

Background Materials – March 23, 2026 – Planning Board Meeting

Prepared by Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation, 3/20/26

Meeting will be live streamed on [SHTV Channel 15](#).

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<https://southhadley.org/517/Alerts-Notifications>

Past Background Reports for Planning Board meetings are posted online:

<https://www.southhadley.org/1274/Agenda-Background-Materials>

1) Open Comment Period

This 10-minute period is set aside for the public to offer comments on items not on the posted agenda, in accordance with the adopted policy, as amended 9/11/23, posted on the Town of South Hadley Planning and Conservation Department webpage:

<https://www.southhadley.org/1286/11881/Planning-Board-Meeting-Policies?activeLiveTab=widget>)

Action Needed: Allow public to offer comments to the Board.

2) Minutes

Planning and Conservation Coordinator Colleen Canning will forward draft minutes separately.

Action Needed: Vote to approve minutes presented.

3) Correspondence

Correspondence is attached.

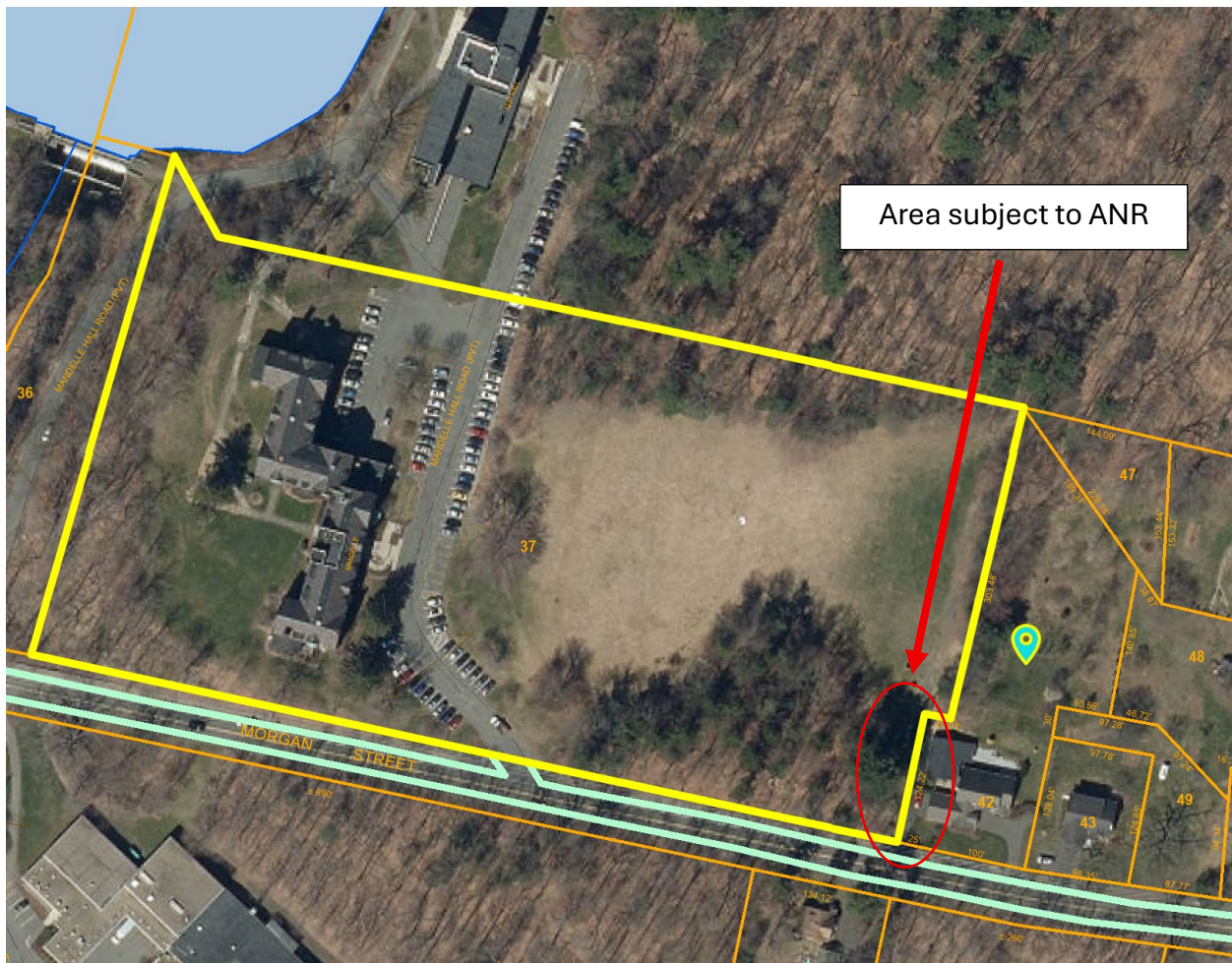
Action Needed: No action needed.

