

CITY OF LEWISTON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES for June 22, 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 5:35 p.m. Chairperson, Shanna Cox chaired the meeting.

Members in Attendance: Shanna Cox, Michael Marcotte, Amy Smith, Penthea Burns and Zoë Lidstrom.

Member Absent: Lucy Bisson and Alexander Pine.

Associate Members in Attendance: Darren Gallant and Heidi Bertels

Chairperson Cox appointed Darren Gallant and Heidi Bertels to full voting members for this meeting.

Staff Present: Shelley Norton, Deputy Director and Linda Tripp, Administrative Assistant

II. **ADJUSTMENT TO THE AGENDA:**

- 1) Addition of March 23, 2026, minutes for review and approval.
- 2) Other Business Item A postponed due to illness of the presenter.
- 3) Darrent Gallant requests a Vacant Building Registration discussion.

III. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

IV. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- a) Maine MILL has submitted an application to amend the site plan for the new museum at 1 Beech Street.

Shelley Norton provided a review of the request then welcomed questions from the board. Tom Platz and Gabrielle Russell of Platz Associates and Rachael Ferrante, Maine Mill CEO, joined in presenting before the board.

Shanna Cox opened the discussion to the public.

David Chittim, City Council President, from Ward 6, and a Maine State Licensed Civil Engineer, inquired if there was an opportunity to reduce the proposed impervious area of the project in order to protect the river from any additional runoff. Tom Platz gave a variety of reasons why the impervious area has been proposed.

No additional public spoke. The public session was closed.

A discussion regarding possible swales and impervious surfaces took place.

Amy Smith spoke in favor of the project.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Penthea Burns** that the application to amend the development approval for the Maine Museum of Innovation Learning and Labor (Maine MILL) for the refurbishment of an existing 8,167 sf building and construction of a 3,153 sf addition on a 1.89 acre parcel at 1 Beech 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 condition:

- 1) That prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, a professional engineer must provide a stamped statement indicating all stormwater and site improvements have been completed in accordance with the approved plans, and that a note be placed on the site plan stating this condition.

Second by **Amy Smith**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

- b) The Planning Board making a recommendation to the City Council on amendments to the Zoning and Land Use Code Article XI, District Regulations, for changes to the No Name Pond Conservation Overlay District.

Shelley Norton provided a review of the request then she welcomed questions from the board. Clarifying questions were asked and answered with regards to the city implementing and enforcing State mandated changes.

Shanna Cox opened the discussion to the public.

Dan Bernier of Ward 6 spoke in opposition to any changes to the ordinance.

David Chittim of Ward 6 defined how the proposed amendments would affect the No Name Pond Conservation Overlay District. He spoke in favor of the proposed amendments and encouraged the board to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council. Shanna Cox, the board and staff had a discussion about how the agenda item was handled at the City Council. Shanna stated that while she appreciates all of the efforts of staff, she feels the request has morphed over time and that the initial need for revisiting the amendment has not been met.

Shelley Norton agreed that it doesn't provide the clarity that was originally sought. Zoë Lidstrom stated that she also feels that the clarity originally sought is still missing. She recommended that both the board's originally proposed language change as well as subsection seven be kept, as it provides the clarity sought. She also stated that the use of the term buffer is complicating the issue as it does not address the normal use of the word. A discussion about the definition and use of the word buffer took place. Shanna Cox read the original wording that the board had previously proposed.

No additional public spoke. The public session was closed.

Shanna Cox polled the board to find who would be in favor of adopting combined language. She proposed that they consider accepting the language from council as well as retaining the Planning Board's previously proposed language. The poll indicated a 6-1 vote with Michael Marcotte opposed.

A lengthy discussion about the motion took place.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Michael Marcotte** 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). With 3 components:

1. Remove the proposed language;
2. Retain the current language;
3. Add a Section 7:
(7) Any work resulting in soil disturbance within the buffers shall comply with the requirements of the Maine Stormwater Best Practices Manual, Volume III. BMP Technical Design Manual, published by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

Second by **Heidi Bertels**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Shanna Cox** to initiate a staff review and bring forward as a future agenda item, review of the language for definition of buffer in the Zoning and Land Use Code as it might relate to the No Name Pond Watershed as well as a review of the language in Section 24, Article 2(f) and that that discussion would support the ability to clarify for future use and staff review buffer zones and distances and give some intent around both clarifying and what strengthening in that clarity might look like.

Second by **Darren Gallant**

Heidi Bertels asked staff to provide information as to why the initial language previously proposed by the board was not considered acceptable but now without revisions appears to be.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

Shanna Cox requested that the reference material for the next hearing include the previously referred to letter from the HOA as well as any letters or recommendations from City Council or Council President.

An audience member inquired if they would receive future notifications when this agenda item returns. Shanna Cox provided the requested information with assistance from Shelley Norton.

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a) "Lisbon Street Safety & Mobility Study" presentation and public input session by ATRC/Toole Design. – POSTPONED due to illness.

Shanna Cox inquired how the public was notified and what information will be provided for marketing, messaging, public sharing and invitation to the future session as she has seen very little to no promotional material.

Shelley Norton informed the board that city staff were requested to post on social media and that it was an informal discussion between staff about possibly welcoming public input. Shanna Cox stated that marketing materials would be very helpful as she wants to be able to share information with constituents and residents to maximize participation. Mike Marcotte inquired about studies for other thoroughfares in the city, such as Sabattus Street and Main Street. Shelley Norton explained that there are a variety of separate studies being done through various resources and all are in different stages. Amy Smith requested an opportunity to help publicize the event, which was acknowledged by Shelley Norton and Shanna Cox.

- b) Darren Gallant requested a future discussion with regards to a possible vacant building registry. He said that he has looked at what other cities and towns are doing and he is interested in what Lewiston could possibly do.

- c) Shanna Cox expressed her deep appreciation for her fellow board members and their willingness to do what it took to address agenda items fully when they could have taken an easy out.

VI. READING OF MINUTES:

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Penthea Burns** to accept the March 23, April 13, and June 8, 2026, draft minutes as presented. Second by **Amy Smith**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

VII. ADJOURNMENT: The following motion was made to adjourn.

MOTION: by **Amy Smith** that this meeting adjourns at 7:30. p.m.
Second by **Darren Gallant**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

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

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Zoë Lidstrom" followed by a circled "n".

Zoë Lidstrom, Secretary