



# TOWN OF WARNER

## Housing Committee

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5 Work Session Minutes, June 24, 2026 (DRAFT)

6 CALL THIS WORK SESSION TO ORDER at 5:01 pm

7 *Note: The Housing Committee held a Work Session in place of its regular meeting since a quorum was*  
8 *not present.*

9 **PRESENT** Committee Members: Bob Holmes, Laura Hallahan, Ian Rogers,  
10 Central NH Regional Planning Commission Representative Matt Monahan,  
11 UNH Cooperative Extension Representative John Christ  
12

13 **ABSENT** Ellie Brown, Dana Myskowski, Ruth Roudiez, Connor Sperrn

### 14 NOTES

15 Because a quorum was not present, the group opted to hold a Work Session and discuss the  
16 draft Zoning documents on the agenda. Ian updated the group and confirmed that the  
17 Housing Needs Assessment, Regulatory Audit, and Survey Results have been sent to the  
18 Planning Board, Select Board, and Webmaster Dan Watts for posting, though neither Board  
19 has formally responded yet and the documents have not yet been posted.  
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21 There was some talk of how to handle a meeting with the Select Board. Bob expressed his  
22 desire not to represent the Committee to the Select Board because he's been in conversation  
23 about them regarding an issue with his property, so Ian and Laura agreed to attend a Select  
24 Board meeting if needed. Matt Monahan also volunteered to join a meeting if needed, which  
25 John Christ supported.  
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### 27 Draft Revisions to Multifamily Ordinance

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29 Matt began by introducing new NH State legislation to remove the changes to Multifamily  
30 Housing in Commercial areas (HB-1010), along with legislation to change multifamily  
31 parking rules (HB-1588). He recommended that with the State rules still in flux, it may be  
32 better to wait to see how this plays out.  
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34 Matt summarized the draft revisions to Warner's Multifamily Zoning Ordinance, including  
35 definitions for "infrastructure" and "multifamily."  
36

37 Bob was in favor of leaving the number of multifamily units at 4 instead of 5, and there was  
38 discussion of advantages and disadvantages of this. Some in town may see 5 units as a large  
39 change, though it could also be an easy way to create new affordable housing as a low-  
40 hanging fruit with more reasonable building sizes.  
41

42 Matt talked about Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) as a tool the Planning Board can use to  
43 move development along more efficiently. CUPs marry the Planning and Zoning processes  
44 by eliminating the need to go to both boards. They also create set standards that can be  
45 clearly spelled out. Since developers will be doing Site Plan Reviews with the Planning Board  
46 anyway, they can also get a CUP from the Planning Board at the same time.

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A discussion of possible obstacles to getting the CUP process accepted in town followed, including that people in town simply aren't familiar with what CUPs are and may be confused. There was also talk of whether CUPs or Special Exceptions are more conducive to multifamily being accepted.

Matt then explained the principle of "buildable acres" in the draft. If enacted, this would determine the number of units allowed per buildable acre, rather than per lot. This change, as proposed, would not affect the OC-1 or OR districts, and the goal is to create a more quantifiable metric for density in terms of buildable acres.

Matt explained the Britton vs. Town of Chester NH Supreme Court case, which called out the town of Chester for having exclusionary zoning. If towns are too restrictive with their ordinances, they could be open to claims of exclusionary zoning as well. Some towns have zoning of 5 or 10 acres per lot, and Matt predicted that there would be more lawsuits. John also pitched the idea of discussing the concept of buildable acres with the Planning Board.

Matt explained that, in general, rules that apply to Low, Medium, and High density should also apply to a Low, Medium, and High number of multifamily units, rather than just the number of buildings. This would also match the Master Plan. For example, Ian asked whether, under this draft ordinance, a lot in the R-2 district with 2 buildable acres would have 5 units per buildable acre, for a total of 10 units on the lot, which Matt confirmed.

Bob brought up the idea of exceptions for Workforce Housing, which has different rules. Adding a cross-reference to this draft document could help avoid confusion.

The group also discussed the Draft Use Table, with some uses having a CUP and some having a Special Exceptions (SE).

Ian brought up the survey results, noting that a majority of people were interested in multifamily buildings that resembled an old farmhouse, and how to do this. Matt explained that this could be accomplished with either a Carrot (offering incentives to builders) or the Stick (requiring it by regulations). The group discussed advantages and disadvantages, along with the idea that implementing homestead-type aesthetics could be beyond the scope of this current project.

Ian also brought up retail in commercial zones. Matt suggested that retail could be a useful Carrot for building housing, since towns like the commercial and builders like the housing in case the retail stores in the building go out of business. However, while this is of course accepted in the downtown area, it could be a dealbreaker in the Intervale or Exit 7.

Townhouses were identified in the survey as well, and would require a specific definition. There was discussion about condominiums and how they relate to townhouses, with some being interested in condominiums as a form of ownership.

**Draft Revisions Per Structures Per Lot Draft Ordinance**

The group also discussed the Structures per lot Draft Ordinance. Matt explained the purpose of the change, which is mostly to increase clarity. In cases where builders were looking to

96 develop multifamily or other units, the “only one residential structure per lot” language  
97 could create problems. John also pointed out that this could also different kinds of structures,  
98 including multiple single-family houses per lot. Bob brought up that many people in town  
99 only want one single-family structure per lot. Matt mentioned that townhouses could also be  
100 added to this draft.

101

102 There was also talk of Warner working in tandem with changes in State law to do what is  
103 allowed. If the Town wants to control its own destiny, we should work within the parameters  
104 that the State gives us.

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### 106 **Draft Revisions to Lot Sizes Ordinance**

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108 The group also very briefly discussed the Lot Size Draft Ordinance. Matt explained that the  
109 conversation starts by observing that lot size drives density. While many claim that larger  
110 lots are needed for water and septic, the head of DES has acknowledged to Matt and Mike  
111 Tardiff that one acre is fine for water and sewer. Lot sizes and density should be driven by  
112 community character, rather than septic size. Bob also repeated that we’ve heard from Water  
113 Commissioner Ray Martin that the Town water supply has plenty of capacity.

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115 Matt also noted that in his draft revisions, he tried to stay as close to what Warner currently  
116 has as possible.

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### 118 **Community Engagement Plans**

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120 Very quickly, John explained the brief community engagement notes he sent to the group.  
121 Laura asked John what he thought the group should do next, and John noted that the group  
122 should first look at its capacity to do engagement work, why they want to do engagement  
123 work, what they want to learn, and who they want to hear from.

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125 Ian pitched the idea of doing a second, smaller Housing Forum and inviting members of the  
126 community, and, failing this, to invite community members to a Housing Committee  
127 meeting to discuss the ideas more generally, especially when the ideas are in clearer shape.

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129 John also suggested that showing people what certain kinds of housing looks like could be  
130 helpful if it already exists in the community, perhaps with a walking tour. Or maybe a bus  
131 tour? Laura mentioned the Braeside Apartments, and Matt agreed that this can be helpful for  
132 helping people understand housing.

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134 There was also some talk about Warner’s very first Zoning Ordinance, which was approved  
135 in 1969. Ian will find this online on the UNH repository, and [it is available here](#).

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137 Finally, the group set future meeting dates of July 29th and August 26th.

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139 Ian adjourned the Work session at 6:37pm.