

## Sugar Hill Planning Board

April 1, 2026

**Members:** Secretary Amy Venezia, Patty Robertson, Rusty Talbot (Selectboard Rep), Arthur Chase, Chairman Rob Hayward, Mike Valentine, Kyle Kinsey (alternate)

**Absent:** Margo Connors (Alternate), Vice Chairman Steve Monsein, Jim Keefe

**Guests:** Ray Dionne, Beth Horan, Andy Smith, Mike Clarflin, Janice Kranz, Richard Hunt, Claudia Hunt, Evan Carmean, Haley Droppert, Rebecca Burbank, Allan Clark, Maureen Houx, Clark Houx, Gerry Strathann

Chairman Rob Hayward called the meeting to order at 5:35PM on Wednesday, April 1, 2026. On a motion made by Arthur Chase, seconded by Rusty Talbot the minutes of the March 4, 2026 meeting were approved. **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

On a motion made by Rusty Talbot, seconded by Arthur Chase the minutes of the March 5, 2026 joint meeting were approved. **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

### **Split Rock Partners, LLC**

#### **Tax Map #226 Lot 16**

#### **4 lot Subdivision**

#### **Final Hearing Continuation**

Chairman Hayward stated Red McCarthy and Doug Glover have not reviewed the road work yet and no further information had been received from them at this time. The Board received an email from Dr. Ken McCarthy who could not be in attendance tonight. Chairman Hayward read the letter aloud for Board members and attendance, see attached. The board continued discussion about the subdivision with proposed covenants including restrictions on house size, drainage infrastructure requirements, and shared maintenance agreements for driveways and drainage systems. Concerns about development variables, including house size and clearing requirements were raised and discussed. Fire Chief Allan Clark explained what would be needed to utilize an existing pond on Hadley Road which includes obtaining an easement and confirming the pond's depth and safety. The chief detailed technical requirements including using an 8-inch pipe at water level and the need for a 12-foot lift, noting that only a portion can be used due to usage restrictions on the top 3 feet and bottom 2 feet. The fire chief agreed to approach property owners about the easement, and discussed how this dry hydrant would serve multiple roads including Hadley Road, Dyke Road, Jericho Road, and Trumpet Round Road. If this pond was not able to be utilized other possible alternatives were mentioned, including the pond at the bottom of Dyke Road.

Chairman Hayward emphasized the importance of following state law and zoning ordinances. The group acknowledged that further discussions are needed on drainage and development impacts, with ongoing work involving Red and Doug regarding drainage requirements. Concerns were raised about drainage analysis using 2-year versus 50-year storm volumes, wetlands impacts, and the need for engineering modifications to address water flow issues. It was stated that Phil from Headwaters Consulting explained at the previous meeting that while town regulations require 50-year stormwater volumes for drainage structure sizing, they do not specify a storm duration requirement. Clarification on what the requirement is in the current subdivision regulations was mentioned and the differences between volume and velocity analysis.

The group expressed concerns about increased runoff and the lack of proposed improvements to handle more water. Chairman Hayward explained that according to the town attorney and state requirements, evidence from qualified and licensed professionals is needed to determine wetlands impact. The project engaged Headwaters engineering firm and wetland scientist Greg Howard from the Conway area to conduct the wetlands analysis, which found only three stream

wetlands that are not being infringed upon by the design. He clarified that the state only requires wetlands permits when there is actual wetland infringement, and the current engineering study indicates no such infringement. It was noted that Red and Doug were looking at redirecting water away from one property and toward Jericho Road. The details of the proposed culvert replacement and ditch modifications are pending Red's measurements and engineering work.

Chairman Hayward asked Patty to read the conditions noted in the last meeting that Split Rock had proposed. Question about who would be responsible for overseeing any changes to the lots from what is proposed was asked and answered that it would be up to the Selectboard when the owner applied for building or any permits to make sure that any conditions and deed restrictions are followed. Patty asked why only lot#1 was noted as having no further subdivision. It was explained that the reason for this is because lot#1 is the only lot that is big enough for subdivision based on regulations. The other 3 lots are not large enough to be subdivided.

The board reviewed proposed covenants drafted by Vice Chairman Steve Monsein and handed out at the previous meeting. They agreed to table further discussion on this proposal until the May meeting.

Discussion on limiting the cutting of trees was had. There is no regulation in the town on this. The concern being that additional clearing beyond the ¼ acre proposed will impact the water runoff and drainage. Haley Droppert asked about the engineering report and it was stated that it is available when the town office is open in the map room. Concerns about there being more wetlands on this property than what is identified and the need for wetlands permit was questioned. A brief discussion on how wetlands are determined and impacted ensued. According to the plans that are being presented there is no impact on the wetlands on this property and according to DES regulations a wetlands permit is not needed. The proposed driveways do not impact any wetlands and if any change was proposed to these plans and impacted wetlands DES would have to be involved and issue a permit. A discussion on the proposed driveways followed. Chairman Hayward stated that it could be required that the shared driveway could be bonded or built as part of a condition placed on the subdivision.

