

**October 6, 2020
Planning Board
VIA Zoom**

Present were: Regular Members: Lori Langlois, Christina Lefebvre, Naomi Levesque, Suzanne Wasileski; Ex-Officio members Lucie Remillard and Lise Barrette; Alternate Members: Richard Cassidy and Anthony Valliere.

Excused were Regular Members: Tom McCue, Lane Strahan and Brian Valerino.

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director; Burke York, York Land Services; Mike Caron, 86 Bemis Street; Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Daily Sun; and Mario Garcia, 1909 Riverside Drive.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Vice Chair Langlois read the following statement:

As Vice Chair of the Planning Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means: We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 646-558-8656, meeting ID 897 0705 1884, Passcode #547322, or by clicking on the Planning Board agenda on the City's website, www.berlinnh.gov.

Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting: We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the Board at www.berlinnh.gov.

Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access: If anybody has a problem, please call 752-8587 or email at plaflamme@berlinnh.gov.

Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting: In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

A Roll Call was taken:

Reg. Member Loris Langlois—Present and alone

Reg. Member Christina Lefebvre – Present and alone

Reg. Member Naomi Levesque – Present and alone

Reg. Member Suzanne Wasileski – Present and alone

Ex-Officio Member Lucie Remillard – Present and alone

Ex-Officio Member Lise Barrette – Present and alone

Alternate Member Richard Cassidy – Present and alone

Alternate Member Anthony Valliere – Present and alone

Public Comments

None

Approval of July 2020 minutes

Ms. Remillard made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 2020 meeting as presented. Ms. Wasileski seconded the motion. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: Langlois – aye, Lefebvre – aye, Levesque – aye, Wasileski – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

Site Plan Review – Timberland Adventures Inc., Tax Map 407 Lot 15 (continued from September 1, 2020 meeting)

The Site Plan Review is not ready at this time and is being tabled. This is the official Public Notice for a continuance until the November 4, 2020 meeting at 6:30pm. No notice will be mailed or published, this is an official notice of record.

Preliminary Discussion – Subdivision – Mike & Elena Caron, Tax Map 135 Lot 73

Burke York reviewed the plan for the subdivision. Lot 73 is adjacent to two dead end streets: Wood St and Bemis St. This lot would be subdivided into three lots, with the two new ones being 73.1 and 73.2. Lot 73.1 would have frontage on the Bemis Street side. There would be a Common Driveway connecting Bemis St and Wood St which would run through lots 73 and 73.2. Water connections will not be an issue and sewer connections are to be looked at in the near future. The Common Driveway Subdivision Regulations were also reviewed regarding the width and the responsibility for the driveway. A name for the common drive will also need to be decided upon and approved by the city council. Drainage was talked about and due to the contours of the land drainage is not seen as an issue. The application will come back for full review at the next meeting.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Bulk Energy Project Language – change from Special Exception to Special Use Permit

The Zoning Ordinance Amendment was sent to council for the first read, although it's not too late to make changes. The amendment will give the Planning Board the authority to grant Special Use Permits for Bulk Power Supply Facilities, Energy Facilities or Renewable Energy Facilities under 30 megawatts. The process would follow the same as the Telecommunications Structures or Towers Special Use Permit process. The ordinance was also renumbered and organized as needed. There were no comments or issues brought up by the board members. It will go back to the council for the second read on October 19th.

Coos County Broadband/Fiber Conversation

Ms. Laflamme and Ms. Langlois are part of a committee created by the County Commissioner's to discuss the lack of Fiber Communications in the Coos County. There is some Fiber available in Coos but it's only available to select businesses, schools and hospitals. The North Country Council has a survey at this time to calculate broadband access, which is limited in some areas.

Project Updates

The Master Plan RFP has had a lot of interest and proposals are due sometime next week.

There is some confusion as to whether the Census has been officially done due to an appeal.

The Riverwalk is moving forward with the final design. Bidding on the project will be in the spring and construction will be in the summer of 2021.

We will be resubmitting the Brownfield Assessment Grant that was submitted last year to the EPA. Last year it was very close to being accepted. This grant would allow us to have more Brownfield assessments that would hopefully then lead to cleanups.

Next month's meeting is on Wednesday November 4th. Go Vote on the 3rd!

Other

None

Public Comments

Mr. Mario Garcia is new to the area. He expressed his interest in helping out in the effort to get Fiber expansion in Coos County. He discussed how communities in the North had applied to the CARESACT and received funding for Fiber connections. Fiber has the potential to bring more businesses and jobs to an area. There is a lack of competition in the area for telecommunications.

Member Comments

Ms. Lefebvre asked about the status of the movie theater. Ms. Laflamme explained that the city is in the process having specs written in order to tear it down. The goal is to have it done this fall, but delays have happened due to needing to purchase the adjacent building.

Ms. Langlois asked about the Main Street Project grant. Ms. Laflamme said she will be sitting in on a 'debrief' to hear as to how she can strengthen our application. She will inquire about the 'innovative projects' that were accepted. She will be reapplying in the future.

Ms. Remillard asked about the signage committee and when it will be reconvening. The committee members are: Ms. Laflamme, Ms. Remillard, Ms. Langlois, and Ms. Levesque. The document still needs to be transcribed, organized and wrapped up and the committee will reconvene soon.

Planner Comments

None

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the board, Ms. Lefebvre made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Levesque. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: Langlois – aye, Lefebvre – aye, Levesque – aye, Wasileski – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

The meeting ended at 7:22pm

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 4, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Lise Barrette

* Note: These minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the Planning Board by motion.