

MINUTES

TOWN OF GORHAM

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting of March 20, 2023 – 8:30 a.m.

Gorham Municipal Center, Conference Room A

Present: Councilor Virginia Wilder Cross - Committee Chair, and Councilors Ronald Shepard and Seven Siegel.

Also present: Town Manager, Ephrem Paraschak; Director of Community Development, Tom Poirier; Town Planner, Carol Eyerman; Assistant Town Planner, Damon Yakovleff; Town Engineer Charles Norton, and Executive Assistant, Jessica Hughes.

1. **Consideration of the minutes of the February 21, 2023 meeting.**

A motion was MADE by Councilor Siegel, SECONDED by Councilor Shepard, and VOTED to accept the minutes of the February 21, 2023 meeting. Unanimous vote.

2. **Current Business**

- A. Develop a long-term plan for pedestrian improvements consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan (referred by the Town Council on August 2, 2022).

Director of Community Development Tom Poirier shared that staff have been working on the map and area in red, and they are looking to simplify the language.

Town Planner Carol Eyerman said staff added in the pedestrian overlay district, and everything else that would be in an overlay to the zoning ordinance; she asked that the committee hone in on the purpose statement.

Mrs. Eyerman said regarding applicability, appeals would not be reviewed by the Board of Appeals.

Under the performance standards section, Mrs. Eyerman said that staff took good sections from everywhere that sidewalks were referenced and listed it in the proposed amendment.

Town Engineer Charles Norton said that sidewalks still have to conform to ADA standards or general engineering practices.

A brief discussion ensued between Mrs. Eyerman and Councilor Wilder Cross in which Mrs. Eyerman said the goal is to consolidate language into one reference document.

Regarding the language pertaining to "fee in lieu," Mrs. Eyerman said that this will apply unless a sidewalk is part of a publicly-funded project that includes sidewalks and additional provisions.

A discussion ensued regarding average costs per linear foot for various projects with closed drainage versus not closed drainage.

Mr. Poirier said staff could sit with Mr. Norton to provide estimated ball park project costs.

Councilor Siegel said that the language under section 4 on page 16 of the attachment A referencing suggested LUDC amendments for the new Pedestrian Overlay District worried him, because if sidewalks are waived closer to villages, no sidewalks may be built to which Mr. Poirier explained that a builder or business would still have to pay the applicable Town fee, then the Town would construct a sidewalk.

A discussion ensued regarding sidewalks within the Narragansett District.

Town Manager Ephrem Paraschak said a more likely concern will be that developers are giving money for a sidewalk that initially would serve no purpose.

Mr. Poirier said that instead of identifying a fee schedule, staff could get estimates from Public Works.

A discussion ensued regarding the setting of a fee schedule.

Councilor Siegel suggested including the statement “adjusted to inflation.”

Mr. Poirier said staff can provide cost estimate examples for various-sized buildings for analysis.

Mr. Paraschak asked if staff can give a couple different size examples for small and mid-size businesses, as well as a future building/business.

A motion was MADE by Councilor Siegel, SECONDED by Councilor Shepard, and VOTED to table the item so staff can present revised documents at the next meeting. Unanimous vote.

- B. Review revising standards for curb cuts on arterials and designated collectors consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan (referred by the Town Council on August 2, 2022).

Mr. Poirier said that Public Works Director Terry Deering and Mr. Norton identified roads to be added to the list now or later.

A discussion ensued in which Councilor Wilder Cross asked if a list was necessary to which Mr. Norton commented that it could be cumbersome for staff without having a list to reference as traffic patterns change with development.

Mr. Paraschak recommended adding North Gorham Road to the list.

Councilor Siegel asked if Saco Street should be considered as well to which Councilor Shepard said that it is short and there are powerlines that run along it.

Mr. Paraschak said that staff could add PACTS roads to the list.

Councilor Siegel asked if Barstow Road should also be considered to which Councilor Shepard said that it doesn’t appear to have a lot of traffic, and Mr. Poirier said he couldn’t foresee an impact.

