

**Special Planning & Development Standing Committee**  
**Monday, August 10, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.**  
**REMOTE MEETING**  
**-Minutes-**

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

**Also Present: City Clerk, Joanne Senos; City Council President, Steve LeBlanc; Community Development Director, Jill Cahill**

**Applicant: Susan Coviello, Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce for Shop, Stroll and Dine event**

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

**Meeting called to order at 6:00 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 25 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.”

**1.Special Event Permit Application: request to hold the Shop, Stroll and Dine (formerly Gloucester Block Party), to be held on August 15, 2020 and September 5, 2020**

**Summary of Discussion:**

- **Community Development Director Jill Cahill** updated the committee that on Friday, August 7, 2020, Governor Baker announced new guidance related to gatherings, reducing the number allowed in an outdoor public gathering from 100 to 50.
- Public Health Director Karin Carroll sought specific guidance from the state and the Department of Labor Standards, and determined that the event could proceed as planned.
- **Ms. Cahill** has consistently stated throughout the process that the administration, along with the event team, is committed to following the Governor’s guidance, and protecting the citizens of Gloucester. She offered to provide the updated information she had received to the full City Council to address their concerns.
- They thought of adding interest to the August 15<sup>th</sup> event by adding a stilt-walker or other form of socially distanced entertainment, however, the state guidance has made it clear that it would not be appropriate at this time.
- **Susan Coviello**, representing the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce, expressed the event team’s desire to move forward with the street closing to encourage an open evening of people being able to walk freely along Main Street, in and out of shops, and to dine by reservation in the restaurants.
- **Councilor Pett** expressed disappointment that more retail shops did not participate in the first event, and suggested the possibility of placing a sawhorse on Short Street with a sign advertising pickup orders at Drift Café, Tonno, and Short & Main. **Ms. Cahill** replied that she would be happy to consider it and discuss it with those restaurant owners for the September event, however, there will never be a happy medium consensus among Main Street business owners as to where the street closures and sawhorses

begin and end. She thanked the councilors for their support, and explained that after her last conversation with the Public Health Director, it is clear that the situation is not going to change drastically over the next few weeks, so the event team will support whatever decisions the Planning and Development Committee and City Council make regarding this, which is why she wanted the August and September events decided together now. **Ms. Coviello** shared the fact that she has communicated with the restaurants that Councilor Pett mentioned, and they chose not to participate in the last event. She explained that all Main Street businesses are invited to participate, their comfort level determines whether they choose to.

- It was also determined that the Design of Mine traveling fashion show that was approved for the last event would not be appropriate for the August 15<sup>th</sup> event in light of the new restrictions. **Councilor Holmgren** stated that the traveling fashion show was not the purview of the Planning and Development Committee (since they were only considering the street closure during that meeting), it will be brought up in the August 11, 2020 City Council meeting.
- **Councilor Holmgren** recognized the efforts of the Community Development Department and the Chamber of Commerce over the last few weeks to try to organize this event to assist local businesses, however, she expressed hesitation in being in favor of this Special Event Permit Application when there has been a recent increase in the overall number of diagnosed COVID-19 cases, even though Gloucester cases have remained low, she does not want to contribute to any further possible illness. She suggested supporting the Magnolia Farmer's Market that currently has a few Main Street members as vendors such as The Cave and Cape Ann Olive Oil Company each week. She stated that she sympathizes wholeheartedly with business owners, and knows that they are extremely conscious of what they need to do to keep their businesses open during this difficult time, however, based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, she would not feel safe voting yes on any aspect of this proposed event.
- **Councilor Gilman** requested that the August event not receive too much advertising. **Ms. Coviello** notified the committee that the same advertising as last time would be used. There is a press release that has been sent out, and the event has a large following on its Facebook page.

**MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 2 in favor, 1 opposed to approve a Special Events Permit to the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce to hold the Shop, Stroll and Dine event on Saturday, August 15, 2020 and September 5, 2020 between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and street closures between the hours 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., with closures of Main Street from Pleasant Street to the West end, and side street closures including Hancock, Short, Center and Porter Streets, with the following conditions:**

1. **No merchant set ups on the sidewalk blocking entrance ways to retail or residential units, hydrants, crosswalks or handicap ramps.**
2. **No outside vendors; this includes other Gloucester-based businesses and non-profits.**
3. **No live music or other form of entertainment.**
4. **The organizers shall allow the Fire Department drive-through access with the fire engine at the convenience of the Fire Department.**
5. **That all of the side streets – Short, Porter, Center and Hancock Streets – shall not be blocked by food establishments, tables, chairs, enclosures equipment, or vehicles, so emergency vehicles may enter and exit Main Street as needed.**
6. **Merchants shall be responsible for their own trash removal.**
7. **Plumbing Codes and regulations shall be adhered to regarding the use of restaurant bathroom facilities.**
8. **Special lighting and electrical requirements necessitate approval of the Inspector of Buildings and the Electrical Inspector.**
9. **The closure of the street at the intersection of Main and Short, Porter, Center and Hancock Streets must be by means of sawhorses or the like, as directed by the Gloucester Police Department.**

10. It is the responsibility of the Shop, Dine and Stroll Committee to procure any other necessary Federal, State, and local permits and approvals associated with this event.
  11. That the Committee makes reasonable notification to all residents and merchants along the route that will be affected by the closure.
  12. All other applicable laws, City ordinances and/or regulations are in full force including Ordinances regarding blocking of sidewalks. The Police Department will enforce these requirements in the interest of public safety.
  13. The Shop, Dine and Stroll Committee shall also adhere to any requirements expressed by the Special Event Advisory Committee including that:
    - (a) That a letter from the office of the Mayor be provided assuring that the event is covered under the City of Gloucester Liability Insurance, and
    - (b) That this approval is based on the Shop, Dine and Stroll 2020 Street Plan submitted to the City Clerk's Office
    - (c) Must follow the guidelines of the CDC and the local board of health for social distancing. Masks are required inside any business and strongly encouraged for people walking on Main Street.
- **Councilor Gilman** commented that she will be voting in favor. She is eager to hear the opinions from the full Council at tomorrow night's meeting. She worked as a volunteer at the first event and felt that social distancing and safe protocol worked well. When she went into a few shops during a break, patrons and shop owners were socially distanced. She noted only three folks that were mask-less, having come off the beach, and they welcomed the free single use masks that we were offering.

**MOTION: on a motion by Councilor Pett, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning and Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the meeting at 6:29 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Komi  
Administrative Support  
City Clerk's Office