

Planning & Development Standing Committee
Wednesday, July 8, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.
REMOTE MEETING
-Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Val Gilman; Vice Chair, Councilor Jen Holmgren; Councilor Barry Pett

Also Present: Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken; Vanessa Krawczyk; Gregg Cademartori; Grace E. Poirier

*This meeting was conducted remotely through ZOOM
All votes by ROLL CALL*

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Councilor Gilman announced, “This meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state open meeting law. Consistent with the Governor's orders, suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law and banning gatherings of more than 10 people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. The public may not physically attend this meeting but every effort will be made to allow the public to view and listen to the meeting in real time. Persons who wish to do so are invited to view the meeting and you have the information that was on the posting. If you are calling in on a phone, you can press *9 to request to speak. If you're watching on a computer a device, there is a raised hand button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either these options to be recognized to speak.”

RZ2020-001: Proposed creation of a commuter residential overlay district to all lots currently zoned extensive business in and around the Maplewood Avenue and Whistlestop Way area (Cont. from 6/17/2020)

Councilor Gilman continued this matter to July 22, 2020.

PP2020-004 (to be conducted as a public hearing): request by New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC d/b/a AT&T, in agreement with National Grid, to install a wireless small cell facility, including telecommunication wires and wireless attachments and appurtenances on a replacement utility pole in the public right of way – Pole #2337 – near Salt Island Road #2 (Cont. from 6/17/2020)

Councilor Gilman continued this matter to July 22, 2020.

PP2020-006 (to be conducted as a public hearing): request by Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England Inc. to install 1 JO Pole on Magnolia Avenue beginning at a point approx. 2,000 feet southeast of the centerline of the intersection of Carrie Lane. Install 1 JO Pole, 1 Anchor and all appurtenances with such sustaining and protecting fixtures as necessary in front of 288 Magnolia Avenue

Councilor Gilman continued this matter to July 22, 2020.

City Council vote of August 22, 2017 re: COV2017-166 re: GZO Sec. 5.30.1 “Purpose” regarding the sunset clause

Councilor Gilman continued this matter to August 19, 2020.

Application of EIP Dory Road LLC for the storage of ethanol at 11 Dory Road, Assessors Map 262, Lot 16 per MGL Ch. 148, Sec. 13, and GCO Ch. 8, Sec. 8-1 “License for storing inflammables”

Councilor Gilman continued this matter to July 22, 2020.

RZ2020-002: Temporary amendment to the GZO pursuant to MGL Ch. 40A, Sec. 5, and GZO Sec. 1.11.2(e) to amend GZO by ADDING a new Sec. 5.33 “Temporary Zoning Relief to Businesses During COVID-19 Pandemic”

Gregg Cademartori, Planning Director, gave the following information to the committee:

- The Planning Board held a public hearing on June 24 and unanimously recommended the amendment.
- The ordinance has been effective so far (once a zoning ordinance has been advertised for public hearing, it becomes the zoning ordinance in effect).
- This temporary ordinance means the removal of requirements as they relates to site plan review and special permitting requirements, particularly for restaurants.
- A process has been implemented for online permitting; departmental focus is on health and safety when considering the permit applications.
- Applicants can petition to use public space (such as sidewalks and parking spaces).
- Businesses have been encouraged to use private space on their own property, as that requires less review than would be required for public spaces.
- About 30 businesses have already applied for permits.

Questions from the committee:

Q.1. What are some examples of how this ordinance would extend to a business other than a restaurant?

A.1. (Cademartori) An example would be retailers being able to use sidewalk space for display; however, business owners can also apply to use space for other reasons. The ordinance is not specific to the permissible uses – business owners would need to specify that in their application.

Q.2. As this ordinance extends into the fall, would heat lamps be installed?

A.1. (Cademartori) Potentially. Anything like that would need to be revisited from a public safety and access perspective.

Q.3. Will the administration extend free parking in municipal lots to encourage people to go to businesses/restaurants downtown? Was that well received by businesses?

A.1. (Krawczyk) Free parking expired on July 1, 2020. The free parking was utilized and generated foot traffic downtown.

Members of the committee thanked the administration for their work in putting this ordinance together.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: on a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, in accordance with MGL Ch. 40A, Sec. 5, and the GZO Sec. 1.11.2(e) to recommend that the City Council amend the Gloucester Zoning Ordinance by ADDING a new Sec. 5.33 “Temporary Zoning Relief to Businesses during COVID-19 Pandemic” which would allow existing businesses to add outdoor seating, display, or takeout without requiring a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals or the City Council, or approval of the Planning Board under Sec. 5.9 “Site Plan Review,” as applicable, on a temporary basis until December 1, 2020.

DISCUSSION ONLY re: potential site visit for SCP2020-004 Folly Point Road #1

Councilor Gilman let the committee know that Council President LeBlanc was aware that this matter was being brought up for discussion. She also checked with General Counsel and was advised that if the

committee conducts a site visit for one Special Council Permit application, it should conduct site visits for all of the applications, unless there is a good reason to do otherwise.

Councilor Holmgren was comfortable conducting site visits for special council permit applications as long as mask/social distancing protocol was followed.

Councilor Pett was comfortable with site visits provided that visits were conducted for all of the applications before the Council. Consideration should be given to potential crowd size, as gatherings cannot exceed the allowable number per the Governor's order.

Mr. Cademartori said that the Planning Board has held some site visits, which were conducted in small groups. He advised the committee that typically it is up to the applicant whether or not they will allow the public to participate in the site visit. The process is really for the permitting body.

The committee agreed to **Councilor Gilman** reaching out to General Counsel for advice on how site visits could be conducted and report back to the committee in two weeks.

This discussion is continued to July 22, 2020.

Item not listed on agenda for discussion and that was not reasonably anticipated by the Chair: setting a special meeting date for the Block Party Special Event Application

Councilor Gilman advised the committee that there was a need for a special P&D meeting in order to take up the matter of the Special Event Permit Application for the downtown block parties, the first of which will be held on July 18, 2020. Members of the committee confirmed availability and set the special meeting date for Monday, July 13, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Pett, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

Submitted by Grace E. Poirier, Assistant City Clerk