Mr. Poirier said that staff will bring back a revised map and more information on collector and PACTS roads, as well as the designations on what the roads are classified as.

A discussion ensued regarding Wescott Road resulting in staff saying that they will remove the dead-end piece of Wescott Road and connect it to Plummer Road.

The committee agreed to add North Gorham Road and Libby Avenue to the list.

A motion was MADE by Councilor Shepard, SECONDED by Councilor Siegel, and VOTED to ask staff to make the changes discussed and bring back the information for review at the next meeting. Unanimous.

- C. Review revising parking ordinances and forward any recommendations to the Town Council for consideration (referred by the Town Council on February 7, 2023).

The committee reviewed the attachment C referencing existing language in the Land Use Development Code (LUDC) and Streets and Sidewalks Ordinance.

Councilor Shepard asked that staff please update the language reflecting the outdated parking standard for “Senior High Schools.”

Mr. Poirier asked if the committee wants to start with onsite or offsite parking. He noted that the committee can look at shared parking later.

Mr. Paraschak said there is renewed interest in reducing onsite parking requirements. He recommends paying special attention to the village and reducing onsite parking.

Councilor Siegel suggested changing the language to reflect “parking maximums” to which Mrs. Eyerman said that could be part of a larger discussion and designated streets for onsite parking.

Mr. Poirier recommended a basic standard with a waiver.

Councilor Shepard asked how the language could be written to incentivize connected parking.

Mr. Paraschak said parking requirements could be waived, and parking could be accommodated in dense areas of the town while narrowing roads as a traffic calming measure, and not infringing on pedestrian traffic.

Councilor Siegel said he is worried about narrowing roads as a traffic calming measure to which Councilor Shepard said that lines could be painted to delineate lanes.

Councilor Siegel asked if lines could be painted to which Mr. Paraschak said – yes, as an added cost.

Councilor Siegel asked if it is beneficial to split by business use or can the language be more generic to which Mr. Poirier said – yes, it could reference the ITE Traffic Engineering Handbook language.

Mr. Paraschak said the language could still be simplified into business types.

A motion was MADE by Councilor Shepard, SECONDED by Councilor Siegel, and VOTED to ask staff to bring back more information for further review at the next meeting. Unanimous vote.

3. **Items Referred for Future Meetings/Action**

- A. Explore a vernal pool transfer program consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan (referred by the Town Council on August 2, 2022).
- B. Review zoning in the Gorham Village Districts to increase economic development (referred by the Town Council on February 7, 2023).

- C. Review increasing the minimum square footage exemption for a fire suppression system from 400 to 800 square feet and report back to the Town Council with a recommendation (referred by the Town Council on February 7, 2023).
- D. Review adding accessory use outdoor storage to the Roadside Commercial District and forward recommendations to the Town Council (referred by the Town Council March 7, 2023).
- E. Review increasing the Stream Protection Sub District from 75' to 100', better define stream, as well as add aquifers, and send recommendations back to the Town Council (referred by the Town Council on March 7, 2023).

Mr. Poirier said that staff can provide a map of the current streams and habitats at the May meeting.

4. **Other Business**

No items were discussed.

5. **Schedule next meeting and discuss agenda items for next meeting.**

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 11 a.m. in Conference Room A. The following items will be discussed:

- A. Develop a long-term plan for pedestrian improvements consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan (referred by the Town Council on August 2, 2022).
- B. Review revising standards for curb cuts on arterials and designated collectors consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan (referred by the Town Council on August 2, 2022).
- C. Review revising parking ordinances and forward any recommendations to the Town Council for consideration (referred by Ordinance Committee on January 17, 2023).
- D. Review adding accessory use outdoor storage to the Roadside Commercial District and forward recommendations to the Town Council (referred by the Town Council March 7, 2023).

5. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was MADE by Councilor Shepard and SECONDED by Councilor Siegel and VOTED to adjourn. Time of adjournment: 10:10am.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Hughes, Executive Assistant