TOWN OF LUDLOW PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
July 23, 2026

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS

Raymond Phoenix – Chairman (Present)
William Ellison – Vice Chairman (Present)
Kathleen Houle (Present)
Christopher Coelho (Present)
Haley Rivers, Associate Member (Absent)

The meeting began at 7:01 p.m. in the Select Board's Conference Room.

ANR – PAH Properties, LLC – 0 & 329 Holyoke Street, 0 Athol Street (Assessors' Map 11A, Parcels 47, 46, 45, 44, 43, 43A, 48 & Map 11B, Parcel 2) (combine multiple lots into three building lots)

The applicant submitted a request to withdraw the application without prejudice, which was discussed during the public hearing for the Special Permit/Estate Lot application.

Mail Item 40 - October 5, 2026 Special Town Meeting Warrant, from Marc Strange, Town Administrator

The Board discussed the proposed zoning articles anticipated for the upcoming Town Meeting. Mr. Carpenter reported that the proposed zoning bylaw repeal and replacement, the amendment to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) bylaw to address the Attorney General's partial acceptance, the removal of data centers from the Mill Redevelopment District, and a proposed prohibition on data centers were expected to be included. Town Counsel advised that a prohibition on data centers would be preferable to a moratorium and would prepare language for both options.

The Board discussed how the proposed data center and ADU articles would interact with the comprehensive zoning bylaw repeal and replacement. It was noted that if the repeal and replacement article were adopted, the subsequent articles would need to reference the new bylaw citations. If the repeal and replacement article failed, the remaining articles would instead reference the existing zoning bylaw sections.

Board members discussed the importance of preparing for both outcomes. It was agreed that draft motions should be prepared assuming the repeal and replacement article is adopted, while alternative motions should also be prepared using the existing bylaw citations in the event the repeal and replacement article is not adopted. This approach would ensure that the remaining zoning articles could proceed regardless of the outcome of the repeal and replacement article.

PUBLIC HEARING – Special Permit/Estate Lot – PAH Properties, LLC – 0 & 329 Holyoke Street, 0 Athol Street (Assessors' Map 11A, Parcels 47, 46, 45, 44, 43, 43A, 48 & Map 11B, Parcel 2) (estate lot)

SEE SEPARATE MINUTES

Mail Item 41 - Resignation of Planning Board from Joel Silva

Mr. Phoenix read a letter of resignation submitted by Planning Board member Joel Silva, effective immediately, citing increasing personal commitments. In his letter, Mr. Silva expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve alongside the Board and thanked his fellow members.

Board members expressed their appreciation for Mr. Silva's willingness to serve and recognized his time, effort, and dedication to the Planning Board.

Mr. Coelho **MOVED** to direct the Town Planner to draft a letter on behalf of the Board acknowledging Mr. Silva's service and thanking him for his contributions.
SECOND Ms. Houle.
4-0 in Favor.

Mr. Carpenter asked whether the letter should be signed by the Town Planner or by the members of the Planning Board. The Board agreed that Mr. Carpenter would draft the letter for signature by the Board members.

PUBLIC HEARING – Special Permit/Home Occupation – Cynthia Lage – 128 Williams Street (Assessors' Map 15C, Parcel 56) (soap making business)

SEE SEPARATE MINUTES

Consent Agenda:

The Board approved the Consent Agenda under unanimous consent.

- FILE Mail Item 39. - Legal Notices from surrounding communities
- APPROVE/SIGN Minutes of May 28, 2026 and June 25, 2026
- APPROVE Change of Occupancies:
  - Karen Mowry – 118 Sewall Street (from eyelash salon to office)

Outstanding Items

Under outstanding items, Mr. Coelho raised concerns regarding tractor-trailers parking along Center Street near the Pride gas station, noting a recent incident in which a truck was parked on the roadway while the driver entered the business. The Board discussed the potential safety concerns associated with the practice, including traffic congestion and reduced visibility, and questioned whether additional signage or enforcement measures may be appropriate. The Board agreed to forward the concern to the Safety Committee for review and recommendations.

The Board also discussed ongoing concerns regarding the hotel property on Center Street, including the continued placement of storage containers, traffic circulation, and electric vehicle charging stations that had been installed without prior Planning Board review. Mr. Carpenter reported that the Building Department advised that the hotel still has open building permits. Mr. Phoenix expressed concern that the storage containers are not shown on the approved site plan and may impede safe vehicle circulation and sight distances. The Board agreed to forward these concerns to the Safety Committee and discussed the possibility of requiring the property owner to appear before the Planning Board if the site conditions remain inconsistent with the approved site plan.

