

May 4, 2021
Planning Board
VIA Zoom

Present were: Regular Members: Chair Lori Langlois, Vice Chair Tom McCue, Anthony Valliere, Lane Strahan, Brian Valerino; Suzanne Wasileski; Ex-Officio members: Lucie Remillard and Lise Barrette; Alternate Member: Dan Whittet, Jennifer Lazzaro, Theodore Bosen and Richard Cassidy.

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director, Michel Salek, Building Inspection; Peter Donovan, Assistant Fire Chief, Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Daily Sun; Eric Grenier, HEB Engineers; Bruce Luksza, Jericho Gateway Family Campground; Jonathan & Carolyn Sapienza, 111 Jericho Road.

Call to Order

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

Chair McCue read the following statement:

As 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 884 2359 3265, Passcode #841709, 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 Lori Langlois—Present, at City Hall with Ms. Laflamme

Reg. Member Tom McCue – Present and alone

Reg. Member Anthony Valliere – Present and alone

Reg. Member Lane Strahan – Present and alone

Reg. Member Brian Valerino – 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

Chair Langlois appointed Alternate Member Dan Whittet as a voting member for this meeting.

Public Comments

None

Approval of April 2021 minutes

Ms. Remillard made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 2021 meeting. Ms. Wasileski seconded the motion. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: McCue – aye, Valliere – aye, Strahan – aye, Valerino – aye, Wasileski – aye, Whittet – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

Site Plan Review – Timberland Adventures Inc., Tax Map 407 Lot 15 (continued from April 6, 2021 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 June 1, 2021 meeting at 6:30pm. No notice will be mailed or published, this is an official notice of record.

Site Plan Review – Coos County Family Health Services, Building Additions, Tax Map 119, Lot 242.1

Mr. McCue made a motion to accept the application for the site plan as submitted. Mr. Valerino seconded it. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: McCue – aye, Valliere – aye, Strahan – aye, Valerino – aye, Wasileski – aye, Whittet – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

Mr. Eric Grenier shared the plan for the two additions to the building at 133 Pleasant Street. This building has .99 acres and frontage along Pleasant Street and Cole Street. There are two access drives on both Pleasant and Cole Streets. There is currently a trailer on the north side of the building which will be removed. One proposed addition is 2,450 square feet which is located along the Cole Street side. The other proposed addition is 1,030

square feet on the north side of the building. The southern access drive along Cole Street will be moved approximately 12 feet to accommodate the addition. The curbing along the northern side will be modified to allow traffic to travel through between Pleasant and Cole Streets. The sewer, drainage and water modifications will be on the property site. There will be areas for snow storage on the site. The sign on Cole Street will be moved.

Chair Langlois recessed the Planning Board meeting and opened up the Public meeting at 6:50pm.

Ms. Tetreault asked about the timetable of the project. It will be put out for bid in June and they hope to have it completed by August or September.

Chair Langlois closed the Public meeting and reopened the Planning Board meeting.

Assistant Fire Chief Donovan asked about the width of the drive between the new addition and the curbing on the north side. It will be able to accommodate a fire truck.

Ms. Remillard asked if there would be any traffic disruptions during construction. If so, there will be minimal disruptions and they will be sure to have at least one lane of traffic.

Mr. Whittet asked about the existing fire hydrants. There is one which will not be impacted.

Ms. Remillard made a motion to approve the Site Plan. Mr. Valliere seconded it. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: McCue – aye, Valliere – aye, Strahan – aye, Valerino – aye, Wasileski – aye, Whittet – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

Site Plan Review – Design Review, Phase II (festivals and special events) – Jericho Gateway Family Campground - Craig Luksza & Chassidy Roy and Bruce Luksza, Tax Map 402, Lots 27 and 24 off of West Milan Road

Mr. Bruce Luksza shared the Circulation and Emergency Path plan as part of Phase II for Special Events. He is hosting a special ATV Invasion festival this summer and possibly some others as well. The permits through Department of Transportation has been received in completion of Phase I. He will have sufficient access space for traffic at the main entrance and at the emergency exit. There has been some meetings between the ATV Committee, Fire Department, Sheriff and Police Department concerning the evacuation route and emergency procedures. This evacuation plan will accommodate a crowd of up to 20,000 people.

Ms. Laflamme asked if the designated Event Area on the plan would be for all events. Mr. Luksza said this is only for the upcoming ATV Invasion festival. The permanent place for future events will likely be at another location on the property.

Ms. Langlois asked about whether the roadways would be paved. They will be hard packed gravel with some pavement at the two access drives.

Mr. McCue shared his concern about the emergency road exit access from the Emergency Response Staging area. He asked if this road would be shared with the public when evacuating. There was discussion centered around the issues of road access on the plan.

This will be on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Site Plan Review – Design Review - Jericho Adventures – Jonathan & Carolyn Sapienza, Tax Map 106, Lot 8, 111 Jericho Road

Mr. and Mrs. Sapienza are going to open up a side by side rental business at 111 Jericho Road. They are currently working on a site plan. This is a 5 acre lot which has a building on it. They plan to start small with only eight machines available during the summer season. They will be open Thursday through Sunday except for a few special weeks.

Ms. Laflamme asked if there is trail access from their property. There is one land owner between their property and the trails. Access points will be off of Route 110.

Ms. Remillard asked about signage and shared her concerns with the previous owner's driveway issues and Mr. McCue was also concerned about parking and access points. Mrs. Sapienza responded that they have already obtained their sign permit and is working on their application for their driveway permit. They are hoping to expand the current parking area and to have two driveway access points.

