



CITY OF GARDINER

6 Church Street, Gardiner, Maine 04345

www.gardinermaine.com

ORDINANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Monday December 19, 2016 @ 3:00 PM

Meeting Notes

Members Present:

Chair Debby Willis Joel Alexander John Burgess
Clare Marron Patricia Hart, City Councilor
Les Young
CEO/Assistant Planner, Barbara Skelton

Members Absent:

Jonathan Stonier Christine Szigeti-Johnson

Also Present:

Mark Eyerman, Planner
Dorothy Morang, Staff
Scott Morelli, City Manager
Greg Farris

- 1.) **Welcome**
Chair Willis opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
- 2.) **Roll Call**

3.) Consideration of meeting notes of November 28, 2016.

Joel Alexander moved to accept the minutes. Clare Marron seconded the motion.
Vote: 6 in favor. 0 opposed. 1 abstained (Les Young was not a member at that time).
Motion passed.

Consideration of meeting notes of December 12, 2016.

Committee did not meet as there was not a quorum.

Old Business

4.) Finalize DTF, CB & CC District Amendments

New Business

5.) Review Sign Provisions

Mark went over his memo dated December 13, 2016, identified as Signs 101 (copy attached). He said he finds the current Sign Ordinance confusing, contradictory and extremely difficult to understand. He put together a worksheet looking at the types of signs and the number, height, size and other considerations for each district. He has included the Downtown Fringe (DF), Cobbossee Corridor (CC), Planned Development (PD) Planned Highway Development (PHD), Planned Industrial/Commercial (PIC), & Residential Growth (RG) Zoning Districts.

He looked at the current Ordinance and determined that the primary types of signs address two basic subsets – Building-attached and Free-Standing. He went over each of the types of signs in each category and gave examples of where some of these types are in the City.

The Occupancy signs are different - the single occupant vs buildings or developments that have multiple occupants. This is especially an issue in the downtown, but also in commercial buildings with multiple occupants. He said that in the industry rule of thumb, size is important in how it is being viewed – and the ability to read it at that speed. He pointed out a few signs that are too small for the speed limit in areas.

6.) First draft of revised sign provisions

Mark went over the worksheet that he prepared identifying the types of signs and the number, height, size and other considerations. He is going to complete one for each district.

Les asked if these are based on the National Standards Council standards? He said they are pretty thorough – a credible reference. Mark said no, they are not, but he has a copy of them.

PIC District

CEO Skelton noted that the travel speed in the Business Park is 25 – 35, but the signs could be larger because the buildings are larger. Mark noted that also, they set back much further – a smaller sign would get lost.

Les asked about multi-tenants. Members discussed Marks proposed maximum size for wall signs for individual and total per side and were ok with Mark's suggestions.

Mark said a Free Standing driveway sign to a business park needs to be larger opposed to an individual lot. He will make a separate provision for a sign leading into a development. What he has in the chart is for individual properties. Mark will look at the maximum height for this district.

PHD District

CEO Skelton said there are similar issues here. She noted a reader board sign – she asked how practical would it be in a higher speed area. She said typically you find them in a lower speed areas.

Greg Farris of Central Maine Crossings noted that currently, only certain types of businesses could have reader boards. His road is a private road with a 2-tenant building. There is terracing where he hopes to further develop – possibly 7 – 8 buildings. He wants a reader board sign to advertise his properties. He noted that he has had offers, but has declined them because of the type of business – types that he doesn't feel would be appropriate for his park.

Pat said when they looked at reader boards, they didn't anticipate flashing signs. It is limited to those types of businesses because of their nature. Les said a reader board is nothing more than an LED-TV. Joel said he doesn't want a flashing sign near his house.

Greg said he needs to get signs. All of the development will come out of Central Maine Crossings. He is currently getting some traffic from Portland, Brunswick, Lewiston & Auburn and his conference rooms are used by many out-of-town businesses. His plans for more development are more professional types – if he does do commercial, they will be put down back.

John asked about state regulations on flashing signs. CEO Skelton said the State limits it to 20 minutes unless a town has a separate regulation. Les said he has seen in other places controlled by the speed limit to maintain safety.

Chair Willis said the ORC did some work on signs - lighting, lumens, etc a while back. Mark noted that the State prohibits scrolling. Les asked how do we deal with pictorial electronic signs. Mark said some communities limit what can be put on a sign – wording vs pictures, etc.

Mark said the first thing we need to look at is the type and scale. He noted that the signs should be shorter as you come into neighborhoods – both the types and size. He said the current Ordinance does this, but crudely. He said that, as an example, in the CC District, highway signs are allowed. This seems opposite of what the CC is trying to be. The general character of the signage should be appropriate in the various areas.

Mark noted that the PHD & PIC districts need provisions something similar to the Business Directory signs. Pat said there are signs on canopies in the PHD. CEO Skelton and Les both noted that you could limit the hours of operation. Dorothy noted that there are residences in some of these districts.

Mark asked how much protection do we give to existing residential properties in these new districts. Do we say they are in a commercial zone and use commercial standards? Joel said if you do that, it will diminish the value of their properties.

DTF District

Members discussed wall sign sizes – do we tie it to the size of the building. Clare asked if the Dollar Store area is included in this district – Mark said yes. Les said those buildings need to be treated as a strip mall. Other agreed. Members said the Free-Standing standards are ok.

Homework – Think about the Traditional Downtown/Historic District (DHD) Section 10.24.32 – what we have and where to place them.

Other

January meetings: Monday, January 9, 2017 @ 3:00 pm w/CEO Skelton
 Monday, January 23, 2017 @ 3:00 pm /Mark Eyerman

7.) Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm