



**NEW HAMPSHIRE PLANNERS ASSOCIATION
PO Box 3458
CONCORD, NH 03302**

February 2, 2016

The Honorable James Belanger, Chair
House Municipal and County Government Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 301
Concord, NH 03301

Subject: HB 1202, relative to planning board applications

Dear Representative Belanger:

The New Hampshire Planners Association, representing close to 200 land use planning professionals in our state working at all levels of government and in the private sector, takes this opportunity to express support for HB 1202. This bill would increase the deadline for submitting applications to the planning board from 15 to 21 days.

Currently, the statute reads "The applicant shall file the ... at least 15 days prior to the meeting at which the application will be accepted." Many communities currently require applications be filed 21 days prior to the meeting at which it will be first considered. However, concern has been raised that while the statute says "at least," it does not necessarily grant the municipality the right to mandate an earlier deadline but instead gives the applicant up to 15 days to submit.

For many communities this poses a logistical hurdle with providing timely notice as required by RSA 676:4,I(d)(1). While notice is to be published 10 days in advance of the hearing, newspaper submission deadlines are often concurrent with a 15 day application submission deadline. It is in both the municipality's and applicant's best interests to allow a few days between these deadlines. For this reason, the NH Planners Association supports increasing the deadline from 15 to 21 days prior to the meeting.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sara H. Carbonneau, Legislative Liaison
NH Planners Association

NHPA MISSION STATEMENT: THE NEW HAMPSHIRE PLANNERS ASSOCIATION PROMOTES, ASSISTS, AND SUPPORTS THE PROFESSIONAL PLANNER IN THE GOAL OF ACHIEVING PLANNING EXCELLENCE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE TODAY AND TOMORROW IN NEW HAMPSHIRE'S COMMUNITIES.