

Megan Portnoy, Elected Member
Canterbury Planning Board
133 Baptist Rd
Canterbury, NH 03224
April 21, 2024

Town of Canterbury, Town Administrator, and Chair of the Board of Selectmen
1 Old Tilton Rd
Canterbury, NH 03224

Dear Town of Canterbury, Town Administrator, and Chair of the Board of Selectmen,

As an elected member of the Canterbury Planning Board, it is with a sense of duty and responsibility that I bring to your attention a matter of concern regarding the improper handling of public meeting minutes.

Draft minutes for the Board's public meeting on April 9, 2024 were disseminated to the Board for review on April 14, 2024. Upon cursory review, I noticed inaccuracies according to my recollection of events, including things I said or did not say. I then noticed that the document was titled "20230309 Draft (gm edit 2)." GM are the initials for Planning Board Chair, Greg Meeh. While at town office on April 18, 2024, I asked the Planning Board Secretary for information about both the Board's procedures and NH Right to Know requirements for handling of minutes. I also requested that both the original draft minutes and the Chair's first round of edits be sent to my email. These were sent to me without delay and are titled "20240409 Draft" and "20240409 (gm edit 1plus LS added last section)," respectively.

After completing a more thorough review of "20230309 Draft (gm edit 2)," I detailed a list of 19 corrections for accuracy. On April 19, 2024, I emailed the board to request time on the next agenda to discuss these corrections, and that request was granted. This is to discuss corrections to "20230309 Draft (gm edit 2)" only, as this is the only document disseminated to the entire Board. I then used the "Compare Documents" feature in Microsoft Word to differentiate "20240409 Draft" and "20240409 (gm edit 1plus LS added last section)" to reveal the edits. I discovered inaccurately recorded items and edits that raise questions about transparency and compliance. These include changing of names, factual inaccuracies, omissions, inaccurate reflections of Board discussions and Member statements, changing of context to support a point of view, inclusion of information that was not discussed in the meeting, and failure to accurately reflect highlighted Board action items. The most concerning edits are on a matter in which the Chair is recused.

As stewards of our community's planning process and transparent and fair governance, it is imperative that elected and appointed Board Members uphold the principles of openness and accountability. Supported by my oath of office and commitment to maintain the integrity of the Board and the trust of the Canterbury community, I feel compelled to report these findings.

Sincerely,
Megan Portnoy
megan4canterbury@gmail.com