4) Morgan Street ANR, Mount Holyoke College

Application online: [22093---Morgan-St-ANR-Rev03](#)

Mount Holyoke College has submitted this ANR plan to carve off 1,673 SF from a parcel identified as land on Assessor's Map 48 Parcel 37, located north of Morgan Street and west of #98 Morgan Street. The applicant has stated the intention of the creation of this lot is to transfer it to the abutter at 98 Morgan Street. The abutter's driveway is actually located on the College's property within the area delineated for the ANR.

The proposed ANR is located in the Residence A-2 zoning district, with minimum frontage requirements of 100'. The proposed ANR will not create a dimensional nonconformity for the parent parcel. Morgan Street is also a town-owned and maintained public road.



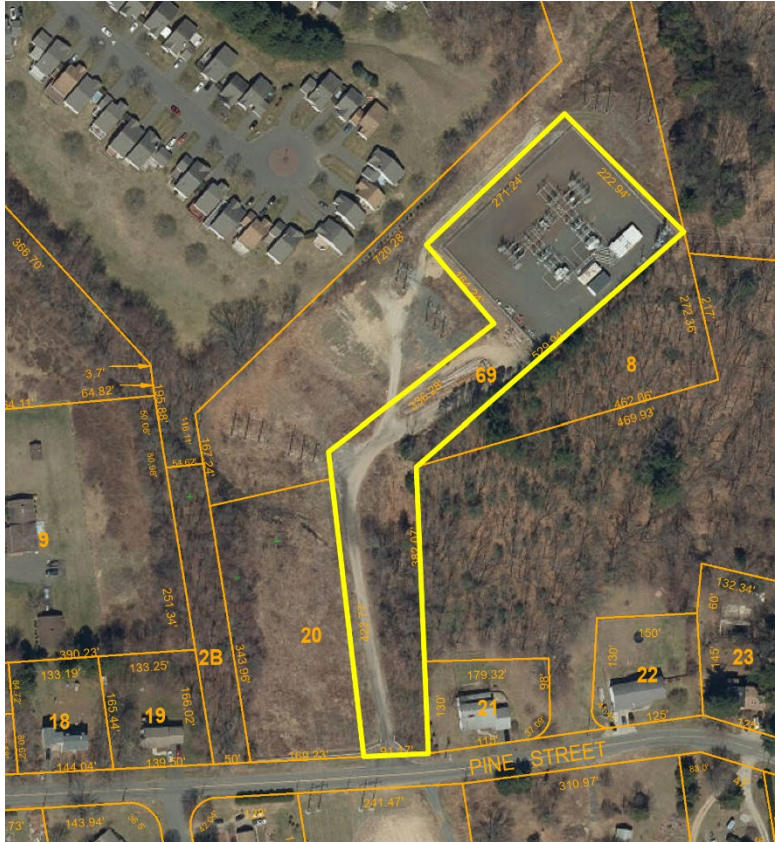
Action Needed: Discuss the proposed ANR, and vote on the requested endorsement.

Recommended Motion: Move to endorse the Approval Not Required plan for Assessor's Map 48, Parcel 37 submitted by Mount Holyoke College.

5) Pine Street ANR, SHELD

Application online: <https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14892/24-2211-ANR-final-031626?bidId=>

A joint application filed by SHELD and Holyoke Power and Electric Company to reconfigure the four parcel boundaries associated with the SHELD's Pineshed Substation on Pine Street including Assessor's parcels 42-6, 42-8, 42-20, and 42-69.



Type of Way: Pine Street is a town-owned and maintained public road and therefore this standard is met.

Minimum Frontage: The frontage along Pine Street is in the RA1 zoning district, and the remainder of the subject area in the Agricultural zoning district. Therefore the RA1 minimum frontage requirement of 125' applies. The proposed ANR includes granting 0.053 acres with 35.51' feet of frontage from parcel 42-20 to parcel 42-69 thereby creating 125' feet of frontage on Pine Street. The remaining frontage on parcel 42-20 will be 133.44'. Therefore, this standard is met.

Vital Access: Pine Street is a town-owned and maintained public road, and there is an existing gravel drive on the frontage parcel 42-69 that provides access to the Pineshed substation at the north end of the parcel. The access is in fact being widened along the proposed new frontage. Therefore, this standard is met.

