

Town of Bowdoin
Planning Board Minutes
September 8, 2026

Members Present:

Michaeline Mulvey, Chair
Tom Giggey

M. 13 October 2026

Helen Watts, Vice-chair
Lauren Leclerc



Absent:

Gwen Thomas, Dennis Douglass, Code Enforcement Officer

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm. The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of August 25, 2026. Giggey moved to accept the meeting minutes as written. Leclerc seconded the motion. Three votes for approval (Watts recused/in public). The meeting minutes were signed.

Members of the Public Present:

Sheila Wenger, Roy Wenger, Michael Roux, Lori Brackett, Carmen Williams, Tim Williams, Marc Bernier, Jane Boyle, Brad Totten, Wayne C. Hart, Tina Hart, Helen Watts (recused)

New Business:

None

Old Business:

Sheila & Roy Wenger, 17 Liberty Lane, Map 8, Lot 28-01

The Wengers are still waiting for a response from the Maine Department of Education about if the homeschool location would be considered a school. The Wengers talked to Heather Jackson of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. If the homeschool location is used less than 5 days, they don't need to get approval as a summer camp. No lodging license is required as long as under 4 campsites are utilized. The Town approval would be conditional upon approval by the state, if state approval is required.

Comment from the Public: The June 23, 2026 minutes included a note that the abutters would be contacted for sign-off on the access being used for the homeschool and the overnight campsites. This did not happen.

Planning Board Response: The Wengers have a deeded right-of-way (ROW) to their lot. The road was constructed and is maintained by the Wengers. The road is 20 feet wide and it was surfaced with reclaim. The Wengers believe that everyone that had a division off the big lot has access over the ROW to the back lots. No condition was put on Liberty Lane when it was approved limiting it to just residential use.

Question from the Public: What is being done with the petitions from the abutters to deny the Site Plan Review application?

Planning Board Response: The Board has the petitions and has reviewed them. The Site Plan Review process takes into account whether the application meets the ordinance

requirements. The petition is moot unless something is brought up that show the Applicants don't meet the performance standards. Giggey read the petition from abutters requesting that the application be denied.

Comments from the Public: Additional documentation on decreases in property value was not allowed to be submitted at the last meeting. And it was not clear on how the public hearing could be extended. There was no guidance for continuance of the public hearing so public did not ask. At the site visit public was not allowed to comment, but the Wengers were allowed to show the site.

Planning Board Response: The Board did not have valid documentation of a likely decrease in property values. The Planning Board was seeking documentation of land values. An external obsolescence article was submitted by an abutter. The external obsolescence documentation was reviewed and was not specific to campsites and this specific Project.

Question from the Public: What can be done if the Project is approved.

Planning Board Response: If we approve the Site Plan Review, you would be able to go to the Board of Appeals. The Selectmen appoint a Board of Appeals.

Site Plan Review Section 7: Performance Standards

1. Preserve and Enhance the Landscape: Giggey moved that the Board make requirements regarding the parking area including: that there will be a 6-foot tall continuous, stockade fence paralleling the abutters' driveway within the right-of-way of the road and extending along the property boundary of the existing cleared area where cars are to be parked and vegetation is to be planted including a double-row of coniferous trees such as balsam fir or spruce sufficient to provide a buffer to the fence. The fence and the buffer plantings shall be set back from the property boundary such that the Applicants can maintain them wholly on their property. Leclerc seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.
2. Relationship of the Proposed Buildings to the Environment: Leclerc moved any proposed yurt/cabin will not be visible from abutting properties. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
3. Vehicular Access: Leclerc moved that Liberty Lane was approved as a Town road prior to this application to provide safe access to the property. Should dust become an issue on the road, water treatment shall be used. The Board suggests a speed limit sign or slow signs to control vehicle speed. The Board also suggests that as the Town-approved driveway surface degrades, the surface should be maintained to the approved Town road standard. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
4. Parking and Circulation: Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as the width of the road is sufficient as it is a Town-approved way, a parking area has been proposed that connects to the driveway (to be fenced) and the walkway/path to the homeschool/yurt/cabin are graveled and children will be supervised while onsite. Motorized access on the trail system will be controlled by the Applicants. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
5. Surface Water Drainage: Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as the parking is distant from onsite wetlands and waterbodies. The slope of the parking area shall be angled such that water does not flow onto abutting properties. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
6. Existing Utilities: Giggey moved this Site Plan Review application meets this

standard as there are no public utilities to impact. Leclerc seconded. Unanimous approval.

