

Minutes of BPBCA Zoning Commission July 17th, 2026, Regular Meeting - 07/17/26

Date and time: 07/17/26 6:00 PM to: 07/17/26 6:42 PM

Present: Brooke Stevens, Recording Secretary, Jim Fox, Zoning Commission Chairman, John Horoho, Secretary, Betsy Klemmer, Regular Member, Jim Mastria, Regular Member, David Weiss, BOG Member, Absent:, Gale Shepard, Alternate, Keith Turner, Regular Member

Location: BPBCA Clubhouse, 6 Sunset Avenue, Niantic, CT, 06357

Topics

1. Call to Order

Note Chairman Fox called the Regular Meeting of the Black Point Beach Club Association Zoning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. Call for Additions to the Agenda

Note There were none.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

3-1. Regular Meeting Minutes of June 19th, 2026

Note see attached minutes.

 [Minutes of BPBCA Zoning Commission June 19th 2026 Regular Meeting 06 19 26.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (1)

Ms. Klemmer moved to approve the Meeting Minutes of June 19th, 2026, as submitted.

Mr. Mastria seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

4. Public Delegations

Note Public Delegations is the time when members of the Black Point Beach Club Association are invited to speak to the Commission about certain matters. Items, referrals, or applications subject to a decision by the Commission, a public hearing or any matters in litigation may not be discussed. During delegations, the members of the Commission will not directly answer questions or make comments.

Note There were none.

5. Reports

5-1. Communications and Correspondence

Note Mr. Fox reported receiving only one item, an email from a community member stating they could not locate the ZEO report and requesting assistance. Mr. Fox noted that the Recording Secretary responded to the community member who requested the ZEO report, sending them the direct link. He clarified for the record that the ZEO report is included within the posted minutes.

5-2. ZEO: Jim Ventres

Note see attached report.

 [BPBCA ZEO_Report_July_2026.pdf](#)

Note Mr. Ventres delivered his ZEO report, noting that he remains busy with typical small projects around the community. No new homes are being proposed, several new homes already approved have not yet begun construction, though electrical setups are appearing, and he expects significant construction activity over the next 12 to 18 months.

Note Mr. Fox noted that construction vehicles already strain the road system, and multiple new homes on streets like Billow and East Shore, and it will be pretty impactful.

Note Mr. Weiss referenced a specific house on Billow explaining that its tight lot will require rerouting traffic. He added that the Board of Governors is already reviewing this situation.

Note Mr. Mastria observed that residents will probably call the Police when roads are blocked and then the Police will then tell the builders they must hire traffic control staff, which is the standard process.

Note Mr. Weiss noted that during the Seawall Project, the Association needed to access the right-of-way, and a specific right-of-way document governed that process. That same document will likely apply here if contractors need to park trucks or equipment on the right-of-way.

5-3. Board of Governors Ex-Officio

Note Mr. Weiss mentioned the new Road Safety Guide and said that with all the construction happening, it's a good reminder for everyone to drive safely, follow the speed limit, and share the roads. He shared that Colleen Chapin provided helpful edits to make the documents clearer for residents.

Note The Board expects to approve the action plan next Thursday night. After approval, they will meet with the Police Chief to review the document and confirm nothing in the plan conflicts with Police procedures, to understand how Police will handle traffic or road-blocking situations, and to reinforce that these are town roads, not Association roads.

Note Mr. Weiss explained that the traffic study was never a budget item but will be added to next year's budget, with hopes to complete the related study between mid-June and August, so that it is completed during peak activity.

Note He reported that the Board is also reviewing proposals and vendor options for installing a disability access ramp on the north side of the Clubhouse.

Note Mr. Weiss shared quick updates on the Black Point endowment. There will be an info session at the clubhouse on July 30th at 7 p.m. and residents will soon be able to learn more or take part.

5-4. Chairman: Jim Fox

Note Mr. Fox noted that Ms. Klemmer is attending her final meeting of this term and is not seeking reappointment. He thanked her for her years of service to the community and the Zoning Commission.

Note He added that Ms. Shepard moved away two weeks ago, could not attend, and completed her term.

Note Mr. Fox also welcomed Steve Beauchene as a newly appointed Alternate Member and acknowledged that Mr. Mastria is now a Full Member of the Commission after a brief period serving as an Alternate.

Note Mr. Fox expressed personal and Commission-wide condolences to Mr. Weiss and his family on the passing of his father.

6. Old Business- A. Review of current Zoning Regulations.

Note see attachment.

 [505220818346410.pdf](#)

6-1. Satellite Dishes

Note The Commission discussed whether to revise, expand, or eliminate the existing regulation governing satellite dish size.

Note Mr. Ventres gave a summary of the proposed edits:

*Replace references to East Lyme with State of Connecticut, since the building code is statewide.

*Remove a confusing final sentence in the yard minimum front section that appeared to be a long-standing typo.