Action Needed: Discuss the proposed ANR, and vote on the requested endorsement.

Recommended Motion: Move to endorse the joint application for Approval Not Required plan for Assessor's parcels 42-6, 42-8, 42-20, and 42-69 submitted by SHELD and Holyoke Power and Electric Company.

5) Public Listening Session - Agricultural Bylaw Amendments

Draft bylaws and Review and Analysis Report online:
<https://www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>

The Planning Board will hold a public listening session on the draft zoning bylaw amendments regarding agricultural uses. Director of Planning and Conservation Anne Capra will give an overview presentation to orient the public and the Board to the draft materials followed by open comment from the public, followed by comments from the Planning Board.

For many years, conflicts have arisen in regard to agricultural uses and the zoning bylaw, as well as Board of Health Regulations. To address these conflicts, the Planning and Conservation Department hired a consultant to review and prepare recommendations and proposed amendments to the zoning bylaw. These materials were then reviewed collaboratively by the Planning Director, Public Health Director and Building Commissioner and further revised. Last year, the draft amendments were reviewed by the Planning Board and determined to need further revision. A small working group was convened to review the draft bylaws and make further revisions, which are now presented to the Planning Board for consideration and the subject of the public listening session

Next Steps: Revise draft bylaw amendments, schedule public hearing, submit final amendment proposals to Town Meeting for adoption (May or November)

6) Draft Report to Town Meeting - Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255-91 Floodplain Regulations Amendment

Draft Bylaw: <https://www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>

Draft Report to Town Meeting:

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14893/Planning-Board-Report-to-Town-Meeting---DRAFT-31626>

A draft report to Town Meeting is posted at the link above.

Action Needed: Review the draft report, suggest edits, and vote on issuance.

Recommended Motion: Move to accept the report to Town Meeting (with edits as noted) and issue to Town Meeting.

7) Planning & Conservation Department Report on Planning Projects and Development Updates

Upcoming Planning Board Meetings

The following meetings are to be held in person at the South Hadley Senior Center/COA with Zoom virtual attendance permitted.

4/13/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHELD/65 Old Lyman Road SPR and Stormwater Permit Public Hearing • Sign Bylaw Amendment Public Hearing • 506 Granby Road – Form H Plan Endorsement & Set Performance Guarantee • 136 East Street – Form H Plan Endorsement
4/27/26 <i>1st Meeting After Election</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Reorganization • Set Summer Meeting Schedule
5/4/26	
	<i>5/13/26 Annual Town Meeting</i>
5/18/26	

8) Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice)

No additional business has been submitted to me as of the date of this background report.

**SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD
LIST OF CORRESPONDENCES
MARCH 23, 2026 REGULAR MEETING**

Letters and Memos

- March 16 letter (attached) from Linda Sachs, 193 Woodbridge Street, regarding proposed zoning bylaw changes regarding agricultural uses.
- March 20 email (attached) from Bobbie Salthouse regarding proposed zoning bylaw changes regarding agricultural uses.

Legal Notices

Amherst

-

Chicopee

-

Granby

- Notice from the Granby Planning Board for subdivision approval for Munsing Estates located at Assessor's Map 16, Block B, Lots 15.4 & 16

Hadley

-

Holyoke

-

Linda Sachs
193 Woodbridge St.
South Hadley, MA 01075

March 16, 2026

Anne Capra, Planning Director
Town of South Hadley

CC: South Hadley Planning Board

Re: Request for clarifications of Draft bylaw 255-25

Dear Anne,

Could you please clarify a few elements of draft Bylaw **255-25 “Agricultural Uses Accessory to Residential Use**, *before* the 3/23 Listening Session?

Your Agenda flier for the Listening Session says “please join the discussion...” Discussion suggests that members of the public will be able to ask questions *and* make comments. Is this so? Will comments be limited to 3 minutes, as they are at Planning Board Public Hearings?

I attended the March 10 Board of Health meeting where the Ag Uses draft bylaw 255-25 was discussed. Some Board of Health members are under the impression that the only residential area where a homeowner could “raise meat” would be in the Agricultural Zone. Is that true?

Specifically, I’m hoping you can clarify the following sections:

255-25 B(1c): Says that the keeping and raising of livestock (meat) are prohibited in all districts *except* “Agricultural,” whether raised for table or other purposes. Does this “exception” allow a homeowner who is not a farmer, but has a home in the Agricultural Zone to “raise meat” i.e. non-equine livestock, if their parcel is 2 acres? Does “for table or other purposes” mean the raising of meat would be for personal use and also to sell? Would the resident raising meat need to comply with the dimensional and other standards in **255-25 E**?