7. Advertising Features: Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as there will be no permanent sign but temporary signs may be used to direct traffic to the parking area. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
8. Special Features of the Development: Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard because a double-row of coniferous trees such as balsam fir or spruce sufficient to provide a buffer shall be planted and maintained, extending from the fenceline to the corner of the property and extending past the open area to the downslope wetland to buffer the gravel trail. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
9. Exterior Lighting: Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as any lighting to be installed shall be motion-sensor and downward facing. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
10. Emergency Vehicle Access: Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as Liberty Lane was approved by the Town and provides and maintains convenient and safe emergency vehicle access to the site. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
11. Municipal Services: Giggey moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as there will be no impact on municipal services. Leclerc seconded. Unanimous approval.
12. Will not result in undue water pollution: Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as a licensed site evaluator has approved the composting toilet/outhouses, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection is being consulted on the stream crossing, and the parking lot will be sloped away from and will not drain onto abutting properties. Giggey seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.
13. Will not result in undue air pollution: Giggey moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as dust on the driveway access road will be controlled with water and occasional outdoor fires would not be considered pollution. Leclerc seconded. Unanimous approval.
14. Has sufficient water available for the reasonably foreseeable needs of the development. Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application complies with this standard as bottled water will be used onsite. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
15. Will not cause an unreasonable burden on an existing water supply, if one is to be utilized. Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application complies with this standard as bottled water will be used onsite. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
16. Will not cause unreasonable soil erosion or reduction in the capacity of the land to hold water so that a dangerous or unhealthy condition may result. Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application complies with this standard as the Applicants will use Best Management Practices (BMPs) as described in the Maine Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual for any construction on site. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.
17. Will provide for adequate sewage waste disposal. Giggey moved this Site Plan Review application complies with this standard as the Applicants have provided documentation of adequate sewage waste disposal by a Licensed Site Evaluator. Leclerc seconded. Unanimous approval.
18. Will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, open space, aesthetics, historic sites or rare and irreplaceable natural areas. Leclerc

moved this Site Plan Review application has required a vegetated buffer to screen the abutting property and will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.

19. Applicant has adequate financial and technical capacity to meet above standards. Leclerc moved this Site Plan Review application meets this standard as the Applicant is self-financed. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.

Section 8. General Provisions

- A. None waived.
- B. Not deemed necessary.
- C. Not deemed necessary.

Conditions of Approval:

- 1. The fence shall be installed prior to cars associated with the Project being parked onsite.
- 2. Plantings shall be installed within the first year of business operation.
- 3. Approval is for 3 or fewer sites for overnight rentals (campsites).
- 4. Homeschooling education is limited to 3 days per week and 20 students per session.
- 5. Approval for this Project is limited to 20 vehicles at maximum in the parking area based on the Road Commissioner's assessment.
- 6. Any campsites shall have a steel fire ring and campsites shall comply with Maine Open Burn Permit System.
- 7. This Site Plan Review approval is contingent upon a response from the Maine Department of Education regarding whether the Project requires licensing by the states and any additional restrictions.

Section 9.

Leclerc moves that trust account fee be waived. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.

Overall Motion.

Leclerc moved that the Wenger's Site Plan Review application for a homeschool enrichment program and no more than 3 overnight campsites (Project) be approved with the additional conditions of approval. Giggey seconded. Unanimous approval.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Leclerc, Secretary

Cc: Selectmen, Code Enforcement Officer, Fire Chief, Webmaster, Planning Board files