

Dennis Select Board
Wednesday, January 27, 2026 at 4:00PM
Dennis Town Hall, Stone Hearing Room
685 Route 134, South Dennis, MA
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RECEIVED BY: AT
Dennis Town Clerk's Office
on February 9, 2026 at 3:31 p.m.

In attendance:

Select Board members: Chris Lambton, Jim Plath, Paul McCormick, John Terrio (Zoom), Carlyn Carey (Zoom)

Select Board members absent: None

Town Staff: Town Administrator Elizabeth Sullivan, Town Planner Paul Foley, Executive Assistant April Pereira

I. CALL TO ORDER 4:00PM

Chris Lambton called the meeting to order at 4:06pm.

II. PUBLIC INFORMATION

West Dennis resident Julie Kennie approached the podium and asked if the Town is considering negotiating pricing on grinders for homeowners – related to wastewater. Julie Kennie asked whether the Town would consider negotiating bulk pricing on generators for homeowners.

Town Moderator Bill Carmichael approached the podium and commended the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Town staff who assisted with snow-clearing during the recent storm.

Carlyn Carey and Paul McCormick also extended appreciation to all those involved with snow-clearing efforts.

Paul McCormick shared that he attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association Conference which was held January 22-24.

Jim Plath echoed appreciation to DPW for the snow-clearing. He stated that he attended the Barnstable County Assembly of Delegates hearing on January 21st regarding the proposed Real Estate Transfer Fee and shared his thoughts. Jim Plath also noted that he attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association Conference and won a \$1000 credit to Guilfoil Public Relations.

Chris Lambton thanked DPW and Town staff for their hard work during the recent storm. He also thanked Chris and Alexander for their custodial services at Town Hall.

III. FY26 SELECT BOARD GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Review and consider proposed Zoning By-law Amendment – Section 4.9

Town Planner Paul Foley approached the podium and stated he has been meeting regularly with the Zoning Bylaw Study Committee (ZBSC), and Planning Board to review potential modifications to §4.9 of the Dennis Zoning Bylaw, which is to encourage Affordable Housing. He noted that the draft Zoning By-law Amendment – Section 4.9 has been brought before the Dennis Affordable Housing Trust (DAHT) as

well. A slideshow presentation was displayed. Paul Foley explained that many of the proposed changes include re-ordering the sub-sections, adding headers, removing obsolete words, correcting changed names and clarifying the different methods to create affordable units. Paul Foley stated some substantive changes are being considered also. He covered the re-organization and clarifications proposed throughout the draft.

Mr. Foley explained that the reorganization includes renaming and relocating subsections to improve clarity. For example, the subsection formerly titled “Affordable Housing Developments” was misleading, as it applied only to large-scale projects. That subsection has been renamed and moved. The amendment also introduces the various types of affordable housing enabled through Section 4.9, including Affordable Housing Apartments; Conversion of Hotels and Motels to Year-Round Affordable Housing; Affordable Housing Developments; Municipally Sponsored Affordable Housing Projects; and Affordable Lots. Other sections of the Zoning By-Law address Accessory Dwelling Units and Apartments.

Mr. Foley stated that section titles have been added where only numerical references previously existed (e.g., §3.1 now includes “Off-Street Parking Requirements”). The proposal eliminates obsolete language, updates DHCD to EOHLC, and adds additional definitions.

Mr. Foley reviewed substantive changes, including clarifying language related to performance and design standards. He explained that, since Accessory Dwelling Units are now allowed by right statewide, Affordable Housing Apartments would be limited to rental units located in or near commercial districts and transportation, and away from environmentally sensitive areas.

Mr. Foley stated that a key substantive change would allow additional locally affordable units that would not be required to go through the State tenant selection process. Projects would either include 25 percent affordable units per the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) and be 100 percent year-round, or 25 percent SHI units plus 50 percent locally affordable units, with 75 percent of units required to be year-round. Locally affordable units would primarily be filled using the enhanced Local Preference List and the Ready Renter List.

Chris Lambton asked whether the intent was to place this amendment on the Annual Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Foley replied yes, noting that the next steps include further review and refinement, followed by a public hearing before the Planning Board on March 2, 2026. He stated that he would return to the Select Board prior to Annual Town Meeting to review the final draft and allow the Board to make a recommendation.

