



GEORGIA VERMONT

Planning Commission Meeting Tuesday, January 9, 2024 Chris Letourneau Meeting Room and via Zoom Minutes

Zoom Details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6165843896?pwd=STduU2JzTmpiVmE1MXZSaWZWLzVadz09>

Meeting ID: 616 584 3896 | Passcode: 5243524

Dial by your Location: 1 929 205 6099 (New York)

1. CALL TO ORDER

CALL TO ORDER 6:48 P.M.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Suzanna Brown

Emily Johnson

Jared Waite

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Greg Drew

Tony Heinlein

STAFF PRESENT

Doug Bergstrom, Zoning Administrator

Kollene Caspers, Zoning Clerk

2. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

3. DISCUSSION

A. Development Regulations Research & Review

- J. Waite started the discussion with Act 47, Act 250, and other laws to enable new opportunities for housing development. There will be changes in administration so the use of

Act 250 will not encompass as many projects. J. Waite will take this information and go through the current Development Regulations to see what can be updated.

- S. Brown reported on Tiny Homes/Dwelling Units: Idaho & Colorado the only two states that are currently entertaining Tiny Home/Dwelling Unit legislation.
- Defining Tiny Homes/Dwelling Units: the standard is 500 sq ft or less. 500-1000 considered a "small home" and "micro-home" is smaller than 500 square feet.
- Examples of Communal Living include "The Collegian", a dormitory not specifically for college students, communal living situations consisting of a small room with living and bathroom, with shared spaces for cooking, dining and leisure. Rent can span \$1500-\$2000/mo.
- Other types of living situations include "A-pod-ments" or micro apartments that are cheaper, \$780-\$1200/mo to share. Japan and other Asian countries also have all female, or different genres of people to live together, similar to old fashioned boarding houses.
- Discussion on Zoning Districts: Lot sizes, both large and small, are way larger in Georgia than in other bordering towns. Changing minimum lot sizes will not affect most people, as houses are typically built in the middle of the lot/building envelope. But smaller lot sizes may encourage some people to subdivide the land to accommodate additional housing.
- Georgia Zoning District Map: Planning Commission went through the different zoning districts and considered areas for high density residential and commercial growth.
- Re-zoning discussion, S. Brown explained that it goes along with the State's request for more housing.
- S. Brown asked the Planning Commission if a change in regulations on PUDs in the Town of Georgia to more align with other area towns should be made. Such changes could include lot size restrictions, measurements in square feet instead of acres, buffer restrictions, open space regulations, etc.
- E. Johnson led the discussion on Short Term Rentals: Division of Fire Safety will not police STR situations unless it is a blatant rental health safety.
- Certificates of Occupancy: VLCT's position is CO's are only required if there is a provision in a Town's bylaws. For those permitted uses as provided by the bylaws, CO's shall be extended to any use that required a Zoning permit. If you don't need a permit, you can't mandate/issue a CO to close out the work. Development Regulations allow for the subdivision work (i.e., roads) to tie the conditions to the CO of the last house in the subdivision.
- Planning Commission will request ARPA money in the 2024 Budget for updating the Development Regulations. Grants can still be requested for the 2025 fiscal year to complete said project.

B. Town Plan Survey Update

- 226 (5% population of Georgia) responses to the Town Survey to date, these will be due at the end of next week.
- Advertisements include Front Porch Forum, Facebook groups, Instagram, as well as another boost from the Town of Georgia email listing.

- Demographic breakdown: most responses came from the 30-74 age bracket. The Planning Commission will reach out to other groups to encourage more responses.
- M. Allen wanted to get at least 300 surveys completed and submitted. As we're falling short at this time, he will make a push to get more surveys completed in the last week.
- Submit any paper copies to M. Allen, he will collate all information by 1/20/24. The Planning Commission will have a few days to review the information prior to the 1/23/24 meeting.
- Primarily it is full-time residents and homeowners who are completing the survey.
- We can continue to gather survey information past the deadline while still working off a raw report. Once survey data compilation is completed, the results will be examined to identify the 2-3 main topics to focus on for public meetings to garner more discussion.
- M. Allen will use the survey data and town meeting discussions to formulate the platform for a sustainable Town Plan.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Planning Meeting Minutes 12/12/2023

Motion to approve with minor changes.

Motion made by Johnson, Seconded by Chair Brown.

Voting Abstaining: Waite

5. PLAN NEXT MEETING AGENDA 1/23/2024

- Town Plan Survey results & data summary
- Continue to work on the Development Regulations
- Definitions

6. OTHER BUSINESS

7. DELIBERATIONS

8. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

Motion made by Johnson, Seconded by Waite.

Voting Yea: Chair Brown

Posted to the Town of Georgia website.

Signed: Douglas Bergstrom, Zoning Administrator, Planning Coordinator

Phone: 802-524-3524 | Fax: 802-524-3543 | Website: townofgeorgia.com