

# Planning & Sustainability - City of Northampton

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## The Northampton Zoning Board

Minutes of Meeting

February 12, 2026 (Approved on 02/26/2026)

Zoning Board Meeting 5:30 PM VIA ZOOM Teleconference

Members Present:		Time
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	David Bloomberg, Chair,	5:32 pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elizabeth Silver, Vice Chair	5:30 pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maureen Scanlon, Member	5:30 pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sherry Taylor, Associate Member	5:35 pm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Erinn Ervin, Associate Member	5:30 pm
Staff Present		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carolyn Misch, Director, Office of Planning and Sustainability	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nathan Chung, Land Use Planner, Office of Planning and Sustainability	5:30 pm

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### Findings Hearing for 182 Mount Tom Rd

Four of the five Board members were present at the beginning and achieved the quorum of three people required for the hearing.

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**5:33 PM** Presiding member Bloomberg announced that the meeting is being Video Recorded. Bloomberg opened for general public comments not about the specific agenda item. There was no public comment.

**5:35 PM** Board member Taylor joined the hearing, creating a full quorum of three regular members and two associate members.

**5:36 PM** Bloomberg opened the findings hearing for constructing 10 solar canopies with utilities in addition to existing nonconforming auto salvage use by Parallel Products Solar Energy, LLC at 182 Mt Tom Rd, Map ID 39-39. Record ID [LU-25-25](#).

- Second session. Continued from the first session on January 8, 2026.
- Findings Permit: Simple Majority Vote Required 2 out of 3 Members. This is a discretionary permit. The Board must find that the proposed change to a nonconforming dual use will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming use.
- Applicable Code Sections: 350-9.2B (Link: <https://ecode360.com/11957609>); 350-9.3A(8)
- Hearing Publication Dates: December 23 and December 31, 2025

**5:38 PM** Michael Mineau, the attorney for the applicant's party, presented. Mineau presented a summary about how the proposed project is not substantially detrimental but a substantial improvement based on aesthetic improvements, more orderly use of the site, and dual use that includes renewable energy generation. Mineau introduced others in the party, Scott Daggett from Farland Corp and Phil Cavallo from Parallel Products.

**5:42** Daggett shared the street view rendering and site plan. Daggett described them and the limited visibility of the canopy from the road. Ervin asked about plant screening. Daggett explained that its value would be limited due to the berm. Bloomberg and Silver were not sure if the planting screening would have value.

Cavallo said that the view from the street shows an industrial site with railroad tracks and the proposal would fit in with the industrial setting.

Taylor asked about the truck entryway and the applicants described it. Bloomberg appreciated the rendering. Bloomberg and Taylor noted the proposal as an improvement. Scanlon asked about planting between the subject property and Mill River. Cavallo noted that the 50-foot no touch zone has a set of plants protected by cattle fences. Daggett shared the planting plan on the screen and explained the phytoremediation aspect of the plants, which were the Conservation Commission requirements. Daggett noted that the slope toward the Mill River is steeper and there will be no removal of trees.

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## Board Asks for Public Comments

No one had comments. Chung noted that there were no comments from the public or other City departments before the meeting.

## Board Closes the Hearing and Deliberates

**6:04 pm** Silver made the motion to close the public hearing. Scanlon seconded. The three regular members – Bloomberg, Silver, and Scanlon - unanimously voted by roll call to close.

## Board Votes to Approve

**6:05 pm** Silver made the motion to approve the findings application and Scanlon seconded. The City of Northampton Zoning Board of Appeals determined that the proposed changes have met the requirements for a findings permit under zoning ordinance 350-9.3A(8). It determined that the proposal to construct 10 solar canopies with utilities in addition to the existing nonconforming auto salvage use is not substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing auto salvage use. The Board found that:

1. The proposed changes clean up the property substantially.
2. The generation of solar energy is positive and encouraged by the community.
3. The visual impact caused by the installation of the solar canopies is not onerous based on renderings and plans. It looks better than some of the materials that have been removed.
4. The proposed changes are visual improvements. They provide for screening of junked cars from the street.
5. The proposed changes result in slightly increased open space.
6. The proposed changes would potentially allow the site to transition away from auto salvage use to a more appropriate income-producing nonconforming use that could bring income to the parcel that might otherwise be abandoned if the auto salvage use becomes unprofitable.
7. Although not jurisdictional to the ZBA, the Board heard that its concerns about protection of inland wetland areas, waters, and buffer zones are being addressed extensively through the detailed plans that have been approved by the Conservation Commission.

