

New Haven Planning Board Minutes

Held Wednesday, September 16, 2026

Call to Order

Chairperson Mike Cutuli called the September 16, 2026, Planning Board Meeting to order at 6:02 PM at New Haven Town Hall.

Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

- Present: Planning Board Members - Mike Cutuli, Karen Valentino, Bettie Jo Cronk, Rhea Keller Knittel, Jessica Ortiz (Alternate) and Cindi Giovo, Planning Board Secretary.
- Absent: Planning Board Member – Allen Chase and Ron Marsden, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer.
- Also, in attendance were Carl Schmidt, Town Attorney; Dan Gibbs, Town Constable; and members of the public.
- All stood, faced the flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairperson, Mike Cutuli made a motion to invite Jessica Ortiz (Alternate) to participate in tonight's discussions. Seconded by Karen Valentino. Jessica Ortiz accepted.

Mike Cutuli, aye; Karen Valentino, aye; Bettie Jo Cronk, aye; Rhea Keller Knittel, aye; and Jessica Ortiz, aye. Motion carried.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Motion made by Bettie Jo Cronk to accept the August 19, 2026 Planning Board Minutes. Seconded by Karen Valentino.

Mike Cutuli, aye; Karen Valentino, aye; Bettie Jo Cronk, aye; Rhea Keller Knittel, abstain; and Jessica Ortiz, aye. Motion carried.

New Business- David J. von Holtz Jr – Application for Proposed Development at 529 Green Rd, Mexico, NY 13114 (tax map # 133.00-01-14)

David J. von Holtz Jr was present to explain his proposed development application. He will be the owner for the business: FOCUS Outdoors LLC in which he will manufacture game calls, (He brought along and demonstrated a wooden turkey call.), hunting blinds (has a design in mind but not built yet), other outdoor products, provide laser engraving and customization, conduct appointment – based retail sales and firearm transfers to follow obtaining required licensing. There will be internet drop – shipment to customers for the merchandise purchased.

He has applied for the Federal Firearms License (FFL) and was interviewed today. He expects to have his FFL in a few weeks.

The Planning Board members asked about the hours of operation of his business: FOCUS Outdoors LLC. His reply was 5 – 8 PM then it will change after his retirement in a few years from his teaching career.

Other questions from the Planning Board members were:

- The size of the building (He will utilize a 700 square foot existing detached structure on his property with the upstairs to be used for woodworking and laser engraving.)
- The parking area (He will have parking for a half dozen vehicles, and also a 40 x 40 ft concrete pad in front of the shop with the existing U – shaped driveway.)
- The distance of the building to the creek and the road (He said the building is 200 ft from the creek and 1000 ft from the road.)
- Security, lighting and signage (He has the BLINK alarm system, lighting is already existing on the building with no sign at present.)
- Discharging of customers' firearms (He stated no customer firearms will be discharged on the premises.)

Planning Board Member Rhea Keller Knittel volunteered to read the Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF) Part I.

Carl Schmidt, Town Attorney and the Planning Board wanted clarification from Ron Marsden, Building Inspector/Code Officer, about the type of application chosen.

Chairperson Mike Cutuli called Ron Marsden on his cell phone. Ron Marsden stated it is an existing building proposed development to change the usage would require site plan approval to follow the New Haven Local Laws.

Motion made by Bettie Jo Cronk to approve the application as complete. Seconded by Rhea Keller Knittel.

Mike Cutuli, aye; Karen Valentino, aye; Bettie Jo Cronk, aye; Rhea Keller Knittel, aye; and Jessica Ortiz, aye. Motion carried.

Carl Schmidt, Town Attorney and the Planning Board addressed the application and discussed classifying it as a Type II SEQR Action under Section 617.5 (c) (9) which states:

“construction or expansion of a primary or accessory/appurtenant, nonresidential structure or facility involving less than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area and not

involving a change of zoning or a use variance and consistent with local land use controls...”

Motion made by Bettie Jo Cronk to classify the application as a Type II SEQR Action under 6 NYCRR Section 617.5 (c) (9) Seconded by Karen Valentino.

Mike Cutuli, aye; Karen Valentino, aye; Bettie Jo Cronk, aye; Rhea Keller Knittel, aye; and Jessica Ortiz, aye. Motion carried.

Motion made by Bettie Jo Cronk to set the Public Hearing for Wednesday, October 21, 2026 at 6:10 PM. Seconded by Jessica Ortiz.

Mike Cutuli, aye; Karen Valentino, aye; Bettie Jo Cronk, aye; Rhea Keller Knittel, aye; and Jessica Ortiz, aye. Motion carried.

Old Business – Town of New Haven Local Laws Pertaining to Building Site Plan Review Articles III Sections 3.30, 3.36, 3.37, 3.38, 3.40

Motion made by Mike Cutuli to table the above Old Business for a future Planning Board meeting. Seconded by Bettie Jo Cronk.

Mike Cutuli, aye; Karen Valentino, aye; Bettie Jo Cronk, aye; Rhea Keller Knittel, aye; and Jessica Ortiz, aye. Motion carried.

Adjournment:

With no other business before the Board, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Bettie Jo Cronk at 6:40 PM. Seconded by Karen Valentino. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindi Giovo

New Haven Planning Board Secretary

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