Since livestock under 6 months are not counted in **255-25 E** could that resident in the AG zone, with a 2 acre parcel, raise unlimited piglets or baby calves?

255-25 (E) (1-5) Non-Equine Livestock Uses Accessory to Residential Use

If a property owner in other residential areas of town has $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre (in addition to the land their home is on) would they be allowed to “raise meat” including unlimited numbers of piglets and calves? With one adult animal allowed on the first $\frac{3}{4}$ acre and an additional animal for each 15,000 sq. ft beyond that?

Are the limited standards in **255-25 E (2-5)** the only protection for abutters and other neighbors from noise, stench, flies and other pests and nuisances stemming from “raising meat” in residential areas? Are these the only standards for the humane treatment of the livestock that is being raised as an accessory to residential use?

255-25 (H): “Except when operated as part of an Agriculturally exempt activity, agricultural uses on parcels in Residential zoning districts are only permitted to be **“accessory to residential uses located on the same parcel.”**”

H (1-5)

This section appears to say a homeowner can “raise meat” i.e. non-equine livestock in “Residential zoning districts” as long as the activity is an “accessory to residential use” located on the same parcel.

Is that the case?

Also, there is no longer mention that raising livestock as an accessory to residential use must be “primarily for the occupants personal use.” (“Primarily for personal use” was language in the May 2025 draft.)

255-25 (H) (3)

This section seems to say that if someone has a home outside of a residential zoning district and wants to “raise meat” as an accessory to residential use, they may ask the Planning Board for a finding that it’s okay to do that. Is my interpretation correct?

Also, state law allows people who raise their own meat to slaughter and butcher the animals on their property. Has there been any consideration to setting appropriate standards for humane slaughter and minimizing the negative impacts on neighbors? Board of Health Livestock regulations are silent on this and only specify sanitary disposal of carcasses. Will the slaughter of livestock as an accessory to residential use also be discussed on March 23rd?

I look forward to any clarification and explanations that you can give me before March 23.

Thank you.

Linda Sachs

Re: Proposed agricultural bylaws

1 message

Bobbie <bobbiesalthouse@gmail.com>

Fri, Mar 20, 2026 at 3:04 PM

To: "acapra@southhadleyma.gov" <acapra@southhadleyma.gov>

Hi Anne,

I wrote to you a few months ago about some problematic matters in the changes to the Agricultural Bylaws Amendments and have been made aware that they are still not fully addressed in the version proposed for acceptance by the Planning Board at their March 23rd meeting.

Regarding 255-25

Article 255-25 proposes allowing all types of livestock throughout residential areas in South Hadley. Risk of transmission of bird flu and other diseases among animals and humans could be increased from chickens and ducks etc. in residential backyards, and there are other health risks associated with excrement in poorly maintained animal dwellings and yards. In these times of tightening budgets the town surely cannot be expected to provide monitoring and ensuring safe conditions for both animals and humans that this amendment would call for,

Regarding 255-26 Commercial Agricultural Uses:

Sound carries long distances. Although "batting cages" are not now specifically mentioned, they are not banned. Allowing batting cages on parcels as small as 5 acre could likely cause disturbing repetitive noise that can impact neighbors' physical and mental health, and must be considered in the proposed zoning changes. For this reason I think it unwise to lower the acreage allowed for such activities.

Regarding 255-26 (N) (5) Allowable Farm-Related Activities/Uses

Again, sound travels and outdoor music and concerts have been a source of serious annoyance for residents in Hadley and Belchertown. For several years we actually were bothered by concerts coming all the way from Mt. Tom. Why would we ask South Hadley residents to put up with this kind of repeated annoyance? I am extremely concerned that again the wording is vague and does not address specific sound levels, duration or frequency of possible concerts. I hope our town would do better than neighboring towns, protect our residents by considering issues that affect health and quality of life for residents. In my opinion, only minimally amplified acoustic music on large properties (larger than 5 acres) should be considered appropriate and allowable in the bylaw. For this reason I again think it unwise to lower the acreage allowed for such activities.

Please forward this letter immediately to the Planning Board so they can be considered in upcoming discussions of these bylaw changes on March 23. We are unfortunately traveling or we would be at the meeting in person.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of the town.

Sincerely,

Bobbie and Robert Salthouse
20 The Knolls, South Hadley, MA 01075