

April 2, 2019 Planning Board

Present were: Regular Members Tom McCue, Lori Langlois, Greg Estrella, Richard Cassidy, Christina Lefebvre, Helene Rayborn, Ex-Officio member Lucie Remillard, Ex-Officio Member Bryan Chevarie, and Alternate Member Suzanne Wasileski.

Regular Member Naomi Levesque and Alternate Members Aline Boucher and Lane Strahan were excused.

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director; Michel Salek, Code Enforcement Officer; Burke York, York Land Services; and Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Sun

Ms. Wasileski was welcomed to the Planning Board in her capacity as an Alternate Member.

Public Comments

None

Approval of December Minutes

Ms. Langlois made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2019 meeting as written. Ms. Remillard seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Site Plan Review – David Poulin (412 Glen Avenue, Tax Map 116, Lot 12) – York Land Services

This agenda item had been tabled several times over the past few months as there was a lingering issue regarding a right-of-way between the City and the owner of this parcel. At this meeting, Ms. Laflamme stated that if the Board does choose to review and approve the plan it will need to be conditional upon this right-of-way issue being resolved.

This plan was discussed in detail at the December Planning Board meeting and the group provided Mr. York with a variety of concerns and/or ideas to improve the site plan. Some of these items included traffic flow, signage, and snow removal. Mr. York distributed updated drawings for the Board to review.

The owner of the parcel is remodeling the rear portion of the structure to include a small carwash. The property has historically been, and current is, utilized as a gas station. One of the concerns of the owner and the Board revolved around creating a plan to appropriately handle the flow of traffic throughout the parcel. Mr. York noted that the plan includes language that the signage must meet standards set forth by the City of Berlin. Snow banks were discussed as they could cause problems in the eye-line of drivers traveling within the lot and entering and exiting the property as well. It was noted that the applicant has done their due diligence in regards to the expected or potential issues that could arise from the site plan.

Mr. McCue opened the public hearing of the site plan review at 7:00 pm. Ms. Tetreault confirmed some of the details of the plan in order to ensure her accurate reporting on the matter.

Mr. McCue closed the public hearing at 7:01 pm.

Ms. Remillard made a motion to approve this site plan on the condition that the conveyance that needs to occur between the City of Berlin and applicant is completed. Mr. Cassidy seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Other

Lot Merger

Map 104- Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and Map 105-Lot 17

Ms. Laflamme explained that she noticed that these lots cannot be officially merged until the ownership structure of each parcel is identical. Currently, there are three different forms of ownership. Any approval will need to be contingent on the ownership of all parcels being identical. Additionally, the City of Berlin has created a form that the Coos County Registry of Deeds appreciates in terms of the format. The form that has been presented in this matter does not follow this format. If approved, a new form will be readied for the taxpayer(s) to sign.

A motion to approve the merging of these lots with the condition that the ownership names be changed to one identical structure along with a new form being generated that is appropriate for the Coos County Registry of Deeds was made by Ms. Lefebvre. Ms. Langlois seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Zoning Issue

It was recently discovered that the line separating the rural residential and residential single-family zones does not follow parcel boundaries in an area of the City. This area can be loosely described as the end of Highland Park Avenue, heading north. Ms. Laflamme explained that upon further investigation, it was not clear why the line delineation is mapped the way it currently is in this instance. This could lead to confusion or other potential issues in the future for owners of these parcels. If the Board does decide that a change is warranted it will need to go to City Council for a zoning ordinance and map change.

Mr. McCue stated that he believes that rural residential zoning is more appropriate for that swath of the City. Ms. Laflamme stated that she needed to know whether the Planning Board would be open to exploring the potential to change the zoning in the area. Any proposed changed would then come back to the group for a vote. There were no objections from members of the Board at this time.

Member List

Ms. Laflamme explained that Ms. Levesque, Mr. Cassidy, and Ms. Rayborn's terms on the Board are set to expire at the end of May. She also asked if Ms. Wasileski would be open to beginning a three-year term instead of the two years she originally agreed to. This is because the other two alternate members, Ms. Strahan and Ms. Boucher, are also on two-year terms. Ms. Wasileski indicated she would be open to the three-year term. It was also noted that Mr. Cassidy has changed his address. These changes will be reflected on the member list in the near future. Letters of intent to be appointed to another term will be drafted for any and all of those members with expiring terms that are interested.

Project Updates

BIDPA consultants – There is an event planned for Thursday, April 4th at 6:00 pm at White Mountain Community College. All members are encouraged to attend.

North Country Growers – There is currently legislation pending which would give the City the authority to enter into a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes with the owners of the facility. This would aid in making the project more financially feasible.

Skateboard park – We are hoping the weather will allow construction to recommence in May.

Food cooperative – Those in charge of the project are hoping to begin selling memberships at the end of May.

Public Comments

None

Member Comments

Mr. McCue stated that North Country Council is conducting planning board training. Ms. Laflamme can RSVP for those who are interested.

Mr. McCue also stated that HB370 is in the works. This legislation will correct the problem that arises in cities across the state where those on planning boards are forbidden from serving on other boards or civic roles such as election moderators.

Mr. McCue noted that SB69 is also progressing through the legislature. This would give municipalities additional/more clear authority when dealing with short-term rentals.

Planner Comments

None

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Rayborn made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Cassidy. All in favor, the motion carried. The meeting ended at 8:00 pm.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bryan Chevarie