Note For satellite dishes, the current regulation lists 18 inches as the maximum satellite dish diameter, modern dishes are typically 24 inches, and starlink panels are square and often larger. Mr. Ventres questioned whether the regulation should be updated or removed entirely.

Note Mr. Mastria noted he has not seen new Starlink panels installed yet, only existing older dishes.

Note Mr. Fox observed that zoning regulations are meant to stay ahead of new needs and technologies, give residents clear guidance before they install anything, and prevent the Commission from having to fix problems after something unwanted is already built. Commission Members agreed that technology will keep changing, and people may put up new kinds of panels or receivers in the future.

Note The Commission discussed how eliminating the rule would prevent the Commission from constantly updating it as technology changes but that without any regulation, residents could install very large or visually intrusive devices, leaving the community with no protection or limits.

Note Mr. Fox said that technology will continue to advance but that it's unclear what that would look like. He asked for Commission Member feedback:

*Mr. Mastria said that 24 inches seems to be the norm and starting point.

*Ms. Klemmer observed that setting a fixed number may lead to constant updates but eliminating the regulation could allow extremely large devices.

*Ms. Diachenko said technology will keep increasing and suggested raising the limit to 36 inches.

*Mr. Horoho said he does not support eliminating the regulation, he believes the Commission should better define it, using similar language to the ground-mounted solar panel regulation, especially regarding placement and lot coverage.

Note After further discussion, Commission Members agreed 36 inches is too large. The industry standard is 24 inches, and the current 18-inch limit is outdated. Consensus formed around setting a maximum of 24 inches, with the option to amend later if technology changes. It was agreed placement should be allowed anywhere on the property as long as the dish does not exceed 24 inches.

Note Mr. Ventres said the regulation as written would cover ground mounted dishes.

6-2. Rear setback distances for Accessory Buildings

Note This item is already resolved as is the detached garage language.

Decision MOTION (2)

Ms. Klemmer moved to set a Public Hearing for August 21st, 2026, with a Regular Zoning Commission Meeting to follow.

Mr. Horoho seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

Note Mr. Fox discussed making the Public Hearing and the Regular Meeting that follows hybrid so that individuals can attend virtually if they so choose.

7. Status of Zoning Commission

Note Mr. Fox reiterated some of the points previously shared by Mr. Weiss regarding the upcoming traffic and road safety study. He offered some of the following comments:

*He has long supported conducting a formal study.

*Many intersections, especially along East Shore, are only 18-19 feet wide, far narrower than modern standards which Mr. Ventres said are typically 24 feet with travel lanes and shoulders.

*Black Point's layout makes widening impossible, so the community must rely on traffic calming, public awareness, and enforcement.

Note The Commission further discussed how unsafe behavior continues and Mr. Fox detailed frequent encounters with young children on electric scooters, often without helmets and ignoring stop signs.

Note Mr. Fox shared that he and Mike Walsh recently worked on construction information sheets for homeowners. These materials do not create new regulations, they simply clarify expectations and remind homeowners of responsibilities, especially regarding start times, noise, and contractor conduct. Many construction activities (new windows, new roofs) do not require zoning permits, so communication helps ensure residents understand the rules.

Note reported that at the last Board of Governors meeting, Mr. Weiss discussed the possibility of the Zoning Commission taking on a broader role. In most municipalities, zoning commissions are considered land use boards. If Black Point were to consolidate land-use-related responsibilities, the Zoning Commission could be formally designated as the Land Use Board or Planning & Zoning Commission.

Note Mr. Ventres noted that the Commission's authority is already defined in the charter and that the Board of Governors could designate the Commission as a combined Planning & Zoning Commission without requiring a charter change.

Note It was noted that a Charter Revision Commission is being formed, so any structural changes could be addressed there if needed.

Note Mr. Fox noted a Charter Revision Commission met in 2019; only minor trust-related voting clarifications were made.

Note The Commission briefly discussed how they could help the community and the Board of Governors by taking on land-use-related responsibilities. Mr. Horoho noted that he BOG's workload, especially during budget cycles, leaves little time for additional planning or land-use matters. The Zoning Commission meets monthly and could devote focused time to issues that often get delayed.

Note How Charter Revision Commissions operate was summarized:

- *The Board of Governors appoints 5-15 members.

- *No more than 25% may be current Board members.

- *The Commission elects its own Chair and Secretary.

- *It drafts proposed changes, which the Board may adopt, reject, or partially accept.

8. Adjournment

Decision MOTION (3)

Ms. Klemmer moved to adjourn the July 17th, 2026, BPBCA Zoning Commission Regular Meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Mr. Mastria seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

Note The next BPBCA Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for August 21st, 2026, following the Public Hearing that will be held at 6:00 p.m.

Note Respectfully Submitted,
Brooke Stevens, Recording Secretary