Bob Samoluk, Chair of the Dennis Affordable Housing Trust, stated that the amended document was much clearer and acknowledged the work completed by Mr. Foley. He

noted that Section 4.9 has been the primary driver of affordable housing in Town and suggested further review of residential restrictions and design flexibility. Jim Plath commended Mr. Foley for his work.

2. Review and consider Seasonal Community Designation

Town Planner Paul Foley remained at the podium and explained that the Town of Dennis is eligible to accept the Seasonal Community Designation due to being in Barnstable County and more than 35% of the housing stock being seasonal. A slideshow presentation was displayed. Paul Foley explained that in order to become a designated seasonal community officially – the Town must accept the designation through a legislative vote; as well as allow affordable housing on undersized lots and tiny houses. Paul Foley covered the benefits associated with the Seasonal Community Designation.

West Dennis resident Julie Kennie approached the podium and suggested that additional clarification is needed regarding State definitions, including tiny houses.

Dennis Port resident Brien Hines approached the podium and stated that housing discussions often focus on new construction rather than regulating short-term rentals and suggested that restricting short-term rentals may be more effective.

Jim Plath wondered the enforcement if a Bylaw was enacted to limit seasonal rentals. Paul Foley stated the Board of Health implements these penalties. Chris Lambton mentioned the potential of having this at a future meeting.

Chris Lambton suggested that the Board may direct staff to begin work on a Town Meeting article for the Seasonal Community Designation. Chris Lambton suggested Paul Foley could come back before the Board at that time for further discussion.

Jim Plath questioned enforcement mechanisms if seasonal rental restrictions were adopted. Paul Foley stated that enforcement would fall under the Board of Health. Chris Lambton suggested the topic be revisited at a future meeting.

John Terrio stated that housing is needed and expressed support for the designation.

Paul McCormick suggested that the Health Director or Board of Health prepare a report to review short-term rentals, including fee increases and penalties for noncompliance. Jim Plath recommended this report come back on the February 24th Select Board meeting.

Paul McCormick moved to have Town staff prepare a Town Meeting Article to consider the Seasonal Communities Designation. Carlyn Carey seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Carey aye, Terrio aye. VOTE:

5-0-0

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Review and consider the Dennis Port-West Dennis Advancement Committee proposed names for the property located at 187 Upper County Road, Dennis Port

On behalf of the Dennis Port-West Dennis Advancement Committee (DPWDAC), Member Josh Brimdyr approached the podium and stated the Dennis Port West Dennis Advancement Committee has been actively working towards finding a proposed name for the property located at 187 Upper County Road, Dennis Port.

The Dennis Port–West Dennis Advancement Committee followed the Policy on Naming Town Owned Property and Josh Brimdyr noted that advance notice had been provided to interested parties and that the Committee had conducted a public process consistent with that policy. Chair Chris Lambton thanked Josh Brimdyr and the Committee for their work.

Josh Brimdyr reviewed the Policy on Naming Town Owned Property and the criteria considered by the committee, including historical, cultural, geographical, and memorial significance. He stated that the property was intended to function as a community park and that no memorial designation was applicable, as the property was purchased by the Town and not donated. He summarized the site’s history, including prior ownership by the Crocker family and later use as a church property until its acquisition by the Town.

Josh Brimdyr explained that the committee sought a name reflective of the community and the park’s intended use. Three potential names were developed and presented to the public through a survey conducted over approximately two and a half months. The proposed names were the “Port Yard”, the “Port Park”, and the “Port Side”. A total of 120 responses were received, with Port Side receiving approximately 60 percent of the votes, clearly exceeding the other options. Following discussion regarding clarity, uniqueness, and public perception of the name, the Committee recommended the formal name “The Port Side Community Park”.

The Board discussed the importance of establishing a name to support future planning, signage, and community engagement; and suggested that park should be included in the name.

