

**PLANNING BOARD MEETING
February 4, 2019**

Municipal Center, Burleigh H. Loveitt Council Chambers
75 South Street, Gorham, Maine

Members Present

**EDWARD ZELMANOW, CHAIRMAN
GEORGE FOX, VICE CHAIRMAN
SCOTT FIRMIN
VINCENT GRASSI
BRIAN PLOWMAN
MICHAEL RICHMAN**

Members Absent

MOLLY BUTLER-BAILEY

Staff Present

**THOMAS M. POIRIER, Town Planner
BARBARA C. SKINNER, Clerk of the Board**

Edward Zelmanow, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Clerk called the roll, noting that member Molly Butler-Bailey was absent.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 7, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

George Fox MOVED and Scott Firmin SECONDED a motion to approve the January 7, 2019 meeting minutes as written and distributed. Motion CARRIED, 3 ayes (Molly Butler-Bailey absent, Brian Plowman and Michael Richman abstaining as not having present at the meeting).

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 14, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

George Fox MOVED and Michael Richman SECONDED a motion to approve the January 14, 2019 meeting minutes as written and distributed. Motion CARRIED, 4 ayes (Molly Butler-Bailey absent, Scott Firmin and Brian Plowman abstaining as not having been present at the meeting).

COMMITTEE REPORTS – Mr. Zelmanow reported that neither of the Board’s committees has met since the last Planning Board meeting. Mr. Poirier said that both subcommittees will have to be reorganized at the March meeting because of the Board’s membership turnover.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT – Mr. Zelmanow read the following letter of resignation, dated February 4, 2019 and addressed to Town Council Chairman Benjamin Hartwell:

“Dear Chairman Hartwell:

I am writing to inform the Town Council that I will be resigning from the Planning Board effective February 5, 2019 as I will no longer be a permanent resident of Gorham as of March 1, 2019. It has been my sincere honor to have served the residents of Gorham as a member of the Planning Board for the past thirteen years with nine of those as the Board Chairman. It has been my hope that during my tenure as Chairman I have been able to meet everyone’s expectations and help control and shape the immense growth Gorham has experienced. I have endeavored to preserve open space within the town and worked with developers to interconnect the town’s many trail networks and shape new residential developments to function as actual neighborhoods in which residents of Gorham could feel safe and comfortable with sidewalks, street lights, and open areas for the residents to enjoy.

One of my biggest fears while on the board was always uncontrolled growth within the town. Growth cannot be stopped, but ensuring that the growth is balanced between residential, commercial and industrial uses and does not expand faster than the Town's current infrastructure has been and will continue to be the challenge faced by this board, a group of dedicated residents who have selflessly volunteered their time and energy to the town.

Finally, all that the board does would be impossible without the assistance and guidance of the Planning Department, especially the clerk of the board Barbara Skinner and my right hand man for all these years, Town Planner Tom Poirier. A lot of people don't realize what Tom actually does to keep this board functioning and things moving forward in the town. I will miss this town which I have had the pleasure to call home for nearly twenty years. I wish Tom, Barbara, all the members of the board, and the residents of Gorham all the best for a happy and healthy future. I will miss you all.

Sincerely,

Edward L. Zelmanow
Chairman
Town of Gorham Planning Board"

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW REPORT – Mr. Poirier reported that the Site Plan Review Committee met with an applicant at 19 Bartlett Road, Custom Coach, who is looking to expand his parking as well as changing some circulation on the site. A workshop was held with the Review Committee and the applicant's engineer on Friday, February 1, 2019, at which time staff provided guidance so that the applicant can revise the plans and move ahead shortly.

At Mr. Zelmanow's request, Mr. Poirier described the Administrative Review as opposed to a full Planning Board review. Mr. Poirier said that administrative site plans that are reviewed are items that are typically minor in nature such as under 10,000 square feet of impervious surface, or smaller re-conversions of residential and commercial properties under a certain threshold. The Administrative Review Committee is composed of the Town Planner as chairman, with the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief, the Code Enforcement Officer and the Public Works Director being the other members. The Review Committee functions differently than the Planning Board in that typically once an item has been submitted for review, abutters are given two weeks to comment after an application is presented, and if no abutter comments are received, the applicant is given the staff review comments, any necessary changes are made and the item is approved. Typically there is no meeting to discuss an item. If there are concerns that standards are not being met or if there are abutter concerns, then there is an official meeting with the Review Committee and the applicant. One "no" vote on that Committee will end a project, it is not a majority of votes to approve. A rejected projected can be appealed for review by the Planning Board, but that review is only to ensure that the correct procedures have been followed by the Administrative Review Committee and cannot override any decision made by that Committee.

ITEM 1 Nonconforming Sign – Nouria Energy Little Falls LLC – a request for approval for a nonconforming sign at the Lil' Mart at 688 Gray Road, zoned Urban Residential, Map 110, Lot 7.

Mr. Poirier advised the Board that the applicant has asked that the item be tabled to the Board's March meeting.

Scott Firmin MOVED and George Fox SECONDED a motion to table this item to the Board's March 4, 2019 meeting agenda. Motion CARRIED, 6 ayes (Molly Butler-Bailey absent).

ITEM 2 Private Way Amendment Review – Plowman Development Group, LLC – Plowman Road – a request for approval to extend Plowman Road to the 2-6 lot standard to accommodate up to 5 new units, one property zoned Rural, Map 4, Lot 102.

The item was withdrawn at the Applicant's request, and no action is required by the Planning Board.

ITEM 3 Discussion – Zoning Amendment – Pheasant Knoll Contract Zone - discussion of a proposal to amend the Contract Zoning Agreement between Kasprzak Landholdings, Inc., and the Town of Gorham.

