uses and dimensional standards of the Community Business Zoning District to allow mixed use (residential and commercial uses) except with lesser setbacks, the front setback being reduced from 15 feet to 5 feet and the side and rear reduced from 10 feet to 5 feet. If the motion passes the Board will hold a public hearing, deliberate and vote on the application. Reconsideration is due to insufficient notice being provided.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Darren Gallant** to reconsider Agenda item B concerning 860 Lisbon Street. Second by **Alexander Pine**.

VOTED: 6-1 (Passed. Michael Marcotte Opposed.)

Craig Thibeault provided a review of the request then welcomed questions from the board. Michael Marcotte made staff aware of the incorrect spelling of Martel in the materials provided.

Penn Lindsay of Lewiston Housing Authority approached the board and welcomed questions, which there were none.

Shanna Cox opened the discussion to the public. No public spoke.
The public session was closed.

Michael Marcotte explained how this agenda item, which began several years back, has morphed over time and he stated that he has serious concerns regarding life safety in the area. He stated that he feels that retail does not belong on the site at all and that he will vote against the project. Shanna Cox stated that with regards to phase 3, she is in hopes that the applicant has addressed the many concerns previously brought forward by both the board and staff. Amy Smith inquired if the outcome of the vote for this agenda item would have an impact on the momentum of the project. Penn Lindsay stated that it would likely only affect phase 3 and not phases 1 or 2. Heidi Bertels spoke in favor of the project.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Darren Gallant** pursuant to Article VII, Section 4 and Article XVII, Section 5 of the Zoning and Land Use Code to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council for the request by Martel School Senior Housing LP for a contract zone amendment for the property located at 860 Lisbon Street to utilize the land use and space and bulk allowances of the Community Business zoning district with the exception of reduced front, side, and rear setback requirements to 5 feet. Second by **Alexander Pine**.

VOTED: 6-1 (Passed. Michael Marcotte Opposed)

- c. Mason Giroux has submitted an application for a subdivision amendment to adjust the location of an existing access easement at 13 Amos Court and to construct a Frontage-Right-of-Way over that easement to provide frontage for 77 Jenkins Street, a 7.84-acre vacant parcel.

Craig Thibeault reviewed the details of the request then welcomed questions from the board. Penthea Burns asked if the right of way would be impacted to which Craig Thibeault answered that the easement would still exist and that it would only be relocated. Michael Marcotte inquired if the city had ever intended to place a road in the area and Craig answered they had not, and that it was due to many challenges that exist making it too difficult. Amy Siegel of Sebago Technics provided the board with additional details regarding stonewalls and wetlands in the area.

Shanna Cox opened the discussion to the public.

Sherry Beck-Poland of 5 Teakwood Knoll spoke of a brook in the area as well as a few other stonewalls and said she was curious as to why they were not being considered. She inquired if the surface was to be paved or gravel. She also expressed concern about what she considers sexual activity in the area which she stated has been monitored by local police.

Nicole Smith owner of 13 Amos Court spoke in favor of the project.

Shanna Cox closed the public session.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Michael Marcotte** that the application submitted by Mason Giroux for a subdivision amendment and frontage right-of-way at 13 Amos Court and 77 Jenkins Street, meets all of the necessary criteria contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code, including, but not limited to Article XII, Section 10, Frontage right-of-way, Article XIII, Section 4, Approval Criteria, and Article XIII, Section 5,

Coordination with state subdivision law, and that approval be granted with the following conditions:

1. Prior to the issuance of occupancy permits for any of the lots served by the frontage right-of-way, the applicant's engineer shall certify to the City of Lewiston that the frontage right-of-way has been constructed in accordance with the requirements of Article XII, Section 10 and the approved plan.
2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the approved frontage right-of-way and subdivision plan shall be recorded in the Androscoggin County Registry of Deeds. If the plan is not recorded within 90 days of Planning Board approval, the development review and subdivision approval shall be null and void.
3. The language on the original subdivision plan be amended to read the stonewall along the property line abutting Thorncrag Bird Sanctuary must remain undisturbed so the area as identified can be amended to accommodate this application.

