

February 21, 2024
Planning Board

Present were: Regular Members: Chair Lori Langlois, Henry Noel, and Micah Bachner;
Ex-Officio Members: Denise Morgan and Lise Barrette; **Alternate Member:** Eamon Kelley.

Excused were Regular Members: Vice-Chair Tom McCue, Larry Laflamme, Dan Whittet and Karen Collins; **Alternate Members:** Jeffrey Quackenbush and Cassandra Mason

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Director of Strategic Initiatives; William Downie, Barrett Planning Group; and Lisa Connell, Berlin Daily Sun.

Chair Langlois called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Public Comments

None

Housing Opportunity Grant Review of Recommendations

Mr. Downie shared information on Transfer Development Rights which one of the recommendations his firm thinks might be a good fit here. He explained how sending zones and receiving zones would work to allow for preservation and housing development. There was further discussion on the value of transferred land, the zones this is typically used in, and how it works with current use properties. The procedure for developing Transfer Development Rights was explained along with an example from another community.

Mr. Downie explained how an Inclusionary Zone would work. An Inclusionary Zone is an overlay zone which would encourage development of affordable or workforce housing in exchange for an incentive. Incentives can be anything from higher than normal building heights or more units than is allowed. The process of setting up this type of zone was discussed as well as an example from another community.

Ms. Laflamme asked about the House Bill concerning parking minimums. Mr. Kelley informed that it was passed in the House.

Ms. Langlois asked to clarify the Recommendation 7.1. This recommendation is to reduce the setback from ten feet to six feet. It was explained that this would eliminate the use for special exceptions from the ZBA.

Ms. Laflamme asked about Slope and Soil based lots sizes. Mr. Downie explained that there are charts which he could supply to explain what the slopes and soil areas are. These guidelines fall under the NH Septic guidelines.

There was further discussion on what needs to be done next. Ms. Laflamme will be cleaning up the language and definitions in the ordinance. The Jericho Gateway Zone will also be worked on. Many of the recommendations will be easier to implement, others will need more discussion. Environmental Sustainability and Governance was brought up by Mr.

Noel. This was further discussed as to being part of the purpose statement. Our purpose statement was written a long time ago and will need updating.

Mr. Downie asked if the Planning Board would be more interested in Transfer Development Rights or Inclusionary Zoning. It was agreed that Inclusionary Zoning is something to look at right now and that Transfer Development Rights is something to be looked at in the future. Ms. Laflamme also said we'd like to move forward with the small homes recommendation and the educational sheets for the public.

Mr. Kelley asked if we could set up an information booth at a local event such as High School Graduation. It's something to be considered.

Mr. Downie said that there has been a survey developed as a supplement to the previous public forums. This will be shared soon.

Public Comments

None

Member Comments

Mr. Bachner asked if there was a reason why Berlin doesn't have a Welcome Board or Welcome Booth. Ms. Laflamme said that this was discussed by the Chamber of Commerce back in 2020. It's something they really had interest in building and staffing. She is not sure what happened to that conversation.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the board, Mr. Bachner made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kelley seconded it. All in favor, the motion carried.

The Planning Board meeting ended at 7:20 pm.