

PLANNING BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday July 8, 2025 @ 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers

1.Call the Meeting to Order: Chair Willis called the meeting to order at 6pm.

2.Roll Call: Chair Debby Willis, Pam Mitchel, Christian Fox, and Jacob Waltman. Lisa St. Hilaire and Zachary Hanley were unable to attend. Others present included- Kris McNeill, Jo Roderick, Roland Pinette, Stella Richard, Flora Pelletier, Pam Easton, Elwood Dill, Melanie & Joseph Day, Lynn Gougeon, and Anna Benitez

3.Public Hearing: Iron Mine LLC is proposing to increase the number of units from four to five by converting the garage into a 1-bedroom studio apartment at 43 Old Brunswick Rd. City Tax Map 027 Lot 014A.

Jo Roderick and Roland Pinette are here to present their application and answer questions. Chair Willis asks if the Board can hear this application without bias. The Board agrees yes. Chair Willis asked if City staff obtained any outside services to process this application. No.

There is currently a 3-unit apartment building, and mobile home beside it, making 4 units on the lot currently. The owners are proposing to build a 1 bd studio apartment in the garage that is on the lot. The garage is currently used for storage, but with the housing crisis, the owners would like to use the garage to make another unit. The garage is wired for electricity, there is a bathroom, and existing plumbing. Converting this garage would be relatively easy and would add another unit for someone needing housing. The only way that this unit can be developed is to utilize the density standards from LD2003. The owners agree that this would need to be labeled an affordable housing unit, but there would need to be a restrictive covenant built in, so that the unit would stay in affordable until the term is up. The property would need to be overseen by a designee. There is a question whether a portion of the apartment buildings units will need to be used as affordable as well. There is a possibility that 3 of the 5 units, would need to be affordable. The owners of the building have the apartment units rented out already, and this would mean having to amend the leases for those units.

Because this project is the first LD2003 situation that Gardiner has had, both the applicants and board feel that this situation needs legal input. After discussion, it was decided to table this application until both parties can consult with legal on how to best manage this. Pam Mitchel moves to table this project until August, or until both parties have been able to seek legal advice on the LD2003 matter. Chrisitan Fox seconded the motion. No further discussion. All members present, in favor.

4.Public Hearing: Review a possible zoning change to the Libby Hill Rd area and changing the density in the Residential Growth zone.

Board members agree they can hear this unbiased, and city staff reported that they did not seek outside services for this. There are several people here at the meeting to discuss this and get more information. There have been two neighboring property information sessions. The proposal is to change the lots identified in the packet from Rural to Residential Growth, and to change the density requirements for RG. Residential Growth fits the character of Libby Hill and would allow some property owners to have more flexibility with their properties. This will be a positive change to the neighborhood. ORC has recommended to be approved, after which it would go to City Council for two reads. Chair Willis opened the public hearing at 6:10 pm. There were questions/comments about increase in traffic, making changes to properties, and how this will affect taxes. Seeing no more questions, Chair Willis closed the public hearing at 6:23pm.

Chair Willis asks the board what they want to do with this change. Pam Mitchel moves to forward this to City Council with the recommendation of passage. Christian Fox seconded the motion. No further discussion. All members present, in favor.

5.Public Hearing: To review possible amendments to the Land Use Ordinance- Section 7 and Section 17- in regard to Cannabis Social Clubs. The Board discussed the pros and cons of this type of establishment. Overall, Board members are concerned about the lack of defined impairment standards and the overall doubt that it would bring commerce to the city. Pam Mitchel moves to forward this amendment to City Council with recommendation to pass. Jacob Waltman seconded the motion. No further discussion. All members present, in favor.

6.Other Business: None at this time.

7.Adjourn: Pam Mitchel moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10pm. Christian Fox seconded the motion. No further discussion. Adjourn at 7:10pm.