



Office of Planning & Codes

Wiscasset Ordinance Review Committee Meeting Notes January 10, 2011

Members Present: Karl Olson, Doc Schilke, Jackie Lowell, Larry Lomison, Jeffrey Hinderliter (Town Planner), Rick Lang (Code Officer).

1. Meeting Opens at 5:05 PM.
2. Agenda items discussed: Sign Ordinance (1/10/2011 Draft 4) and the proposed Downtown Business Zoning District extension.
3. December 13, 2010 meeting notes approved

Jeffrey begins by stating what he hopes to discuss this evening. First, in regards to signs- maximum sign size formula, maximum sign size per lot, work on section 15.2, what should we do with pennants, banners, flags, temporary advertising signs, and a discussion about appeals. Second, he'd like to discuss the proposed Downtown Business Zoning District amendments. Finally, he'd like to discuss the transition to the new ORC advisor, Bob Faunce, Lincoln County Planner.

4. Signs. Jeffrey reviews the materials submitted to the ORC. He discusses the items of the proposed ordinance remaining. He indicates that his time is limited with the ORC and hopes to finish up some loose ends like the sign ordinance. The ORC resumes review of the ordinance beginning and discussed the following:

- Jeffrey explains two examples of how to calculate sign area- one is based on the square footage of the facade area another is based on lot frontage. He believes we have three options to determine what to base maximum allowable sign square footage- 1. Square footage based on facade area; 2. Square footage based on linear feet of street frontage; 3. Flat maximum square footage amount (like the current ordinance allows). Jeffrey explains how other towns have calculated this and what their max sign area is. Our current ordinance max permissible sign area per lot is 128 sq. ft.
- ORC discuss the different options and how they could work. The façade measurement could be difficult because there may be confusion on which facade should be used in the calculation. The linear frontage footage may be difficult too.
- Jeffrey believes there should be different maximum for the downtown historic district and the rest of town. He suggests max sign area for the downtown to be 50 sq. ft. and the rest of town is 200 sq. ft.
- ORC discuss max and minimum sign area. If we use the linear sq. ft. we would need a maximum and minimum. Should we use linear sq. ft. for the town, excluding the downtown district? We should build a scale for linear feet frontage and façade sq. ft. If we use linear sq. ft., there should be a minimum number of sign sq. ft. allowed for those properties that have limited frontage. Why should the downtown have less max area- because the ordinance seeks to preserve the downtown.

- ORC continue discussion and decide the maximum allowable sign area for the downtown historic district be 75 sq. ft. and the rest of town be 150 sq. ft.
- ORC begin discussions on 15.2.
- The banner definition should include the language ‘with or without text.’
- ORC discuss decorative pennants, banners and flags. If they are temporary they should not be included in the sign ordinance. Is a sign permit still necessary? If they are not temporary then they would be counted in the sign ordinance as a regular sign so they need to conform to max sq. ft. requirements and a permit would be required. Flags that state ‘open’ should be limited to 1 per business.
- Temporary advertising signs- how should these be treated? Should a permit be required and counted towards the maximum allowable sq. ft.? Temporary signs are those that have temporary advertisements such as “Budweiser \$6.99”. If the signs do not qualify as temporary then they would be considered a regular sign and must follow that procedure. What makes these signs temporary? Setting some limits such as the total number allowed, limit on days, permit required (?), fees. ORC discuss if and why a permit should be required and the main purpose of the permit would be for the sign control officer to keep track. A fee should be charged because it takes time to administer the ordinance. The numbers should be limited so places do not look too cluttered. If the sign qualifies as a temporary advertising sign, the sq. ft. should not be counted. ORC continues discussion and decides a temporary advertising sign requires a permit, a \$5 permit fee will be charged for each sign, individual temporary signs cannot exceed 30 days, 4 is the maximum allowed at any one time, size for each sign cannot exceed 12 sq. ft. If an advertising sign does not conform to the standards above, it cannot be considered a temporary business sign and must conform to the ordinance under the regular sign standards.
- ORC discuss applied signs and wall signs. ORC decides to delete the info on applied signs in 15.2 and include these signs with wall signs.
- 15.2 Awning Signs: delete ‘be located only on the awning valance and shall.’
- 15.2: add ‘total sign area’ where applicable.
- Do to time constraints, Jeffrey requests that we move on and discuss the downtown business zoning district extension. ORC ok this.

5. Downtown Business Zoning District Extension.

- Jeffrey introduces the zoning district proposal and states this includes an extension of the current downtown business district into the residential district. 10 properties will be impacted by this proposal. The primary changes will be 0’ setbacks, no minimum lot size, no required parking standard, and expanded permissible land uses. He said this conforms to the comp plan and it is located in the proposed Village 1 District, which includes more than 10 properties. Jeffrey indicated that if we keep the change simple and concentrate on only the 10 properties than the proposal should not involve more detailed ordinance language changes. He thinks the only items that need to be changed will be the zoning map and the downtown business district description. Jeffrey introduces George Freeman who is part owner of the Ledges property located within the area proposed to be changed. Jeffrey states that George originally approached him about the difficulties he’s having with marketing the property because of the restrictive zoning. He and George discussed the options for changing the ordinance to better accommodate George’s needs and found the proposal before the ORC now is the easiest and quickest change. Jeffrey asks George to discuss his experiences.

- George describes the ledges issues and how it is hard to get tenants or sell the property with such restrictive zoning. George offers some examples of how the zoning has been difficult. He indicates that he would like the zoning to offer more flexibility and he believes the proposed changes will assist him.
- The meeting runs out of time and Jeffrey indicates that we can continue our discussion at the next meeting. The ORC questions Jeffrey if he will be at the next meeting due to the transition to Bob Faunce and Jeffrey states he really feels another meeting is needed because there are too many loose ends so he'll speak to Laurie Smith about it.
- Karl asks Jeffrey to contact Paul Foley to see if he is interested in continuing as an ORC member. Paul has been absent since last summer and indicated he would come back during the winter.
- Jeffrey outlines what needs to be discussed at the next meeting and the ORC agrees with following:
 1. Outline of what ordinances need to be complete including prioritizing.
 2. Sign Ordinance: review of section 15.2, appeals and vending machine signs.
 3. Downtown Business Zoning District consideration

6. Adjourn: 6:56 PM