Carlyn Carey moved to name the property located at 187 Upper County Road, Dennis Port, The Port Side Community Park, as recommended by the Dennis Port–West Dennis Advancement Committee. Paul McCormick seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Terrio aye, Carey aye. VOTE: 5-0-0

2. Review and consider extending the Cape Playhouse Community Preservation Grant expiration date from December 31, 2025 to December 31, 2026

Paul McCormick moved to extend the Community Preservation Grant for the Cape Playhouse from December 31, 2025 to December 31, 2026. Jim Plath seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Carey aye, Terrio aye. VOTE: 5-0-0

3. Review and consider appointing Officers Madison McCarthy, Brienhard St. Fleur, and Derek Keenan as Police Officers with full police powers pursuant to MGL 41-97A, beginning January 25, 2026 for a term to expire on December 31, 2026

Paul McCormick moved to appoint Officers Madison McCarthy, Brienhard St. Fleur, and Derek Keenan as Police Officers with full police powers pursuant to MGL 41-97A, beginning January 25, 2026 for a term to expire on December 31, 2026. Paul McCormick further moved that these appointments are subject to successfully completing their respective probationary periods through January 24, 2026. Jim Plath seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Carey aye, Terrio aye. VOTE: 5-0-0

4. Review and consider appointing Officers Madison McCarthy, Brienhard St. Fleur, and Derek Keenan as Licensing Board Agents, beginning January 25, 2026 for a term to expire on March 31, 2027

Paul McCormick moved to appoint Officers Madison McCarthy, Brienhard St. Fleur, and Derek Keenan as Licensing Board Agents, beginning January 25, 2026 for a term to expire on March 31, 2027. Paul McCormick further moved that these appointments are subject to successfully completing their respective probationary periods through January 24, 2026. Jim Plath seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Terrio aye, Carey aye. VOTE: 5-0-0

5. Review and consider Tourism Committee's request for the Select Board's consent to reimburse their designated representative

Paul McCormick explained that this request from the Tourism Committee is to reimburse its designated representative for expenses incurred while attending a tourism related event held at the Pelham House. The reimbursement amount was \$404.10.

Paul McCormick moved to accept the reimbursement for the Tourism Committee designated representative. Paul McCormick seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Terrio aye, Carey aye. VOTE: 5-0-0

6. Review and consider endorsement of MassTrails Grant Program Application by Dennis Conservation Land Trust

Kat Garifoli appeared on behalf of the Dennis Conservation Land Trust to request the Select Board's endorsement of a MassTrails Grant program application and amendment of an existing conservation restriction. Ms. Garifoli described the Trust's acquisition of approximately 13.45 acres adjacent to the Plashes Conservation Area and outlined plans to design a trail network connecting Route 28 and Lower County Road. The project includes planning for accessible trails and a boardwalk through an Atlantic white cedar swamp.

Ms. Garifoli explained that the grant would fund planning, design, and permitting only, with no financial match required from the Town. She also noted that authorization from the Town was required due to the extension of trail planning onto Town-owned land and the existence of a conservation restriction held by the Town.

The Board expressed strong support for the project.

Jim Plath moved to authorize Chair Chris Lambton to sign any and all documents necessary for this grant program. Paul McCormick seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Terrio aye, Carey aye. VOTE: 5-0-0

Chris Lambton executed the MassTrails Grant Program Application and Conservation Restriction documents.

V. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator Elizabeth Sullivan provided an update on recent storm response efforts. She reported that Public Works had completed plowing operations, with major roads cleared and municipal facilities addressed. She advised the Board of a regional salt shortage and noted that neighborhood treatment would be limited in anticipation of a potential additional storm this upcoming weekend. She thanked Public Works, Public Safety, and Town staff for their professionalism and extended hours during hazardous conditions.

Town Administrator Elizabeth Sullivan also reported that the FY27 operating budget had been formally transmitted to the Finance Committee. She noted upcoming Finance Committee meetings and encouraged the public to review materials available on the Town's Budget Central webpage.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

The Select Board reviewed and accepted the warrant and contract execution summaries as presented.

VII. MINUTES

- 1. Paul McCormick moved approval of the January 6, 2026 minutes as presented. Jim Plath seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Terrio aye, Carey aye. VOTE: 5-0-0**
- 2. Jim Plath moved approval of the January 14, 2026 minutes as presented. John Terrio seconded the motion. Lambton aye, Plath aye, Terrio aye. VOTE: 3-2-0 (Paul McCormick and Carlyn Carey abstained)**

VIII. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Paul McCormick moved to adjourn to executive session at 5:26pm and to not return. Jim Plath seconded the motion. McCormick aye, Lambton aye, Plath aye, Terrio aye, Carey aye. VOTE: 5-0-0

- 1. PURSUANT TO M.G.L. C. 30A, SEC. 21(A) REASON #3:** To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares - *Town of Dennis, by and through its Planning Board v. Northern Nominee Trust, et al., Barnstable Superior Court, CA No 2472CV00370*