

TOWN OF SCOTLAND PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION



Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 28, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

Scotland Fire Department, 47 Brook Road, Scotland

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1. Call to Order B. Syme called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

2. Roll Call/Seating of Alternates

Members Present: B. Syme, J. Troeger, M. Garrison, J. Nelson, I. Kisluk, Jakubowski, R. Brautigam, R. Manning

Alternates Present: D. George

Others Present: Audience of Citizens

3. Additions/Changes to the Agenda- None

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion to table until the secretary arrives.

5. Audience of Citizens -None

6. New Business

a. Valerie Bruneau, Scotland Elementary School Superintendent, asked the committee if there were ways that we could encourage younger families to move to Scotland to increase the population of the school. At this point, they are averaging 11 students per class and would require 10 more per class before the need for a new teacher is required. The Committee heard her but let her know that at this time, the cost of building supplies, housing and taxes in town just don't appeal to the younger families, often being more than they can afford to spend. The last subdivision was well over 10 years ago, so a lack of land is also an issue. The committee is willing to hear other

ideas in the future. Affordable housing may open opportunities in the future if it goes through.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 21st, 2025, meeting made by R.

Manning, 2nd M. Garrison.

Motion carries.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 23rd, 2025 meeting minutes made by M.

Brautigam, 2nd R. Manning

B. Syme abstains due to absence

Motion carries.

7. Public Hearing

I. Kisluk opened the public hearing by reading the legal notice that was published in the Chronicle on the 16th and 21st of June.

Malinda Wright, mother to Jonathan Owen, owner of Forest of Wisdom, read a proposal from her son to the audience. Jonathan is currently in India. Forest of Wisdom is a religious organization of approximately 50 members and 1 clergy and have their 501(c)3 non-profit status. They are seeking a special permit to run a religious organization at 51 Palmer Road in Scotland. They run 3 meetings per week with a maximum of 30 attendees, occasionally they host larger events and observe their holy days with up to 100 attendees 3-5 times per year. They offer counselling services and a spiritual opportunity to members of the community. Full property taxes will be paid.

I. Kisluk responded by informing the audience that this type of special permit is allowed in Scotland and that we are here to hear commentary from the audience. She encourages the committee to leave the hearing open until the next meeting so that she has time to draft motions for the next meeting.

J. Jakubowski asked if they will still store the large equipment and if a site plan can be included.

I. Kisluk stated that it can be included.

J. Jakubowski asked what the regulations were for parking regarding crushed stone/gravel and to get clarification of delineated spaces.

I. Kisluk stated that it is only required for handicapped spaces.

Open to the Audience to ask questions/voice concerns:

R. Dziekan neighbor to 51 Palmer Road was concerned that they might have loud events that might disturb her young children at bedtime.

B. Syme informed her that events can only be held between 8am and 8pm

M. Wright stated that events are currently 1.5-2 hours in length and are held in the main house, meditation classes are held on Wednesdays from 6-6:45 pm and any outdoor events will be held only 3-5 times per year and are held in the afternoons.

C. Lasch asked what they were seeking a tax exemption on.

B. Syme informed him that full taxes will be paid

R. Manning explained that they are asking for a Special Permit for the religious services on the property that will run with the land.

B. Syme let the audience know that the land is not owned by the church but is leased to them by Mr. Owen.

J. Jakubowski asked if there could be term limits to the permit.

B. Syme said that was possible and has been done in the past.

R. Manning said that time limits could be set as the committee and public see fit.

J. Jakubowski took a moment to inform the audience that a copy of the Special Permit application could be obtained by leaving their email address with the secretary who would forward it to them.

R. Dziekan inquired about fencing or some other line of demarcation so that people who were visiting Forest of Wisdom did not end up on her property. The committee will investigate this.

J. Nelson asked how this would affect the real estate if the permit were attached to the land.

B. Syme stated that Mr. Owen is retaining his property and leasing it to the church.

L. Rollin asked how long this had been going on.

M. Wright informed her that they have had some meetings since April with several attendees being Scotland residents.

J. Troeger asked how long the term will be and what are plans for expansion.

M. Wright said she was not comfortable speaking for Mr. Owen on this and would like the question directed to him next month.

J. Troeger asked if he would be available in person

M. Wright explained that he did try to get into the meeting virtually this evening so that he could directly address any questions or concerns himself but there were technical issues with connecting that might be due to his location in India.

The committee will ensure that he can be part of the meeting next month via link or phone call.

L. Brautigam wanted to know how this works if the permit is attached to the property and it is then sold. What does that allow the next owner to do.

R. Manning explained that it can only be for a place of worship

*Motion to keep the public hearing open until the next meeting made by J. Jakubowski
2nd by (could not hear in person or on the recording)*

Motion carries

8. Sub-Committee Reports-

a. **Affordable Housing subcommittee-** Nothing new to report. D. Barrow Jr, First Selectman, gave some information on the bill changes.

9. Regulation Revisions-

J. Jakubowski informed the audience that there is a meeting set for August 25th, 2025 at 7pm and more dates will be set to meet monthly to discuss zoning regulations with the goal of having a Public Hearing in December 2025 or January 2026 to publish new Zoning Regulations.

10. Old Business- D. Barrow Jr, First Selectman, informed the committee that he received the Blight Ordinance back from the town's lawyers and will be removing #12.

11. Audience of Citizens- Someone asked for an ice cream truck to be available at the green when we have concerts.

I. Kisluk said we have an ordinance against food trucks.

12. Administrative Reports

a. **Enforcement Report-** I. Kisluk apologized that she did not have her notes with her but did have 2 proposed violations. She will have more information next month.

b. **Education-** I. Kisluk informed the committee that there was a YIMBY conference coming up in October in New Haven and the cost was \$60

12. Communication and Bills- None

13. Commission Open Discussion- None

14. Executive Session- None

15. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:19 pm made by R. Manning, 2nd by R. Brautigam

Motion carries

Respectfully submitted by,
Sharon George