



Town of Gorham
PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP NOTES
APRIL 11, 2011

A workshop meeting of the Gorham Planning Board was held on Monday, April 11, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Council Chambers, 75 South Street, Gorham, Maine.

The Clerk called the roll, noting that in attendance were Edward Zelmanow, Chairman, Thomas Fickett, George Fox, Christopher Hickey, Andrew McCullough and new Board member Corey Theriault. Also present were Town Planner Thomas Poirier and Planning Board Clerk Barbara Skinner.

REVIEW MARCH 7, 2011 WORKSHOP NOTES

There were no comments or corrections to the March 7, 2011 Workshop Notes.

1. Introduction of New Planning Board Member/ Discussion of Planning Board Processes

Mr. Zelmanow introduced new Board member Corey Theriault.

Mr. Poirier explained the processes followed by the Planning Board, describing ordinance amendment review/public hearings, site plan reviews, subdivisions, private ways, and special exception reviews. He commented that site walks are typically held by the Board for most projects, unless waived, with site walks for private ways typically being held by the Board's streets and ways subcommittee.

Mr. Poirier discussed the issue of prohibited or ex parte communications between a Board member and a member of the public wherein a member of the public contacts a Board member individually about a specific on-going application. He noted that the public's business needs to be held in public, so if a Board member receives any information or a request for information from anyone, he must advise the person that he cannot speak privately about an application and that the request will be forwarded to staff for distribution to all Board members at a public meeting.

Mr. Poirier also spoke about personal involvement of a Board member with a project, which needs to be disclosed to the whole Board. If a Board member were related to an applicant, then the Board member should recuse himself from participation and step down until the project is over. If there is a perceived conflict, it is best to step down and not review the project. If the involvement with an applicant is more casual, it should be made known to the Board for their discussion and decision as to whether the Board member involved should be allowed to participate. Mr. Zelmanow said the most important issue is that of financial gain or loss or bias, so if it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

Mr. Poirier commented about staff's packets and the direction that the Chairman will guide the meeting, noting that when recognized by the Chairman during a meeting, Board members have the option of asking questions of staff and the applicant's engineer.

Mr. Theriault told the Board that he is a chemical engineer by degree, with a license in civil engineering, and is doing environmental engineering now. His background is more into such items as utilities, water, wastewater, and septic.

Other Business. Mr. Poirier advised that the election of officers will be held at the start of the regular meeting.

Adjournment.

The workshop adjourned at 6:50 p.m. to proceed to the regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara C. Skinner, Clerk of the Board
_____, 2011