With no further discussion, the hearing was continued until the May meeting on 6<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Old Business/New Business**

Rusty Talbot conducted the swearing in of Patty Robertson and Arthur Chase for 3 year terms.

With no more business, on a motion made by Patty Robertson, seconded by Arthur Chase the meeting was adjourned at 7:48pm.

Submitted by:

Amy Venezia

Secretary to the Planning Board

Letter Addressed to Sugar Hill Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Fire Chief Allan Clark, Road Agent Douglas Glover, Building Officer Doug Amsbary, Police Chief Michael Ho Sing Loy, Vice-Chair Steve Monsein, Selectmen's Representative Rusty Talbot, and Margo Connors, Alternate

Dear Board Members and Town Officials,

Thank you for your time and attention to the proposed Split Rock sub-division. I am not able to be at the March 4 planning meeting, but wanted to make sure to share my sentiment with you as I have concerns about this development and the impact it will have on the area.

In response to the final hearing of the Split Rock subdivision on March 4, 2026, I am writing to request formal clarification regarding the following items and to respectfully ask you not to approve until all concerns are addressed.

1. If the new owners are to be responsible for road and drainage installations, please provide the written confirmation that a restrictive deed or covenant will be placed on each lot per item 14 on the checklist. This should state that the owner is restricted to a 2,900 sf build (including garage) and is responsible for building and maintaining the drainage plan per the Headwaters Consulting drainage analysis submitted by Split Rock partners. Will bylaws be developed for the subdivision prior to the sale of the property to determine road/drainage maintenance responsibilities and costs? These should be outlined in the covenants.

2. Please clarify the developer's intentions regarding the installation of roads and drainage per the submitted plan. Specifically, will the developer be completing these installations, or will this responsibility be passed on to the new owners and/or the town of Sugar Hill?

3. Once question 2 is clarified, has item 15 from the checklist been added to the Final application?

15. Unless dedicated to and accepted by the Town already, the plat shall bear the following statement for any new roads: "The roads in this subdivision shall be classified as private. The Town of Sugar Hill will not be under any obligation to maintain or repair said roads. It is further understood that the Town of Sugar Hill will not be obligated to provide any services to the property owners in the subdivision which require the use of said private road or roads unless the Town vehicle providing the service is able to pass safely over said private road. The private roads will remain the sole responsibility of the property owners in the subdivision during construction and during the life of said private roads. The property owners in the subdivision shall be held responsible for any damages in the form of silting, erosion, slides, or pollution from said private roads to abutters' property or water sources."

4. Please request that the Headwaters Consulting drainage analysis submitted by Split Rock partners be updated with the 50-year storm volumes in section C. Post-Development Analysis – Volumes per Section 4.4 (9) of the Town of Sugar Hill Subdivision Regulations. It also requires that storm water volumes shall not be increased off the property. The 2-year storm volume is not adequate to meet this requirement. Also, no additional drainage work on flows onto other landowners has been proposed, as their plan uses 9 culverts to cross streams and divert water.

5. Please confirm that the requirements for sufficient fire suppression, as specified by the Fire Chief, will be addressed. Has the chief signed off?

6. Please provide written documentation from the wetland specialist who determined that a permit is now not required, including a detailed explanation as to why a wetlands permit is unnecessary for this project. Prior research and the requirement by the Conservation Committee determined that a Wet Lands Permit by NHDES was required.

7. When was the wetlands survey completed? Were any vernal pools identified on the site?

8. Have you taken into consideration the 61D soil mapping?

The 61D soil mapping unit in New Hampshire refers to the Tunbridge-Lyman-Rock outcrop complex, characterized by 15 to 25 percent slopes. Found in areas such as Grafton County, this complex consists of well-drained and somewhat

excessively drained soils, often found on hillsides, that are shallow to bedrock, making them challenging for development. 20 inches (Lyman) and 20 to 36 inches (Tunbridge).

9. How do septic systems respond to soil type 61D with shallow bedrock? Is there a concern that effluent from leaching fields will reach surface waters as it leaches onto the bedrock? Have you taken into consideration the downstream wells and the Salmon Hole Brook?

10. Will the driveway entrances comply with all the requirements of the Town of Sugar Hill driveway regulations, specifically item 7. Driveway construction standards?

11. It was mentioned that many regulations will be dealt with at the building permit stage. Has this been reviewed with the Selectmen and the Building Officer?

Thank you for your consideration and leadership in addressing these matters. Based on this process, I do not have confidence that the developer's current approach fully reflects the best interests of Sugar Hill residents. I respectfully ask that the items above are addressed to support Sugar Hill's long-term viability for current and future generations.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kenneth McCarthy

203 Dyke Rd.

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