



Long Range Planning Committee Meeting
August 9, 2023
8-9:30 am

Council Chambers B and via Zoom

In attendance: Allen Paul (via Zoom), Marvin Gates, Peter Freiling, Rick Shinay, Robyn Saunders, Portia Hirschman, Rachel Hendrickson, Autumn Speer, Eric Sanderson

I. Review Minutes July 12, 2023

Marvin Gates moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Robyn Saunders. Motion passes unanimously 4-0-0.

II. Review and discuss recommendations to Ordinance Committee – Chapter 405B Site Plan requirements and Commercial Design Standards Merger/Update – **Draft Ordinance Landscape Requirements**

Autumn Speer gave an overview of the changes made since the last meeting, shown in highlighted color. These include addition of prohibiting invasive species, and ground cover requirements. Rachel Hendrickson recommended increasing the number to allow ground cover plantings, suggesting the greater landscape architect community weigh in on these standards. This includes with respect to use of deciduous trees as in the longer life term of the tree over decades, as the Maine climate may not support such plantings in the future. Portia added that language should include something to the effect of “this list will be reviewed and updated every X years” or “annually”.

The Committee went on to discuss buffering and how buffering benefits stormwater management and treatment. The standards include language stating stormwater treatment facilities cannot be located in the front of a site. Robyn Saunders suggested a waiver in case the constraints of a site can’t accommodate such location. Robyn added that buffering is most natural and best in serving to treat stormwater at grade instead of using raised infrastructure where water can’t get to. The Committee discussed uniform buffer requirements along different portions of Route 1, suggesting 15 ft. Allen Paul noted 25 feet is currently used along the north section of Route 1 by Maine Medical Center’s campus. It was the consensus of the Committee that this 25 ft. section be kept but all other areas should have a uniform 15 foot requirement.

Arrangement of trees and groupings were then reviewed. The Committee requested the language on page 4 be changed to require 10 foot buffers instead of 5 feet between single family and multifamily uses. Then Autumn concluded the buffering discussion by noting the proposed Ordinance language adds rear façade landscaping requirements.

Autumn continued onto screening requirements for service and mechanical areas, including dumpsters. In the current Ordinance, this is looped into “outdoor storage”. The proposed language separates these two items for clarity. Dumpsters cannot be located in front of a building. The Committee requested language at the bottom of page 6 (Section I) be changed: “disposal areas shall be located to the side or rear of buildings

sites". Flexibility for screening was discussed, with the Committee recommending screening "if required by the Planning Board".

Tree plantings were discussed. In Section K Landscape Preservation and Protection, page 7, "native species over 20' at DBH" needs to be changed to "over 20" (in.) at DBH". The Committee discussed the proposed requirement to include a tree inventory for projects that propose tree preservation. Rachel emphasized that the Planning Board needs to see what vegetation is in those areas, to determine if it is in good shape and visually pleasing condition to complement the desired aesthetic. The Committee requested language be added that the inventory "be approved by staff" with the Planning Board having the final determination on sufficiency.

Autumn continued to review the proposed language, including for bicycle facilities. Rick Shinay requested "1 bike space per 20 parking spaces" be changed to "bike facilities". Subsection L. was discussed to change "primary entrances" to "public entrances". Robyn suggested for trees that do not survive, the ordinance allow something other than an "in kind" replacement if the death of the species was based on the site conditions, environment etc., and another of the same tree would also not survive. The Committee requested that in staff's sharing of this language with local landscape architect groups, that those professionals' weigh in on pros and cons of installation of plantings with and without root balls. Autumn then suggested one final, quick review at the next meeting and incorporating landscape architect review comments before the Ordinance goes to the Ordinance Committee.

III. Public Comment

IV. Meeting Day and Time Discussion

The Committee agreed on the second Friday of each month. The remainder of 2023 meetings will be held in public safety with the exception of one or two meetings where the PSB conference room is previously booked (December).

V. Staff Updates

Autumn updated the Committee that Ordinance language on wetland and stream buffers will be forthcoming for full LRPC review.

VI. Committee Member Updates

Rachel added that the Planning Board has conducted several workshops before its meetings, most recently with the Fire Department on what they review for in projects for public safety. Peter concluded with noting the ZBA sees many applications for home businesses, and writing those as allowable into the Zoning Ordinance would alleviate redundant processes for home owners and the town.

VII. Adjourn

Marvin Gates made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Peter Freiling. Motion passes unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:36AM. The next Long-Range Planning Committee Meeting will be on Friday, September 8th.