Mr. Carpenter reported that the first draft of an existing conditions plan for Town Hall had been received from the surveyor, along with deed information confirming that the area containing the storage sheds is located on Town Hall property and that the Town's GIS mapping is inaccurate. The Board discussed the need for a complete site plan reflecting current conditions and stated that Town Hall should be held to the same site plan requirements and standards that apply to private development. Mr. Phoenix emphasized that the completed site plan should include all information required under the Zoning Bylaw.

Mr. Carpenter reported that no response had yet been received from the School Department regarding its site plan. He also advised that the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan is nearing completion and that a letter of support would be presented to the Board for signature at its next meeting.

Mr. Carpenter provided an update on the Community Preservation Committee, noting that the four at-large positions remain vacant despite the openings having been advertised for several months. Board members discussed additional ways to publicize the vacancies, including sharing the information through the Town's website, social media, and cable access channel.

Mr. Carpenter also reported that, following Joel Silva's resignation from the Planning Board, the Select Board had posted the vacancy with an application deadline of August 11, 2026. A joint meeting of the Select Board and Planning Board is anticipated on August 18, 2026, to interview applicants and appoint a replacement member.

Ms. Houle **MOVED** to adjourn.
Mr. Phoenix: That's always in order, not debatable, but does need a second.
SECOND Mr. Coelho.
4-0 in Favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

APPROVED:

Kathleen J. Houle

Kathleen Houle, Secretary

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(all related documents can be viewed at the Planning Board Office during regular business hours.)

TOWN OF LUDLOW PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT/ESTATE LOT
0 & 329 Holyoke Street, 0 Athol Street
(Assessors' Map 11A, Parcels 47, 46, 45, 44, 43, 43A, 48 & Map 11B, Parcel 2)
PAH Properties, LLC
(estate lot)
July 23, 2026

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS

Raymond Phoenix – Chairman (Present)
William Ellison – Vice Chairman (Present)
Kathleen Houle (Present)
Christopher Coelho (Present)
Haley Rivers, Associate Member (Absent)

The public hearing began at 7:00 p.m. in the Select Board's Conference Room.

The applicant was not present for the public hearing.

Mr. Phoenix read the legal notice which included the description of: estate lot.

Mr. Phoenix: The main piece of correspondence that I do have on this; *Dear Chairperson Phoenix and Board members*, from R Levesque Associates and signed by Nina Fazio as permitting coordinator with CC to Town Counsel, *on behalf of the applicant and property owner PAH Properties, LLC c/o Jacob Hannoush, Manager, R Levesque Associates Inc. respectfully requests to withdraw without prejudice the Special Permit application and ANR application for the above-referenced project. Based on Town Counsel and Planning Board review comments, the applicant is requesting this withdrawal with the intention to resubmit once certain items are resolved. Additionally, the applicant respectfully requests the requisite filing fees previously tendered for the applications be applied to a future, upcoming filing. Should you have any questions or comments regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact our office at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, R Levesque Associates.* Do we know for town counsel purposes is something coming from R Levesque satisfactory or do we need something signed by the applicant?

Mr. Carpenter: The letter we, Steve and I discussed it today. The letter's fine.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay.

Mr. Carpenter: It's up to the Board to obviously make the motion to accept or not.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay. So, this is again, both on the ANR to adjust the lot lines as well as the, the estate lot hearing, the whole thing, to withdraw all of it. I don't know if we want to touch on any of the backstory. I don't know that it's necessary, if we're just gonna accept the withdrawal. But basically, as indicated in the letter, there were some things that would need to be addressed. There were questions about the ANR timeline and looking to extend that and the suggestion was made to instead withdraw, fix whatever needs fixing, and come back with one thing that actually makes sense. And it sounds like that's the avenue that they'd like to take. So, we have in front of us the question right now of do we accept the withdrawal on one, on both, on neither, and do we want to even take up the conversation about any potential waivers of future filing fees now or do we wanna push that off until such time as it becomes relevant if ever?

Mr. Coelho: Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Phoenix: Mr. Coelho.

Mr. Coelho: I don't mind the withdrawal, but I think, you know, we have time and energy invested in this project already. I don't know that waiving any future fees is wise, you know. It's not like we didn't do anything and you know, we have to go through it all again. You know, that's my opinion.

Mr. Phoenix: Any other comments from the Board?

Mr. Ellison: So, just so I understand, so if we, I'm trying to make sure I get this right. The applicant requests that the, because of filing fees previously tendered, be applied to a future upcoming filing. So, they're just kind of saying let it ride. Is that what basically they're saying?

Mr. Phoenix: Yeah, they don't have to pay again. They want us to do the, all of the work on it, figure out all the things that are wrong with it this time, then take it back, resubmit it, not have to pay again and then we have to send it back out to Engineering and Building and Fire and everybody else to review it all over again. Not counting our own professional staff time, any additional resources that get put into that, any publication costs, office supply costs, any other expenses, they want to just let that all be off of this original submittal.

