

July 2, 2019
Planning Board

Present were: Regular Members Tom McCue, Lori Langlois, Naomi Levesque, Greg Estrella, Richard Cassidy, Helene Rayborn and Christina Lefebvre; Alternate Members, Susanne Wasileski and Aline Boucher.

Alternate Members Lane Strahan and Tony Valliere, and Ex-Officio Members Bryan Chevarie and Lucie Remillard were excused.

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director and Lise Barrette.

Public Comments

None

Approval of April Minutes

Greg Estrella made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2019 meeting as written. Lori Langlois seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Burke York, Presentation of a preliminary subdivision, Alan McLain (Map140 Lot 16)
It has been withdrawn.

Community Profiles & Economic Development Strategy Updates

Ms. Laflamme shared that we officially have dates set for Friday Oct 4th and Saturday Oct 5th at the Brown School. Friday night will start at 5pm with a community dinner. We have received a donation to have a dinner instead of a potluck.

The Cooperative Extension will have small group conversations. We will find out which topics generate the highest interest. On Saturday morning there will be six topics selected for discussion. Donuts and coffee will be available on Saturday.

On Wednesday September 4th, UNH will be holding a Facilitator training for our Community Profile group as well as North Country Listens and other interested parties. Pizza will be offered. It will start at 5pm at the Brown School. Let Ms. Laflamme know if you are interested, they would like around 15 people to participate.

Building a Better Berlin. We now have a logo which Ms. Laflamme shared with everyone. There will be a Community Profile Event kickoff. We will be asking people to share a photo of their favorite and meaningful spot in Berlin, their favorite rooftop, their favorite smell, things to do and share, using Instagram. Mr. Estrella asked whether people can put comments with their picture to explain why they think it's beautiful. Ms. Laflamme assured that Instagram allows this.

There will be a second Community Workshop on Wednesday September 11th. Camoin Associates will be presenting.

Next week Camoin Associates will conference with BIDPA. They will go over their Market Analysis, Economic Analysis and other completed documents. There will be a final presentation for BIDPA in October.

Project Updates

On July 24th, 1:00pm at the White Mountain Community College there will be a federal resource roundtable and an Opportunity Zone presentation. There will be several Federal agencies giving presentations. These agencies include: HUD, USDA, Federal Highways, Northern Borders, EPA, DOT, Department of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Dept. of Commerce and Ms. Laflamme, Berlin's Community Development Director. Introductions will be made by each agency and it will be set up like a resource fair. All nonprofits and banks are some of those who will be invited. There will be a final invite ready by Friday. If you have interest, you are welcome to attend.

Brown School Committee. Ms. Lefebvre and Mr. Estrella have volunteered for the subcommittee. Next Monday, July 8th, at 5pm, there will be a tour of the Brown School. Those who are involved are the Planning Board, the City Council, BIDPA, the Chamber of Commerce and some people who live in the neighborhood.

Skate Park opening will take place next Wednesday, July 10th, at 11am. There will be shaved ice, hotdogs, and a 'giant' ribbon cutting. An official invite will be going out tomorrow. There will be some short speeches. All are welcome.

There is potential for long meeting next month. Ms. Laflamme has met with a lot of different developers. There are six possible site plans in the development stage.

The old Depot Restaurant was discussed. Ms. Laflamme said it doesn't need a site plan review. If they don't add onto the footprint by more than 25% then it doesn't need to come to the Planning Board.

As of August 20th, there is a new law coming into effect. Planning Board members are currently limited to the number of roles they can serve in the city. The new law says any two Planning Board members can also serve on other municipal boards.

Other

None

Public Comments

None

Member Comments

Mr Estrella asked about the Berlin Sign. Will we be changing stone color or repainting it? He noticed some signs in the North Conway area where the letters are black. Mr. Grenier

shared his dislike for black lettering with Ms. Laflamme. Mr. Estrella asked if they are going to reposition the lights. Ms. Laflamme explained that she will be working on it.

Mr. Cassidy- Will the fencing in the Brown School perimeter remain. Ms. Laflamme explained that until August 29th, the school system is in charge of the Brown School.

Mr. Estrella-Do we have savings now that we switched the lights to LED lighting throughout the City? Ms. Laflamme will find the documented savings.

Mr. Estrella asked if we could place some 'no littering' signs in the area where we will be putting the Riverwalk. Ms. Levesque asked if there are any trash cans there right now. There isn't right now.

Mr. Estrella asked if there was a leash law. He needs to speak to the Police Department about that.

Mr. Estrella shared his interest in the article in the Business Review magazine. He is sending thanks to Ms. Laflamme and for her time.

Ms. Levesque asked about the playgrounds. She is wondering if the Community Field Playground is totally fenced in around the play areas. She says there are no playgrounds in Berlin or Gorham that are completely fenced in. Could there be grant money to support fencing that in? This is something she feels is needed for handicapped kids so they don't run out into roads. Ms. Laflamme explained there is one playground that is all fenced in on the corner of Third Ave and Rte 110. It is a playground not a Dog Park. There isn't likely a grant available for putting up fences, but there is something the City could do about fencing. It is something she could look into. Maybe even a self-closing gate door could be installed on Mason St side.

Mr. Estrella brought up the Cambridge St railing and its deteriorating condition. Ms. Laflamme confirmed that it's not ours, it is private property.

Planner Comments

Happy Fourth!

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Langlois made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Cassidy. All in favor, the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:30pm.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 6, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lise Barrette