This will be on the agenda for next month's meeting.

Lot Mergers – Riendeau, Tax Map 133, Lots 28 & 29 and Golden, Tax Map 406, Lots 21 & 22

Tax Map 133, Lots 28 and 29 were shown. Mr. and Mrs. Riendeau purchased the abutting lot number 29 and tore down the house and would like to merge their two lots.

Mr. Valerino made a motion to accept the lot merger for Lots 28 and 29. Mr. McCue seconded it. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: McCue – aye, Valliere – aye, Strahan – aye, Valerino – aye, Wasileski – aye, Whittet – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

Tax Map 406 Lots 21 and 22.1 were shown. Mr. and Mrs. Golden have purchased both lots and wish to merge them. Mr. Valerino made a motion to accept the lot merger for Lots 21 and 22. Mr. Valliere seconded it. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: McCue – aye, Valliere – aye, Strahan – aye, Valerino – aye, Wasileski – aye, Whittet – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

Master Plan recap from April meeting

Ms. Langlois summarized what was discussed at the last meeting. The transportation data and maps were reviewed. The outreach plan in place was discussed. The webpage is set and ready for people to give feedback. The flyers for the June 23rd public event has been finalized. The next meeting will focus on recreation and community facilities and utilities. There will not be a committee meeting for the Master Plan in June because we will be having the public meeting.

Continued discussion regarding Short Term Rentals and Regulations

Ms. Laflamme informed the board that after some ideas and questions were passed around with the members of the Short Term Rentals Committee, it appears this may not really be a Planning Board or Zoning issue. Some of the ideas discussed within the Short Term Rentals Committee were having the property owners registered by providing contact information with the Fire Department and Police Department and having informational documents concerning trash, parking and noise that the owner would share with their renters. Also talked about was the complaint process and possibly adding fines for first, second and third offenses.

After some discussion among the board as to where we go from here, it was decided that Ms. Laflamme will submit a memo to the City Council or possibly to the Traffic and Safety Committee with the board's recommendations. Mr. McCue asked for a copy to be circulated to the Planning Board.

Upcoming/Proposed Zoning Conversations – Manufactured & Modular Housing, Setbacks, Zoning Designations, and other

Ms. Laflamme shared some situations she has run into and would like everyone to start thinking about possible changes to the ordinances. The first example she shared was that someone approached her wanting to put a manufactured house somewhere besides Riverside Housing or Northwood's Mobile Home Park which are designated areas for manufactured houses. Ms. Laflamme asked the board if they would consider changing these restrictions. The difference between manufactured and modular homes were discussed.

Another example Ms. Laflamme shared was the current setbacks. At this time someone would need a Special Exemption if they wanted to build something with a lesser setback than the current 10 feet required. Some places require 25 feet. She is asking that setbacks be looked at and possibly making it 6 feet for all areas. This would allow people with smaller lots to have less restrictions to building upon it.

It was decided that Ms. Laflamme would bring one or two proposed changes to the board each month for discussion.

Discussion about amendment to Site Plan Review Regulations and Site Plan Submissions for Change of Use and Site Plans with no new construction

Ms. Laflamme shared her thoughts on the current Site Plan requirements and whether they are appropriate for smaller businesses. Some people would like to open a business and do not need an expensive site plan drawn up for the current processing through the Planning Board. She is thinking that a different set of requirements could be drawn up for different levels of needs. A committee could possibly be created to work on this.

Planning Board Rules of Procedure – Continued discussion from April meeting

This item was tabled until next month's meeting.

Vice-Chair Vote

Mr. McCue's term has been renewed as a Regular Member and he would be interested in serving as Vice-Chair.

Mr. Valerino made a motion to nominate Mr. McCue as Vice-Chair. Mr. Whittet seconded it. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: Valliere – aye, Strahan – aye, Valerino – aye, Wasileski – aye, Whittet – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

Project Updates

Ms. Laflamme is waiting on a response to a submitted grant from the EPA for the Brownfields Phase 1 project.

The Build Grant for the downtown project, now called the RAISE Grant, will be resubmitted.

A grant request has been submitted through Representative Kuster's office for Directed Spending Request which we can get funding for the Mason Street Bridge project. This project has not yet been awarded.

Ms. Laflamme is working on a Grant through Senator Shaheen's office which has a project funding stream for Transportation and Infrastructure which is due by May 21st.

A grant proposal was submitted for Broadband Services with the USDA. Ms. Laflamme expects to hear back by early July.

Ms. Laflamme continues close contact with the Department of Transportation regarding the Riverwalk project. Recently they removed the historical Boom Pier sign so that it wouldn't get damaged during the construction. The City is required to change Engineers for the construction phase, the DOT has a pre-approved list of Engineers. We hope to have construction start this summer.

The North Country Grower's greenhouse project seems to be moving forward and permits through us are all set.

Other

None

Public Comments

None

Member Comments

Ms. Langlois was acknowledge by Mr. McCue for a good job on her first night as Chair.

Mr. Valliere thanked Ms. Laflamme on her out-of-box thinking to attract more people to our area.

Planner Comments

None

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the board, Ms. Remillard made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Valerino. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote: McCue – aye, Valliere – aye, Strahan – aye, Valerino – aye, Wasileski – aye, Whittet – aye, Remillard – aye, Barrette – aye.

The meeting ended at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lise Barrette

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