Second by **Darren Gallant**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

- d. Kaydenz Kitchen Food Pantry, Inc. has submitted a development review application for a Conditional Use Permit for a homeless shelter at 70 Horton Street on a 0.79-acre parcel.

Shelley Norton provided a review of the request then welcomed questions from the board. A discussion took place regarding conditional use permits.

Kevin Boilard and Linda Scott, both of Alter LA Shelter and Dan Morino of Platz Associates, joined in presenting before the board and welcomed questions.

Darren Gallant inquired why the layout of green space is proposed as it is. Linda Scott provided the reasoning for the decision. Alexander Pine asked the applicants to talk about how the outdoor space will be maintained and managed. Shanna Cox added a request that applicants address how the children in the area will be considered. Linda Scott addressed the outdoor space as well as the children in the area. She spoke of plans for a future garden and how they welcome the area children. Alexander Pine asked about the pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow on site. Kevin Boilard answered that because the property is so large, they often share it with neighboring properties. Kevin Boilard said they would be erecting signs and issuing parking permits in the future in order to gain tighter control of the site. Penthea Burns inquired what the length of a typical stay might be. Kevin Boilard answered that the need varies for each guest and that staff aims to assist with any barriers guests may have holding them back in order to transition them to independence.

Amy Smith spoke in favor of the project. Michael Marcotte spoke in favor of the outdoor space then stated that Fire and Police should be providing comments on items like this and that seeing "no comment" in the packet is disappointing. Shanna Cox stated that on a different project from a few meetings back, she had requested to see some of the correspondence that an applicant referred to, which she stated has not happened yet and remains an open inquiry. Jon Connor explained that often times inspections will follow Planning Board approval of a project and that is when comments from the other departments are made known. Shelley Norton clarified that in this case, the concerns they might have would likely be related to licensing and not the Conditional Use Permit.

Shanna Cox opened the discussion to the public. No public spoke.
The public session was closed.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Pentheia Burns** motion that the application submitted by Kaydenz Kitchen Food Pantry, Inc. for a large homeless shelter with on-site 24 hour programming at 70 Horton Street, meets all of the necessary standards for a Conditional Use Permit contained in the Zoning and Land use Code, in Article X, Section 3, Standards for conditional use permits and Section 4, Additional standards for Homeless Shelters with the following conditions:

1. The capacity of the shelter shall be limited to 49 beds. Any expansion of the number of beds shall require board re-approval.
2. That prior to commencing operations as a homeless shelter, a homeless shelter license is required from the City Council.

Second by **Darren Gallant**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Pentheia Burns** that the application submitted by Kaydenz Kitchen Food Pantry, Inc. for a large homeless shelter with on-site 24 hour programming at 70 Horton Street, meets all of the necessary criteria contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code, including but not limited to Article XIII, Section IV, approval criteria and that approval be granted with the following condition:

1. That plant species be provided for staff review and approval prior to the signing of the final drawings.

Second by **Darren Gallant**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

Shanna Cox called for a 5-minute recess then called the meeting back to order.

- e. Jon Connor provided the board with a review regarding the No Name Pond Overlay Clarification of Article Xi, Section 24 (2f).

Penthea Burns requested clarification regarding where the allowable activity within the buffer zone would take place. Jon Connor stated that no activity would be allowed within the buffer except for the required maintenance to the existing stormwater system. Using the overhead projected image, Jon Connor pointed out exactly where activity would and would not be allowed.

Shanna Cox stated that she feels the proposed language does not provide the desired clarity for perpetuity. A lengthy discussion took place regarding buffers, easements, drainage and access for any required stormwater maintenance.

Shelley Norton proposed new language that was received well by the majority of the board.

Michael Marcotte expressed concern about any changes made and how they could have a negative impact on the area. Shanna Cox stated that she believes that the stormwater system was designed with the utmost care of keeping the water quality in mind. Jon Connor stated that the stormwater system was designed to accommodate the area if all available lots were occupied, which they are not. Michael Marcotte feels that the system should likely be looked at to make sure all possible measures are taken to protect the area.