The Board had no conditions.

**6:08 PM** The members voted unanimously by roll call to approve the findings permit for 182 Mt Tom Rd.

## Special Permit Hearing for 118 Lake St

**6:09 PM** Bloomberg opened the special permit hearing to widen a nonconforming attached garage by Louis Montgomery and Lynn Reagan at 118 Lake St, Florence, Map ID 17A-252. Record ID [LU-25-27](#).

- Special Permit: Super Majority Vote Required 3 out of 3 Members. This is a discretionary permit. The Board must find that the proposed widening of the attached nonconforming garage with a

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new zoning violation will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure.

- Applicable Code Sections: Zoning Attachment 7 for URB (Top of <https://ecode360.com/13265306>); 350-9.3A(10) (<https://ecode360.com/27190013>)
- Hearing Publication Dates: January 29 and February 5, 2026.

Present were subject property owners Louis Montgomery and Lynn Reagan and their attorney Margo Welch. Welch was having technical issues, so the owners initially presented. Scanlon asked about the detached garage and its gravel driveway in the proposed plan. Montgomery noted that it might not get built. Chung added that City officials interpret gravel driveway as covered space, not open space.

Welch presented the application as follows: It is a family-owned home that the owners want to renovate. The existing attached garage setback is nonconforming at 0' feet but would become conforming with the proposed change of 10' setback. The proposal widens the garage, making its area about 33% of the total house façade area, making it 3% greater than the 30% maximum limit and requiring the special permit. Neighbors would benefit from the changes even with the widened garage, which would stay as a 1-car garage. It would be aesthetically pleasing and not substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing conditions.

Chung clarified that the proposed detached garage in the rear and its gravel driveway are not the subjects of this hearing. Scanlon and Bloomberg wondered about conditioning an updated site plan that deletes the detached garage and its gravel driveway to avoid confusion. Taylor expressed that it seemed to be an overly complicated condition.

## Board Asks for Public Comments

No one had comments. Chung noted there were no public or inter-departmental comments. Montgomery noted positive neighbor feedback.

## Board Closes the Hearing and Deliberates

**6:38 PM** Silver made the motion to close the public hearing. Scanlon seconded. The board unanimously voted yes by roll call.

The Board deliberated. It continued the earlier discussion on whether to condition an updated plan. It tried different motions. Chung suggested putting a clarifying statement in the Findings section of the decision that the approval is not for the rear detached garage and the gravel driveway instead of conditioning a new site plan. The Board members agreed and made the following motion.

## Board Votes to Approve

**6:45 PM** Silver made the motion to approve the special permit and Scanlon seconded. The City of Northampton Zoning Board of Appeals determined that the proposed changes have met the

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requirements for a special permit under zoning ordinance 350-9.3A(10). It determined that the proposed widening of the attached nonconforming garage with a new zoning violation would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming structure with the understanding that this special permit does not include approval with respect to the detached rear garage and the gravel driveway in the plan shown to the Board. The Board found that:

1. The proposal renders the setback of the attached garage conforming, eliminating one nonconformity, and the new zoning violation is not substantially more detrimental. (URB design standards require the front face of an attached garage to be stepped back 10 feet from the house façade and the attached garage façade to comprise no more than 30% of the overall façade. The proposal makes the attached garage's setback conforming while making its façade about 3% above the 30% maximum.)

The Board had no conditions.

**6:49 PM The three regular members voted yes unanimously by roll call to approve the special permit.**

## Board Reviews Minutes and Other Matters

**6:50 PM** Board postponed voting for a chair and vice chair due to Ervin having had to leave due to time constraints around 6:45 pm. The Board reviewed the minutes for the hearing on 1/8 and 1/22.

Silver made the motion to approve both minutes. Scanlon seconded. All members, except for Ervinn who was not present, voted yes by roll call.

**6:54 PM** Nathan Chung explained the next hearing on 2/26. **All four noted availability on that day.** Chung noted that there are no new applications for March hearings.

## Board Adjourns

6:55 PM Upon motion by Silver and second by Taylor, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn.

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