



Town of Gorham
PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP NOTES
JUNE 6, 2011

A workshop meeting of the Gorham Planning Board was held on Monday, June 6, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. in the Burleigh H. Loveitt Council Chambers, 75 South Street, Gorham, Maine.

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

REVIEW MAY 2, 2011 WORKSHOP NOTES

There were no comments or corrections to the May 2, 2011 Workshop Notes.

1. Proposed Amendments to the *Gorham Land Use and Development Code* relating to a definition for caretaker unit.

Mr. Poirier said that this item is on this workshop agenda to identify for the Board that at the May workshop the Board had added the words “security person” and also discussed whether “caretaker unit” should be limited to a single unit. He said that staff did not add that to either version scheduled for the public hearing later this evening, so if the Board wishes to recommend limiting a caretaker unit to a single unit, the Planning Board’s version of the language would need to be amended during the public hearing.

Mr. Hickey raised the issue of the distinction between a caretaker unit being defined as an accessory dwelling unit and an accessory apartment. Mr. Poirier explained that an accessory apartment is accessory to a single family residential dwelling unit only, so it cannot be for commercial uses. The caretaker unit is meant to allow dwelling units on lots smaller than those which normally would be allowed to have a dwelling unit, as long as they were accessory to the commercial use on the site.

Mr. Poirier explained to Mr. Fox that this proposed change would allow the accessory residential dwelling unit if the resident is employed by the business operation in the Urban Commercial, Roadside, and Narragansett Districts. Mr. Poirier said that currently in the Industrial District, residential units are permitted if resided in by the owner, a security guard or someone who works for the company.

Mr. Zelmanow referred to the question of limiting the definition to a single unit, noting that all references are singular anyway, and perhaps it could be a recommendation to the Council for consideration.

2. Overview of the Development Transfer Overlay District Standards.

Mr. Poirier gave a brief overview of the Development Transfer Overlay District, explaining that the Development Transfer Overlay rights allow a developer to purchase more “bonus” units in the areas where public sewer and water are available, identified on the zoning map where the Town wants those developments located, in exchange for a payment to the Town for those bonus units. The Town would then use those fees to buy open space, conservation lands, easements, farms, scenic corridors, and areas of natural resources that the Town believes should be preserved. This allows the Town to focus development in those areas where utilities are available to support those developments. Review under the DTO is somewhat different from a traditional subdivision review as it gives the Planning Board more input into the overall design of the subdivision.

Using the Wagner Farms Subdivision as the only DTO project approved to date as an example, Mr. Poirier said that the Board not only wanted to see the layout of the lots, but how the houses could fit on those lots,

the Board added two bus stops with benches as small pocket parks, multiple landscaping throughout the subdivision, boardwalks to a skating pond, and picnic tables.

Under the DTO requirements in the Code, the developer pays a fee per bonus lot, which is \$15,000 per bonus lot, divided out by the number of lots in the subdivision, and spread out over all the building permits. The subdivision must be designed to limit lot access on arterial and collector roads unless expressly permitted by the Planning Board. Subdivisions of 10 lots or more must set aside open space as part of their approval, unless a variance is requested of the Planning Board. That open space must be 10% of the gross parcel area, and 5% of that 10% must be usable space. For single and two family houses, the depth of the lot must be at 140% of the lot width, basically a lot longer and deeper to provide a larger back yard. Houses must be set between 15 and 25 feet off the property line, which is a build-to line, not a setback, putting the houses close to the front of the lot. There have to be sidewalks and there must be two street trees per 50 feet of street frontage.

Mr. Zelmanow noted that the DTO allows the Board to help craft more of a true neighborhood development, located where the infrastructure will support the increased residential density. Mr. Poirier commented that the lots in Wagner Farms have sold fairly steadily, even during the economic downturn. The proposed zoning map shows the areas in the Town where DTO developments are permitted as those are areas where sewer and water currently exist or can be reasonably extended to provide service for such developments.

These qualifications and standards are based on a publication called "The Great American Neighborhood," distributed by the Maine State Planning Office and GrowSmart Maine. Mr. Zelmanow asked that staff provide the Board with pdf copies of the publication.

Other Business. None.

Adjournment.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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