Mr. Ellison: And did we, we as a board or the town didn't come into play on any of the reason why they're withdrawing. This was on their side, right?

Mr. Phoenix: The issues are on their side. Like I said, they had suggested the possibility of extending time to act on the ANR because that's a tight 21 days. So, given the state of what was explained of the ANR, it sounded like we would likely have to deny unless they either extend it or withdrew. Given that it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me to have, like, I think the, the suggestion coming out of the lawyers was to have something put onto the plan indicating that things were still being contested and might not land the way that they are. Instead of approving that, getting that recorded at the Registry of Deeds, having a whole new can of worms, I suggested it might be cleaner just withdraw, come up with one plan that actually makes sense and submit when you know what you're doing.

Ms. Houle: Yep.

Mr. Phoenix: So, my suggestion was the withdrawal just to keep things clean.

Mr. Ellison: Yeah, that, that totally makes sense.

Ms. Houle: Makes sense.

Mr. Ellison: How much money are we talking about?

Ms. Houle: --- the fees?

Mr. Carpenter: It was, I believe, 150 for the ANR and I believe the special permit, I believe, is 500.

Mr. Phoenix: Sounds like, right? Yeah. That's what's indicated here.

Mr. Ellison: Okay.

Mr. Phoenix: And like I said, we don't even have to necessarily take into account the, the fee conversation now. We can, if we want to if vote up or down on that now or we can just say if and when they do resubmit, we can talk about that then. I know they, they say they have an intention to resubmit, but that doesn't mean that that's actually gonna come to pass depending on what hiccups they may have.

Mr. Ellison: But there's no guarantee that they're gonna resubmit. Okay. I mean, I understand, I think I agree with the.

Ms. Houle: With Chris.

Mr. Ellison: Yeah, I guess.

Mr. Phoenix: Alright, so do we want to just handle that now or push that part off till later?

Mr. Coelho: Prefer to just handle it now.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay. So, I guess what I would entertain at this moment would be probably a multi-part motion. Number one to accept the withdrawal request relative to the ANR; number two to accept the withdrawal request with regards to the estate lot special permit; number three to find that it does not appear that it would be appropriate for the town to waive the fees on a resubmittal based on the existing circumstances; and number four, to close the public hearing. Is there anyone who cares to so move?
Mr. Coelho: **SO MOVED**.
SECOND Ms. Houle.
4-0 in Favor.
Roll call vote: Mr. Ellison – yes; Ms. Houle – yes; Mr. Coelho – yes; Mr. Ellison – yes; Mr. Phoenix – yes.

The public hearing closed at 7:13 p.m.

APPROVED:

Kathleen J. Houle
Kathleen Houle, Secretary

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Documents: Request to withdraw without prejudice from Nina Fazio (July 22, 2026)
(Documents pertaining to this hearing are available for viewing in the Planning Board Office during regular business hours).

TOWN OF LUDLOW PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT/ESTATE LOT
128 Williams Street (Assessors' Map 15C, Parcel 56)
Cynthia Lage
(soap making business)
July 23, 2026

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS

Raymond Phoenix – Chairman (Present)
William Ellison – Vice Chairman (Present)
Kathleen Houle (Present)
Christopher Coelho (Present)
Haley Rivers, Associate Member (Absent)

The public hearing began at 7:15 p.m. in the Select Board's Conference Room.

In attendance: Cynthia Lage, attendees

Mr. Phoenix advised the public that the hearing is being recorded and read the legal notice which included the description of: soap making business.

Mr. Phoenix: So, just to kind of go over the highlights that we have on the application, name of business is Swan Soap and Such LLC. Description is soap making business at home with online sales only. No one comes to the house, The paperwork here we have total area of home and other buildings housing the occupation is 1,346. Area to be used for home occupation is 278. No non-resident employees. Also, no to planned signage for the business, customers at the house, deliveries unlike those of a normal residence, any changes to the site that would make it look less residential. One vehicle that may be used in connection with the business, and that is a 2022 Subaru Forester with a GVW of 3,594 on here. And we do have a requested waiver of a full site plan in favor of a sketch and photos as prepared by the applicant. We do have a signed certification of ownership authority as well, and signed copies of what we used to read off in the meeting as checklists, but we just let people review those ahead of time. Basically 26 criteria saying the stuff that we already talked about, that you're not gonna have neon flamingos flashing at odd hours of the night saying come here and shop and buy my soap please. Basically, just that you're gonna keep things harmonious with the neighborhood around you, just in a lot more words.

Ms. Lage: That's right.

Mr. Phoenix: With that, before we get into any motions or other things from this side of the table, I would just ask if you could explain a little bit more informally, what are you looking to do?

