

Town of Gorham  
Planning Board Minutes  
November 15, 2018

Present: Paul Robitaille, (chairman) Wayne Flynn, Dennis Arguin, Brian Ruel, Jeff Schall, Abby Evankow

Excused: Barney Valliere, Dan Bureau, Earl McGilicuddy, Mike Waddell

Members of the Public: Tom Cote

Paul opens meeting at 6:31

Appointments: Chairman Robitaille appointed Brian Ruel and Jeff Schall as voting members for tonight's meeting.

Approve and Accept Minutes of October 25, 2018 with correction: Old business, #1 Abby abstained from driveway permit.

Wayne makes motion to approve minutes as amended, Jeff seconds it. All members in favor.

Code enforcement update: John Scarinza not here - so pass over.

New Business

Tara Bamford is asking for Tuesday meeting in December. Majority available December 4th. 6:30. Jeff Schall is only available Dec. 18th. Have to decide where to go with rest of master plan.

North Country Council update: Paul appointed to NCC finance committee. Attended Technical Advisory Committee, reviewed 4 project plans for GAP meetings in spring. Two projects tied for first: rebuilding retaining wall by Libby' Pool tied with Shelburne rebuilding water ducts under flooded brooks.

#3 rebuilding of Rte 16 from Gorham town line to Cleveland Bridge, Berlin, including sidewalks

#4 rebuild Rte 110 state line to Jericho State Park, with eventual take over by city of Berlin

#5 Rebuild western end of Main St. Littleton

will vote on engineering plans in spring, go out to DOT, added to 10 year plan, no new roads until 2028/209

End of new business

No old business

Public Comment:

Tom Cote, Robitaille recuses self, Wayne Flynn takes gavel

Thank you for economic development brainstorming session, as individual who owns property, wants to develop property to benefit all. How do you put vacant buildings back to use in town - how help owners develop them?

Tom was shocked to find out sprinkler system requirements - he'd need to change the pipe size from building to sidewalk in order to have adequate pressure, \$15,000 - \$40,000. Tom asked other developers - they were not aware of new requirements. It's been the law since 2009. Others have not been held to same standard. Checked w/ Whitefield fire chief, White field is not requiring sprinkler system. In Gorham we can't charge same rates as down state, wages won't support high rents. Cote and Sappington met w/ Technical Review Committee. Hair Dresser encased in fireproof sheetrock + further protections. Checked w/ Concord Fire Marshall, checked w/ Gray Maine.

To complete this project, Cote needs: architectural plan, engineer plan, NH certified fire engineer, "from now on sprinkler law will be enforced" Cote is reaching out to legislators. Fire Marshall adopted international building code. Legislature created exception 60% commercial 40% residential. Cote has reconfigured lease so no longer a commercial bldg, now established use as residential w/ one unit. Fire code goes hand in hand with building code says can have two residential units + small commercial unit, can develop without sprinkler system, but Scarinza said no, this building needs sprinkler system. Tom thought as a residential building, he was within the law not needing a sprinkler system. Tom's question: Question: who makes decision about sprinkler requirement? Concord assessor? Planning Board? Scarinza?

John Scarinza recused himself. Then John sent Tom an email telling him he would now have to deal w/ Concord fire marshall's office for building code approval. Why does Whitefield, who does not have an inspector, not have to go to Concord fire marshall for approval, but the Whitefield planning board has that power. So who actually has authority in Gorham? state fire marshall or does town planning board have discretion? Raising this question, because If you intend for this town to be developed you need to have mixed use. Tom wants to turn his building into student housing for WMCC - furnished, students = attract youth, but as this process currently stands it is financially infeasible to make these changes, he would be better off tearing it down. Tom has been approached several times by WMCC if he has apartments available for students.

Cote has nest alarms communicate w/ his cell phone, he stays on top of his building no matter where he is.

Existing building converting from one efficiency apartment, and one office upstairs = this old office will become a new apartment, downstairs reception area will become 2nd apartment, back area will be = 3 room apartment. But needs to have sprinkler because over the limit. He first thought 3 apartments was the limit but now finds that 2 is the limit.....can get around it by sub-leasing. John told Tom that he couldn't sub-lease. Tom doesn't think John has that power. Other building, in Berlin, couldn't be turned into mixed use, so now turned over to bank and boarded up, rather than been renovated and used. has changed since Lavigne and Duncan.

Tom is asking Bill Hatch for legislative help. Bill will ask for a committee hearing. We need something more than single family for our downtowns. Tim Sappington will testify. .

Schall wanted to ask question. Flynn doesn't allow comment because the site plan for this project has already been approved with condition, so no good to re-hash. Flynn closes comment session of this meeting.

Wayne makes a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Dennis. All in Favor.

Meeting adjourned.

Approved as Amended 12/4/2018