

# Nov 18 2025 Town Board Meeting and Workshop

## Meeting minutes

Roll Call, Attending- Supervisor Reilly, Councilmembers Jorve, McGhee, Moran, Quinn

Zoning Draft Workshop will continue through regular mtg.

### Workshop Process:

#### Town Board and Town Attorney Introduction

Supervisor Reilly opened the meeting, explaining the format for the workshop

Town Attorney Andy Howard introduced himself and explained his approach to the draft zoning document. He emphasized that the document was prepared as a baseline to start discussions, with an agnostic view. Howard noted that the document needed to be adjusted to Gallatin's specific needs, and he stressed there was no motivation beyond getting the code to meet the town's requirements. He clarified that this was just the beginning of the process, and the final document would evolve through input from various boards and officials.

### Planning Board Input

Terry Porter, Chair of the Planning Board

- The Conservation Overlay District was grouped with watercourse protection, with no specific regulations for wetlands
- Questions about placement of the Department of Health approval requirement for subdivisions in the definitions section rather than regulations
- Confusion between "dwelling group home" and "group home" definitions
- Concerns about the kennel definition only applying when dogs are for sale or boarding, which doesn't address nuisance issues from multiple dogs
- Questions about front setback measurements and road centerlines
- Inconsistencies between RA3 and LDR3 district descriptions
- The more generalized schedule of allowed uses was appreciated, but concerns about inconsistencies in permit requirements across districts
- No provisions for net area of lots that exclude steep slopes and wetlands
- Questions about minimum floor space requirements (700 sq ft) and how they relate to tiny houses and affordability
- Concerns about Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) regulations, including lack of special permit requirements and review process
- Suggestion to make ADUs proportional to main dwellings rather than having fixed square footage limits
- Objections to "strongly encouraged" language for safety requirements for short-term rentals

Planning Board members raised concerns about:

- The minimum lot width in RA3 being reduced from 250 to 100 feet

- The need to maintain the FCID (Floating Commercial Industrial District) provision that allows town board discretion to decline projects at the beginning
- Questions about wind energy provisions given limited capability in Gallatin
- The need to include clustering and conservation subdivision provisions
- Ensuring intense commercial uses restricted to state/county roads
- Concerns about flag lots and road frontage requirements

Porter and other Planning Board members discussed the preference for site plan review rather than special permits for ADUs, and the need to define proper setbacks from roads.

### ZBA Input

Richard Humphries Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman mentioned concerns about standby generators requiring variances, and the burden on homeowners to obtain variances for small garden sheds. He suggested giving homeowners more flexibility with setbacks for small structures under 144 square feet.

### CEO Input

Jake Exline, Code Enforcement Officer, provided numerous detailed comments:

- Need for minimum road frontage requirements in the new draft
- Provisions for harvesting timber
- Requested better definition of large private garages over 1,150 square feet
- Questioned the removal of lot coverage percentages from the density control table
- Concerns about reduced setback requirements (10 feet) for accessory structures
- Questioned provisions about "obnoxious use" being too subjective and difficult to enforce
- Requested the inclusion of ECHO (Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity) housing provisions
- Suggested revisions to kennel regulations, including addressing non-commercial ownership of multiple dogs
- Recommended stronger language for short-term rental safety provisions
- Raised concerns about enforcement of pond regulations
- Questioned the waiver provision for ridgeline protection
- Recommended maintaining current time limits for political sign removal (7 days instead of 10)
- Suggested clarification for home occupation signage when multiple businesses exist in one home

### CAC Input

The Conservation Advisory Council representative presented several recommendations:

- Reduce road setback requirements to 50 feet to help conserve properties
- Push for conservation subdivision provisions as mentioned in the comprehensive plan
- Advocate for smaller lot sizes in hamlets and larger lot sizes in conservation zones
- Expand stream protections to all Class C streams and tributaries
- Apply Watercourse Overlay District protections throughout town
- Implement a 200-foot minimum riparian buffer with a 100-foot vegetated zone
- Adopt town-specific water resources and wetlands maps (forthcoming in Natural Resources Inventory)
- Prohibit building in flood zones
- Define ridgelines as elevations above 500 feet and remove visibility requirements
- Add slope and clearing restrictions to ridgelines
- Include stormwater management rules requiring green infrastructure

- Protect potential ancient forest areas to avoid habitat loss
- Require conservation subdivisions within the Forest Protection Overlay District
- Include controls on clear-cutting, regrading, fragmentation
- Require driveway permits to prevent fragmentation
- Limit clear-cutting to about 15% of wooded areas
- Increase lot sizes within the Forest Protection Overlay District to 10 acres

## Town Board Summary and next steps

The board agreed that additional meetings would be needed to address all the concerns raised. Attorney Howard would highlight open issues in the next draft and incorporate the feedback received. Several key issues identified for further discussion included:

- Preservation of rural character while allowing appropriate development
- Overlay district definitions and regulations
- Road frontage and setback requirements
- ADU regulations and proportional sizing
- Safety requirements and enforcement provisions

## General Housekeeping: Website update to .gov, Highway staffing process, December Mtg. Plans

Supervisor Reilly provided several updates:

- The town website is being updated to a .gov domain as required by year-end, with a new platform and improved features including email addresses for officials
- The highway department has identified a candidate to fill an open position
- Jack Gomm will be retiring as Highway Superintendent as of December 30th, and Todd Coons will be appointed at the December meeting to fulfill Jack's term for one year
- The fire department election is scheduled for December, with current members now planning to stay after previously considering dissolution
- The town received a sales tax check for the third quarter that was higher than predicted, with cash reserves on track to be higher than the projected 3.4 million
- A check for the new plow truck will be issued, having been previously approved

## Review of October 2025 Minutes for Errors/Clarifications Resolution 2025-35

A motion was made to approve the October 2025 meeting minutes.

Motion by Council-member Michael Moran, seconded by Council-member Sara McGhee, to approve the October 2025 Meeting Minutes. Motion passed.

## Bill Review of Non-Recurring items - Resolution 2025-36

A motion was made to approve the October 2025 bills for payment.

Motion by Council-member Michael Moran, seconded by Council-member Sara McGhee, to approve the October 2025 bills for payment. Motion passed.

General – 155-168	\$51,302.94
Highway- 110-122	\$122,410.52

## Acceptance of monthly financial reports- Resolution 2025-37

Motion by Council-member Michael Jorve, seconded by Council-member Dan Quinn, to approve the October 2025 financial reports. Motion passed.

## Highway Superintendent Comments/Report

The Highway Superintendent report was read, noting that:

- The department completed roadside mowing
- Clean-up day was held on November 1st
- The new truck is at Allegiance and will be put into service once payment is made and it can be registered

## Comments of Code Enforcement Officer

Jake Exline reported:

- 4 building permits issued
- 0 zoning permits
- Total permits year-to-date: 57
- Total new homes year-to-date: 1
- 8 Certificate of Occupancy/Compliance issued
- 2 CO searches
- 10 site inspections performed

## Town Clerk Reports

- Building Permit renewals- \$501
- Certified copies-\$20
- C/O search- \$225
- Driveway Permit- \$100
- Building Permit- \$1,380
- Resident Recycling- \$5
- Dog licensing- \$15
- Total local shares remitted \$2,396

## Meeting Adjourned by Resolution of the Gallatin Town Board

Motion by Council-member Jeff Jorve, seconded by Council-member Dan Quinn, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.