Mr. Poirier said that Kasprzak Landholdings is proposing to develop the entire Pheasant Knoll site, but since the initial contract zone approval and the current proposal, performance guarantee standards have changed. Therefore, the applicant would like to utilize the performance guarantee language originally in effect when the contract zone was approved. Kasprzak's proposed amendment is to allow it to record the final plan with all phases after approval, without needing to bond all phases as shown on the subdivision approval. That way Kasprzak would only need to bond the proposed phase prior to the start of construction of that phase of the subdivision under construction.

Mr. Zelmanow said the Board can either send the item to the Board's ordinance subcommittee or if the language matches the Council's intent, the item can be placed on the Board's next agenda for public hearing.

In reply to Mr. Fox's request for further clarification, Mr. Poirier said that the current performance guarantee language requires that if a subdivision receives Board approval, the applicant has one year to establish a performance guarantee, with the mylar then being released for recording at the Registry. If that is not done within a year, the subdivision approval becomes null and void. There is also language which requires that every phase subsequently needs to be bonded within 5 years, or those phases become null and void. In this case, the applicant would like to bond the proposed 3 phases and it is understood that they will not go forward with each phase until a performance guarantee is in place.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPENED: None offered.
PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ENDED.

George Fox MOVED and Brian Plowman SECONDED a motion to forward the item to the March 4, 2019 Planning Board meeting for review and public hearing. Motion CARRIED, 6 ayes (Mollie Butler-Bailey absent). [7:20 p.m.]

ITEM 4 Pre-Application Discussion – Avesta Housing Development Corp. – a request for approval to add 27 residences for individuals 55-plus at Ridgewood I in existing but unused office space, consisting of 22 one-bedroom apartments and 5 two-bedroom apartments, on property zoned Urban Commercial, Contract Zone, Map 101, lots 18 and 19.

Mr. Poirier reminded the Board that a pre-application discussion is only between the applicant and the Board, and that nothing has been submitted for review by staff. He said that this project will be reviewed under both subdivision and site plan standards. Mr. Poirier explained that Avesta received site plan and subdivision approval in 2015 for Ridgewood II, a 24-unit senior housing building located on property parallel to School

Street. The applicant is now proposing to remove a section of the existing rear of Ridgewood I, located to the interior of the site, and replace it with a new 27-residence addition. Mr. Poirier noted that the 2015 approval under the contract zone performance standard allowed a parking ratio of .7 parking spaces per dwelling unit and said that the Board can decide to reduce the required parking on supporting data demonstrating a reduction in the number of residents' vehicles.

Nate Howes, Avesta Housing, came to the podium and introduced Catherine Elliott, Avesta Housing, and Sashie Misner, Gawron Turgeon Architects. Mr. Howes said the project is described as a vacant office space to be torn down to make way for the project, which will include a four-story building with 22 one-bedroom apartments and 5 two-bedroom apartments. Solar panels would be installed on the roof. Plans include adding 11 parking spaces to the existing 47 spaces at the combined Ridgewood 1 and 2 site, or a ratio of .83 per every unit of housing, greater than the .7 that is required by the contract zone. Mr. Howe said that Avesta also hopes to work with Metro, which now serves Gorham with a bus stop on the USM campus, in addition to stops on each side of Main Street in Gorham Village, to add a stop at Ridgewood.

Sashie Misner, Gawron Turgeon Architects, told the Board that the existing building footprint will be used. Mr. Howe showed where the proposed landscaping and open space will be located. Ms. Misner described the proposed building as 4-story to minimize the footprint, nested into the slope at the back of the building. The first floor will be mechanical and utilities, with no windows, with resident rooms toward the front of the building. Mr. Howes said the portion to be torn down is vacant office space. Ms. Misner said 5 parking spaces will be added along the front, 4 spaces along the side, and 2 additional spaces where the existing parking is located.

Mr. Howe advised Mr. Zelmanow that the contract zone allows for a .7 ratio of parking spaces, and they are providing .8, adding 11 to the current 47 spaces existing on site. Mr. Fox confirmed that the .7 ratio applies to the entire site. Mr. Howe said that the property manager has said that only 28 or 29 parking spaces are utilized on a regular basis now. Mr. Zelmanow said that the distance to the hydrant has to follow the road. Mr. Zelmanow and Ms. Misner discussed the turning requirements for emergency vehicles, something that probably will be looked at by the Fire Chief, possibly with the addition of a hydrant inside the site. Mr. Plowman confirmed that the building design will be similar to Ridgewood II and asked where the elevator is to be located. Ms. Misner said that the elevator will be according to whatever the code requires. Mr. Richman confirmed that the front of the existing building is 2 stories and asked if the new building will be taller than the existing one. Ms. Misner said that it probably will be. Mr. Howe said there will be a solar array on the roof. In reply to Mr. Zelmanow, Mr. Howe said that future plans for a looped road and a service center are still indefinite due to funding considerations. Mr. Grassi suggested that safety considerations be given to pedestrian foot traffic in the parking lot.

Mr. Poirier asked if, in light of the Board's concerns about the different building heights, the Board would like to see perspective renderings in its next submission, to include a perspective from South Street looking into the development. Mr. Poirier explained the process to Mr. Howe that once a formal submittal has been made, it will be sent out to staff for a full review, and the submittal will come back to the Board so they see all the comments from staff, addressing any issues or concerns with the ordinance and any abutter concerns. At that time the Board will decide whether a site walk is warranted.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPENED: None offered.
PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ENDED.

OTHER BUSINESS **None**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Planning Board meeting will be on March 4, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

Edward Zelmanow MOVED and George Fox SECONDED a motion to adjourn. Motion CARRIED, 6 ayes (Molly Butler-Bailey absent). [7:42 p.m.]

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara C. Skinner, Clerk of the Board
_____, 2019