



# GEORGIA VERMONT

## Selectboard Special Meeting Monday, October 13, 2025 at 6:30 PM Chris Letourneau Meeting Room and via Zoom Minutes

### Zoom Details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6165843896?pwd=STduU2JzTmpiVmE1MXZSaWZWZVadz09>

**Meeting ID:** 616 584 3896 | **Passcode:** 5243524

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

### 1. CALL TO ORDER 6:30PM

#### SELECTBOARD PRESENT

Chair Kristina Senna, Vice Chair Brian Dunsmore (via Zoom), Kellie Bosenberg, Carl Rosenquist, Judith Nasca

#### STAFF PRESENT

Doug Bergstrom, Kollene Caspers, Lori Hobart, Stacy Katon

#### GUESTS PRESENT

Tessa Collette, Terry Cleveland, Mary O'Neil, Heather Grimm, Fred Grimm, Ken Minck, Dayle Goad, Walter Goad, Michael Danis, Tom Hargy, Evan James, Dan Coolbeth, Kevin Lavalley (via Zoom) and Deanne Waddy (via Zoom).

### 2. DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS VERSION 3.0 PUBLIC HEARING

<https://www.townofgeorgia.com/planning-commission/page/town-georgia-development-regulations-presentation>

#### A. Selectboard Chair Statement

Chair Senna made a statement:

The Selectboard is elected to represent All- not just those who attend meetings. The Planning Commission and Selectboard held several public hearings, the Planning Commission on June 24<sup>th</sup> which the Selectboard warned and attended; and the Selectboard held hearings on July 31 and August 26, both of which the Planning Commission and ReGrowth Planning attended.

Tonight's hearing is to correct an error in the adoption process on August 26<sup>th</sup>. The Planning Commission did not update its report on the amendments made by the Selectboard.

The Selectboard was within its authority to make changes to the proposed Development Regulations and there were not thousands of changes. An example is changing the word *shall* to *may* per current recommendations from the State of Vermont, allowing more decisions to be made by the Development Review Board. 10-foot setbacks from the lake were based on current state regulations that do not allow, however recent history shows the governor can issue executive orders to loosen up regulations.

The Natural areas zoning reduction to 10 acres allows those individuals who own in the area to sell less of their property to conserve more, same with other areas in town. The Town has heard many positive comments about the changes to the zoning regulations, and many are thankful they can sell less of their property and stay in Georgia.

**B. Planning Commission Report 9/23/2024**

- D. Bergstrom gave a timeline of the Development Regulation review and rewrite and spoke on the history of Town zoning regulations over the past 50 years. Including:
  - In 1974, the lot size in Georgia's AR-1 was 2 acres, and the R & N districts were 5 acres.
  - In 1981, zoning was 10-15 acres minimum in AR-1, which changed in the 90s to 5 acres.
  - Over that time, there has been a large reduction in farmland.
  - Natural areas have been 20-acre zoning since the 1980s, but the zone has increased greatly. During that time, smaller lots have been created.
- Reducing acreage back to 1974 standards would lessen the impact on remaining open space in Georgia.
- Chair Senna stated the Planning Commission Report is in the meeting packet for informational purposes, no action needs to be taken by the Selectboard.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Senna asked that each member of the public clearly state their name, may take up to four minutes to comment on the Development Regulations only, and requested the community not to repeat conversations or questions due to time constraints.

- F. Grimm asked when the Selectboard decided to change the setbacks and acreage in the Development Regulations. Chair Senna answered the changes were made during the June 24 and July 31 public meetings. F. Grimm continued to ask why have a Planning Commission or consultant create the regulations if the Selectboard was going to make changes.
- D. Coolbeth spoke positively on the new Development Regulations, highlighting the benefits of the changes, such as planned growth, smaller acreage for farmers, and more autonomy for property owners.
- T. Hargy wanted to address the 10-foot setbacks at the shoreline, and the State regulations that safeguard the Lakefront zoning district.
- K. Minck read the Planning Commission report regarding Agricultural zone acreage. He commented that the Agricultural zone is intended for low density growth, which is not consistent with the two acre minimum. He continued to address the language for Steep slopes and the problems that come with building on slopes.

- H. Grimm asked about the zoning regulations along the lakefront and properties that did not follow state regulations. F. Grimm continued, questioning on Development Regulation administration and enforcement by the Zoning Administrator. F. Grimm asked who on the Selectboard thought 10-foot setbacks in the Lakefront zoning district was a good idea, given some people are not being held to State regulations.
- D. Goad said the mean water level should be taken into consideration on Shoreland setbacks.
- W. Goad asked why 10-foot setbacks were decided, instead of 25-foot setbacks as permitted by the State. C. Rosenquist asked D. Bergstrom, who said it was dictated by Shoreland Protection.
- Vice Chair Dunsmore reminded the community that zoning regulations are rules that take away the rights of property owners. The Selectboard's intent in approving the new regulations was to help landowners maintain autonomy over their land.
- W. Goad asked why the Development Regulations did not just use "state standards" language for the Lakefront setbacks.
- M. O'Neil asked about Federal oversight and protections on the shoreland setbacks, and whether they would impact the Town's flood insurance.
- C. Rosenquist spoke on the reduction of local regulations when there are state controls put in place.
- D. Bergstrom explained the Development Regulation amendment process.
- W. Goad asked again why the Selectboard put 10-foot setbacks for Lakefront zone in the Development Regulations. C. Rosenquist answered that it would give flexibility to Town regulations if the State changed their regulations.

Motion to close the Public Hearing at 7:11pm

Motion made by Vice Chair Dunsmore, Seconded by C. Rosenquist.

Voting Yea: Chair Senna, Vice Chair Dunsmore, K. Bosenberg, C. Rosenquist, J. Nasca

#### 4. **ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn at 7:12pm

Motion made by C. Rosenquist, Seconded by K. Bosenberg

Voting Yea: Chair Senna, Vice Chair Dunsmore, K. Bosenberg, C. Rosenquist, J. Nasca

**Agendas are posted to the Town website, four designated places within the Town of Georgia (Town Clerk's Office, Georgia Public Library, Maplefields & Georgia Market), and e-mailed to the local media. Meeting videos are posted on the Town of Georgia website.**

**Minutes and videos are posted on the Town of Georgia website.**

**Signed: Stacy Katon, Town Administrator**

**Phone: 802-524-3524 | Fax: 802-524-3543 | Website: [townofgeorgia.com](http://townofgeorgia.com)**