Shanna Cox opened the discussion to the public.

Diane Chasse of 56 No Name Pond Road spoke about the impact of water on her property. She said she has requested that someone from Public Works come out to her property and take a look at area culverts. She was told someone would reach out to her but said that had not yet happened. She is opposed to the proposed changes.

Dan Bernier, owner of 28 and 32 Waters Edge Drive, spoke in opposition. He rapidly provided much information regarding stormwater and retention ponds. He feels the information speaks in opposition to what it proposed.

The public session was closed.

Shanna Cox provided a summary of her interpretation of the public comments and how they relate to the desired goal.

Heidi Bertels spoke in favor of what she described as middle ground. Penthea Burns expressed appreciation for the public show of support for No Name Pond as well as for Michael Marcotte bringing to the attention of all that the pond is a back-up source of water for the city.

Jon Connor stated he would reach out to Director, Kevin Gagne regarding the issues Diane Chasse brought to his attention.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Shanna Cox** pursuant to Article VII, Section 4 and Article XVII, Section 5 of the Zoning and Land Use Code to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council for amendments to Appendix A, Zoning and Land Use Code, Article XI District Regulations, Section 24 (2) No Name Pond Conservation Overlay District (NNP) and that it would reflect a change in the language in the space and bulk standards to read: *minimum buffer from perennial or intermittent streams, natural drainageways, and the treated outflow from stormwater treatment infrastructure.*
Second by **Penthea Burns**.

VOTED: **6-1 (Passed)** Michael Marcotte opposed, citing that he isn't confident we are protecting the pond in the same vein and intent of the original language and he would like to hear from the individuals who served the city years ago when this language was derived.

Amy Smith stated that in her opinion, pictures would be helpful when it comes to ordinances and believes it would be valuable when it comes to interpretation.

V. OTHER BUSINESS:**a) Discussion regarding staff procedures and notices.**

Jon Connor apologized to the board for any shortcomings with regard to abutter's notices or meeting legal requirements. He informed the board of newly implemented procedures to assure accuracy moving forward. Amy Smith expressed frustration over the archaic ways the city still handles public notices and abutter notices. She feels that social media is under used and in some cases, she feels a call would suffice. Shanna Cox stated that she appreciated seeing the process involved in bringing an agenda item before the board and feels it has added value as public awareness. She also feels it would be beneficial to the public if we added additional ways to inform them of what is happening within the community.

b) Shanna Cox began a discussion regarding the recent introduction of a Planning Board email list serve. She said the email address is now available to the public, anyone can use it and there is no filter. Due to how it is used and set up, list serve delivers from an external email address to in boxes. She expressed concern about emails being spam or ending up in their spam folders. Shanna also said she would like to see something implemented that would allow the public, as well as staff, to be certain that messages were received in time to be considered for the scheduled meeting. Alexander Pine doesn't believe that it will really accomplish the goal without a lot of manual work, which he feels defeats the purpose. He said he would be willing to come up with a possibility or two of how to proceed. Jon Connor said they have created this for the public knowing that it may create a bit more work for staff. A discussion took place about a cutoff time to receive and consider submitted emails. It was agreed that more thought and consideration should be given to how to utilize or revise the new list serve.

A discussion on training opportunities for members took place.

Amy Smith requested a workshop on dispositions and acquisitions. Alexander Pine spoke in favor of the workshop. Shanna Cox stated that at a future meeting, time should be allocated for a discussion about what members would like to see when considering action. Amy requested that the board be advised of the criteria used to determine if a property is surplus. In addition, she would like the board to receive any and all information that is shared with other staff, be it in executive session or not and Shanna agreed.

VI. READING OF MINUTES:

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Heidi Bertels** to accept the March 16, 2026, minutes, as amended. Second by **Alexander Pine**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

The following motion was made to adjourn.

MOTION: by **Alexander Pine** that this meeting adjourns at 9:00 p.m. Second by **Shanna Cox**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

The next regularly scheduled meeting is for Monday, April 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Zoë Lidstrom, Secretary