Ms. Lage: Well, I started making soap because my family has psoriasis, starting with my dad. And so, I made pine tar soap and it was very helpful. So, then a farmer friend of mine said, oh you can make soap that helps with poison ivy. And I was like, really?

Mr. Phoenix: Okay.

Ms. Lage: So, I did that and that's helpful. I'm highly allergic to poison ivy and I have a salve for that too. And so, it just went from there. And so, to proliferate my habit of making, I had to have people buy it so I could keep making it and I've been very successful at it.

Mr. Phoenix: That's a step a lot of people tend to miss. They tend to get into hobbies of things, and then it just kind of keeps going and accumulates and yeah. So, that sounds like that all makes pretty reasonable sense to me. I think, like we have already covered most of the questions we would typically have. You're not having the hoards beating down your door saying I need soap now. You're not doing great big soap expositions; you're not having tanker trucks or products come to your house to drop things off to make 'em. So, that takes care of most of the things I would ask. Does anybody from the Board have anything?

Ms. Houle: No, Except I have to give her email address to a friend of mine who's has poison ivy issues.

Mr. Phoenix: I always get nervous that I'm gonna flip. 'cause so far, I haven't reacted to poison ivy, but there's no guarantee that's not gonna change.

Mr. Coelho: Every seven years.

Mr. Ellison: I have a question. What are you using for raw materials like beef tallow or something like that?

Ms. Lage: Well, I have a lot of different recipes. So, I use beef tallow in some, I have lard in others I have, it's usually a combination. I usually use like five basic oils, olive oil, palm oil, shea butter, castor oil, and various others.

Mr. Ellison: Sure.

Ms. Lage: Avocado oil and stuff Like that.

Mr. Ellison: Don't want you to divulge your secrets.

Ms. Lage: I have a YouTube video that I, video channel that I have about a hundred videos on, that I haven't been doing because I grew out of my house so I had to move. So, I moved here because my son and all my grandchildren are here. So, they're four blocks walking distance from where I'm living now.

Mr. Phoenix: That's nice.

Ms. Lage: So, that's really great. That's the best.

Mr. Ellison: Great.

Ms. Lage: And yeah, so.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay. Yeah, makes sense to me. Any anybody else from the Board have any comments, questions, concerns? Hearing nothing, I suspect I know the answer to this, but for formality's sake I do need to open this up for any public comments, questions or concerns at this time. If anyone does have anything that they would like to add or ask, I would just ask that you state your name and address for the record and address anything that you have through myself as Chair and I'll do my best to get you any information that you need. Does anybody have anything at this time?

Ms. Lage: This is my husband, Mike. He doesn't want to be put on the spot.

Mr. Phoenix: Fair enough, fair enough.

Ms. Lage: I would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Phoenix: Sure, sure. So, from there the next things that we would normally be looking for would be a finding as to whether this is a suitable home occupation under the bylaw, an approval or denial of the waiver request for the full site plan in favor the sketch and photos, a motion on the matter itself, and a motion on the status of the public hearing, which can all be separate, all be together. They can be read out; they can be just done in the suggested form. It is the Board's pleasure what we want to do. Anyone care to make any motions at this time?

Mr. Coelho: Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Phoenix: Mr. Coelho. I **MOVE** to find that the soap making business by Cynthia Lage at 128 Williams Street as described as a suitable home occupation under the bylaw. Furthermore, I **MOVE** to waive the full site plan for Cynthia Lage at 128 Williams Street in favor of a site sketch and photos as prepared by the applicant, since this in relation to a home occupation and doing so as consistent with the purpose intent of the zoning bylaw. Furthermore, I **MOVE** to approve the Special Permit under 7.0.4 a through m and the Home Occupation under section 6.2.1 through 6.2.13 for Cynthia Lage at 128 Williams Street with the restriction that the permit will run with the applicant and not with the property. Furthermore, I **MOVE** to close the public hearing.
SECOND Ms. Houle.

Mr. Phoenix: So that's a motion for all four as I heard it and I did hear a second. Just to make sure everybody's on the same page here. This is to make the finding, to grant the standard waiver that we do with most of the home occupations, to approve the home occupation for as long as you're doing the same business at the same property, and to close the public hearing. With that understanding, since this is a Special Permit, I will again call the roll this time.

Mr. Coelho: **SO MOVED.**
SECOND Ms. Houle.
4-0 in Favor.
Roll call vote: Mr. Coelho – yes; Mr. Ellison – yes; Ms. Houle – yes; Mr. Phoenix – yes.

The public hearing closed at 7:24 p.m.

APPROVED:

Kathleen J Houle
Kathleen Houle, Secretary

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Documents: Master application

(Documents pertaining to this hearing are available for viewing in the Planning Board Office during regular business hours).