

City of Augusta, Maine
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

AUGUSTA STATE AIRPORT
CODE ENFORCEMENT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ENGINEERING
FACILITIES & SYSTEMS
PLANNING

Memo

To: Planning Board

From: Matt Nazar, Director of Development Services 

Date: March 5, 2015

Re: Museums

As mentioned at the previous Planning Board meeting there is the desire to create a museum at the Gannett House. Museums are currently defined in our ordinance as a "Service". The definition of a service specifically lists "museums". The Gannett House is in the BP zoning district right next to the Blaine House. Services are not allowed in the BP zoning district and I do not recommend adding that use to the BP zoning district as it's a very broad use and would open the BP district to many uses not currently allowed there. However, creating a new definition for museums similar to this:

Museum: a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.

This is the definition of a museum as adopted in 2007 by the International Council of Museums and it clearly fits our purpose in Augusta.

In addition to this new definition, the Board should remove "museum" from the definition of a service to avoid overlap. And finally, the Board would need to allow Museums in the zoning districts they want these uses to occur.

To the best of my knowledge, the current museums in the city are the Maine State Museum and the Children's Museum. Other locations have collections that are displayed, but the primary purpose of those operations is not as a museum. The two zoning districts where we have museums are BP and CC. Adding the use to those two zones, and perhaps KBD1 and KBD2 would meet the needs of the First Amendment Museum, the existing museums, and encourage any additional museums to potentially locate downtown.