01/22/2020 PB Minutes

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Planning Board

January 22, 2020

BETHLEHEM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM

Minutes

6 p.m.
Present: Chairman Johnathan Stevenson, Mike Bruno, Chris McGrath, Marie Stevenson, Kim Koprowski, Kevin Roy, and Chris Jensen

Excused absence: Alternate Anthony Rodrigues

Alternate: Peter Roy
Chairman Stevenson opened the meeting, all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.
Chairman Stevenson read the agenda.
Chairman Stevenson motion to approve minutes from January 8, 2020 Chris McGrath second and it is passing on a 7-0 vote.
Manufactured Housing Warrant Article
Mr. Jensen explained that the select board’s lawyer found a series of problems with the warrant article on manufactured homes. The lawyer said it lacked some technical language required by the RSA for zoning change.
But the most serious problem was that the board made some tweaks to the wording and never held public hearing on those changes, Mr. Jensen said.
Board members agreed they did not realize an additional public hearing was necessary because the changes were so small and only trying to make it easier for the public to understand.
Mr. Bruno said it was part of the learning curve of the volunteer board.
Chairman Stevenson said perhaps planning consultant Tara Bamford should be hired to look at it before it is submitted next year.
Mr. Roy asked whether it is too late to fix it.
Mr. Jensen said it is too late for this year and he made a motion to withdraw the amendment. Ms. Koprowski seconded the motion which passed 7-0.
The board said it would bring up the issue for the 2021 vote.
Gray/Corey Revocation
The board was told that the Gray/Corey revocation is being handled by Attorney Riff from Lancaster. The board decided, after getting legal advice from NHMA that a new lot line application would be the next step. Chris McGrath made that motion, which was seconded by Kevin Roy and it passed 7-0.
Master Plan Checklist
The board went over the yearly Master Plan checklist and made updates to the status of several of them.
Bretzfelder
Chris McGrath said he will stay on the Bretzfelder Committee unless anyone else would like to join. There are two more meetings. He said all the trails are open. The new gazebo at The Rocks will be named after Tanya Tellman.
Board business
Mr. Jensen said Ed King told him he will not be able to take the position of commissioner for the North Country Council because of a health problem. Deb said she will post it again on the website.
Rek-lis
Mike Bruno raised the Rek`lis expansion and introduced a memo he wrote.
It said there were a series of problems with the Rek-lis expansion such as the foundation being four feet longer than approved and the town and Rek-lis share responsibility and the planning board should have been consulted.
He said some of the lessons learned should be remedied and provided these points.
• Any changes to an approved SPR must come back to the Planning Board for revision and approval. (I would like to highlight AHEAD Lloyds Hill as an example of what needs to occur). This can be accomplished initially as a conceptual. Whereto, the PB may waive new SPR and approve changes at the conceptual. Or, require a new SPR with normal procedures.
• No deviations from an approved SPR can occur outside of a noticed Public Hearing or scheduled conceptual. In cases of immediate action being necessary; I suggest the PB Chair either convene a special meeting or if the board approves to allow the Chair or Vice-Chair in their absence to make a determination.
• The Planning Board may reserve the right to hire a consultant at the expense of the applicant to review plans for thoroughness. This action would require a board vote on a case by case basis.
Mr. Jensen said there was also the issue of the size of the addition, which was raised at an earlier meeting by Peter Roy, who noted an article in The Courier quoted the owners saying the addition was about 2,200 square feet.
Mr. Jensen said he thought it would be 1,440 square feet added to the existing building, which is about 2,200 feet.
Mr. Jensen noted that 1,440 square feet is on a document filed by Rek-lis. He also said when he was writing an item on the expansion for the select board’s newsletter, he sent Dave Wiley, the architect, an email asking how big the addition would be. Mr. Jensen said Mr. Wiley told him 1,440 square feet.
Mr. Jensen said he asked Mr. Wiley about it and was told that 1,440 square feet was only the footprint of the first floor. He said a careful look at the plans would have shown the planning board that the total footage was about 2,200 square feet.
The planning board decided to ask Rek’lis back to discuss the changes that were not on the approved site plan and the need for an updated plan that shows the changes.
The board asked Deb to send a certified letter to Rek’lis explaining their request for conceptual meeting, to bring the plans from July 24, 2019 up to the present.
This will include a new set of plans and Mylar for Grafton County Deeds.
The letter is also to make it clear that Rek-lis should not build anything that is not on the original, approved site plan. The business will have 30 days to come to a meeting – starting on January 27, 2020.
Vice Chair Bruno motion to send a certified letter to Rek`lis for an updated plan. This meeting will be conceptual. Applicate will have 30 days to comply beginning January 27, 2020. Ms. Koprowski seconded, and the vote was 7-0.
Expert help
Mrs. Stevenson said she thinks the planning board has been facing a serious challenge because it is all volunteers and not professional planners. She said that is a reason for serious concern and it would be a good idea to get expert help.
Mr. Jensen said Mrs. Stevenson made an excellent point. For example, he said he thought the Rek-lis addition was only 1,440 feet. He said he would have voted for it even if he knew it was going to be 2,200, doubling the size of Rek-lis. He said his mistake in not understanding the plan is not the end of the world. But without the expert help Mrs. Stevenson was suggesting, he worries the board could make a very bad mistake by missing something important.
Marie Stevenson motion to adjourn Kim Koprowski second 7-0 all in favor
Next Planning Board meeting February 12, 2020
Respectfully submitted

Deb Bayley

Planning/Zoning Clerk