

Town of Gorham

Planning Board Minutes

January 15, 2020

Members Present: Paul Robitaille (Chairman), Michael Waddell (Ex-Officio), Abby Evankow, Jeff Schall (Alt), Dan Buteau, Brian Ruel and Wayne Flynn

Members Excused: Barney Valliere

Members Absent: Earl McGillicuddy

Members of the Public: Tara Bamford, Peter Gagnon, Deb Linzmaier, Burke York and Mary Davis

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 6:32 by Chairman Robitaille

Appointment of Alternates: Chairman Robitaille appointed Jeff Schall as a full voting member to replace Barney Valliere

Accept & Approve Minutes of December 12, 2019 – On a motion from Wayne Flynn with a second from Dan Buteau, the board voted to accept the minutes as presented. Jeff Schall abstained.

Public Hearing – Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Chairman Robitaille opened the public hearing at 6:34 pm. Tara gave a brief overview of the proposed amendment which was discussed at the board's November meeting. The change is recommended by the attorneys at NHMA to clarify the type of ordinance the Town has. This came from a webinar that Tara, Paul, Town Manager Denise Valle and Secretary Michelle Lutz participated in.

Mike felt this was an attempt at regulating Airbnb's and wanted it noted that he was against that at this time and recommended giving the board a year to deal with the issue. Tara questioned how this amendment would change anything. It only explains how the current ordinance works. The Secretary explained that the amendment was recommended by the NHMA attorneys so that the general public would have a better understanding of how the ordinance functions and would alleviate the ability for someone to challenge a ruling because it was not clear in the ordinance how it functions. Jeff felt that if people perceived the ordinance as a restrictive ordinance they may not purchase property because of it. Paul stated that this amendment is only a housekeeping item as the ordinance has always been a restrictive ordinance and this would not change that. Wayne agreed with Paul that this makes it clearer to people as to what the rules are and if something is not listed then they cannot do it. Chairman Robitaille opened the hearing to the public. Peter Gagnon, who is also an attorney, stated that being transparent and clear is better and that not clarifying the ordinance is of equal harm. Wayne made a motion to place the amendment on the Town Warrant which received a second from Abby and chairman Robitaille called for a roll call vote

Wayne – Yes Dan – Yes Paul – Yes Abby – Yes Brian – Yes Mike – Yes Jeff – Yes

Chairman Robitaille closed the hearing at 6:57.

Public Hearing on the 2020 Master Plan

Chairman Robitaille opened the public hearing at 6:58. Tara explained that the board had been in the process of updating the Master Plan for the past 2 years. As part of the process there was a community survey, and an economic round table. Some items that came up during the process was to form an Economic Action Team and a Trails Committee. Mike questioned the classification for Moose Brook as a 4th order stream. Tara explained that DES classifies it as 4th order from Perkins Brook down. Mike made a motion to accept the general work on the master plan subject to non-substantive changes pending info from DES on stream classification. The motion received a second from Wayne and Chairman Robitaille called for a roll call vote: Wayne – Yes Dan – Yes Paul – Yes Abby – Yes Brian – Yes Mike – Yes Jeff – Yes

Case #01-2020 – Minor Lot Line Adjustment – Nadeau / White

Burke York presented plans to the board for properties on Cascade Hill owned by Maurice & Janet Nadeau and Emelda White. The survey shows that the property line goes through the Nadeau's garage. Mrs. White has agreed to move the lot line just enough to clear the eaves on the garage which involved 134 sq ft. The adjustment will not meet the zoning requirements but it will make the issue better and more conforming. The abutter, Deb Linzmaier, had concerns regarding a neighbor pulling the property marker pins and questioned Burke as to how he determined the accurate lines which Burke explained at length. Wayne made a motion to grant the adjustment which received a second from Brian. Chairman Robitaille called for a roll call vote: Wayne – Yes Dan – Yes Paul – Yes Abby – Yes Brian – Yes Mike – Yes Jeff – Yes

Code Enforcement:

- 1) Sweet Berries Bakery is up and running. They do not have a hood yet so they cannot deep fry anything but they are open and running well
- 2) Peebles store is closing. However, it will not close its doors but will change to another ownership and remain open.

New Business –

- 1) Chairman Robitaille informed the board that he had received a letter of interest from Peter Gagnon who was interested in being an alternate member of the board. On a motion from Mike with a second from Wayne, the board voted to appoint Peter as an alternate member.
- 2) Abby questioned the addition of a snow dump on Main Street on property owned and used by the Mt Madison and Top Notch Inns as overflow parking during the summer. She questioned if it should have had a site plan review process completed. The secretary will mention it to CEO Scarinza.

Old Business – Verizon Wireless

The secretary informed the board that Verizon Wireless had met the conditions placed on its Site Plan Review to update the plans with the property owners. On a motion from Wayne with a second from Wayne, the board voted to release the conditions

Public Comment – Peter Gagnon stated that he felt AirBnb's could spur sales and/or property values. He felt that setting regulations could actually help potential investors.

Next Meeting – The Planning board scheduled its next meeting for February 19, 2020 at 6:30 for a work session with Tara Bamford to begin working on updating the Zoning Ordinance.

Adjournment: On a motion from Dan Buteau with a second from Wayne Flynn, the board voted to adjourn at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle M. Lutz

Approved March 26, 2020