



Town of Gorham
PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP NOTES
June 22, 2009

A workshop meeting of the Gorham Planning Board was held on Monday, June 22, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Council Chambers, 75 South Street, Gorham, Maine.

In attendance were Chairperson Susan Robie, Douglas Boyce, Vice Chairman, Thomas Fickett, Thomas Hughes, Mark Stelmack, and Edward Zelmanow. Also present were Town Planner Deborah Fossum, Assistant Planner Thomas Poirier, and Planning Board Clerk Barbara Skinner. Absent was Board member Michael Parker.

1. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 1, 2009 WORKSHOP NOTES

There were no comments or corrections to the June 1, 2009 Workshop Notes.

2. Discussion of proposed amendments to the Land Use and Development Code pertaining to the new Sign Provisions adopted August 5, 2008.

The Board discussed certain “housekeeping” issues in the new sign ordinance as follows:

1. Amend CHAPTER II, SECTION III, D. PROHIBITED SIGNS, DISPLAYS AND RELATED MATERIALS by adding a new item “o) Off-Premises Signs” to read:

“o) Off-Premises Signs: All signs must be located on the same lot as the use or occupant that is the subject of the sign or where the goods or services are available except as specifically provided for in this section. Off-premises signs are allowed only for Exempt Signs in accordance with subsection C, Official business Directional Signs in accordance with subsection H, and Business Park Identification Signs in accordance with subsection I.”

This change is at the request of the Code Enforcement Officer; the Board concurred with the proposed change.

2. Information/Direction Signs

Amend CHAPTER I, SECTION V – DEFINITIONS by adding a definition of an “Information/Direction Sign” in proper alphabetical order to read;

“Sign, information/ direction	A freestanding or building sign that provides information or directions to users of a property about the location of entrances and exits, parking, traffic flow, hours of operation or other noncommercial messages.”
----------------------------------	---

The Board agreed that the words “An onsite” should be added to the above definition before the word “freestanding.”

Amend subsection E. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS in CHAPTER II SECTION III – SIGNS by adding an item “12) Information/Direction Signs” to read:

“12) Information/Direction Signs: An information/direction sign shall only provide information or directions that relate to the use of the property and may not include any advertising such as prices or product information, but may include the name and/or logo of the occupant or the project. The area of the name and/or logo may not exceed forty percent (40%) of the area of

the sign. The sign may not be illuminated. The sign must be located in relationship to the information provided.”

The Board concluded that the last sentence in the above proposed language needs to be clarified.

Changes to permit information/direction signs were also proposed in the four “environments” listed in the sign ordinance of Village Environment, Roadside Environment, Industrial/Business Park Environment, and Residential Environment under subsection G. PERMITTED NONRESIDENTIAL SIGNS of CHAPTER II, GENERAL STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE, SECTION III - SIGNS.

3. Event Signs

Amend subsection C. Exempt Signs to read:

“C. EXEMPT SIGNS

The provisions of this section shall not apply to the following types of non-illuminated signs: public safety and information, political, traffic control and directional that contain no advertising, no trespassing, real estate development or site signs during the period of construction, real estate sale and rental signs except as limited in this section, building markers, signs required by law or court order, gasoline price signs attached to or part of a pump for the dispensing of gasoline or other fuels having less than one square foot of sign area, signs displaying only the address of the property, and temporary signs in conjunction with a yard sale or community or other special event with a limited duration.”

This change is to allow the Code Enforcement Officer more flexibility in dealing with signs of this type. The Board concurred with the proposed change but recommended that sequential items introduced by a colon should be separated by semicolons.

4. Corner Lots

Suggested language to be added to each of the provisions for freestanding signs in the Village, Roadside, and Industrial/Business Park Environments:

“The Planning Board may allow a second sign for a corner lot that has only one vehicle access in accordance with the standards of subsection M.”

Subsection M would read as follows:

“The Planning Board may permit an additional freestanding sign for a property that fronts on two or more streets but that has vehicular access only from one street upon the written request of the property owner if the Planning Board finds that

- 1) The building faces or is primarily oriented to a street form which the parcel does not have vehicular access;
- 2) The additional sign is needed to provide appropriate visibility for the occupant(s) of the property or to safely direct vehicles to the access into the property;
- 3) The additional sign will be located so that there is only one sign of any type on each frontage;
- 4) The sign will be of an appropriate scale for the location of the project; and

- 5) If the project is located in the Village Centers or Urban Commercial Districts, the sign is compatible with the village character.

The applicant shall be responsible for demonstrating to the Planning Board's satisfaction that all of these conditions are met."

The Board concurred with the proposed language.

5. Project Signs

The issue of project signs can be addressed by adding these types of signs to the list of exempt signs, as follows:

Amend subsection C. Exempt Signs to read:


"C. EXEMPT SIGNS

"The provisions of this section shall not apply to the following types of non-illuminated signs: public safety and information, political, traffic control and directional that contain no advertising, no trespassing, real estate development or site signs during the period of construction, project identification signs with the name of a municipal or community building or facility or residential subdivision or development that is located at the entrance of the site, real estate sale and rental signs except as limited in this section, building markers, signs required by law or court order, gasoline price signs attached to or part of a pump for the dispensing of gasoline or other fuels having less than one square foot of sign area, signs displaying only the address of the property, and temporary signs in conjunction with a yard sale or community event."

The Board concurred that these housekeeping items are ready to be forwarded to the Town Council.

The workshop was concluded at 7:00 p.m. in order to proceed to the regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,


Barbara C. Skinner, Clerk of the Board
June 22, 2009