

PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF BERNE
PO Box 57
Berne, NY 12023

Date: November 2, 2017

Present: Richard Rapp (Chair), Mike Vincent, Debra Bajouwa, Todd Schwendeman, Dawn Jordan (Town Board Liaison), Kathy Brown (Secretary), Tim Lippert (Building and Zoning Administrator) and other interested citizens.

Regular Meeting:

Mr. Rapp called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the minutes from the September 21 and October 5 meetings. Ms. Vincent moved to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Bajouwa seconded and the motion passed, 5-0.

Old Business: none

New Business:

Historic Review (TN/MU1) – 1616 Helderberg Tr./Przygoda, 79.1-1-20: Naomi Przygoda told the Board she and her husband would like to build a small porch on the side of their house. The porch will be constructed of wood similar to the rest of the house and painted white. The roof of the porch will be shingled and there will be landscaping around the bottom. The proposed porch is to be approximately 60' from the nearest property line. Ms. Vincent stated she and Mr. Schwendeman conducted a site visit and said that the proposed porch is in keeping with the rest of the house and nearby properties. Ms. Vincent moved to recommend that the Building and Zoning Administrator approve a building permit for the porch. Ms. Bajouwa seconded and the motion passed, 5-0.

Other:

Mr. Rapp updated the Board on the application for a hardship waiver from the solar moratorium submitted by resident Randall Grippin that is before the Town Board. A public hearing is scheduled for 11/8/2017. Ms. Bajouwa moved to have Mr. Rapp draft a letter of comment to the Town Board that, as a condition of being granted a waiver from the moratorium, Mr. Grippin present to the Planning Board and comply with the draft solar law. Ms. Vincent seconded and the motion passed, 5-0.

Ms. Bajouwa said she'd gotten a phone call from the Zoning and Building Administrator regarding the blue building on Helderberg Trail west of the Old Berne Mill. She asked whether any other Board members had received a phone call regarding the building. No one said they had. Ms. Bajouwa said the phone call made her feel uncomfortable and that she was being singled out. She said she and Mr. Lippert discussed the cupola and refuse container. Ms. Bajouwa stated that Town code requires property owners in the Historical Districts to come before the Planning Board for approval prior to any external repairs. Ms. Bajouwa said Mr. Lippert had told her that she needed permits for the repairs/improvements on her property. Ms. Bajouwa submitted pictures for the record (see attached) and stated that all permits/historic review had been done according to Town zoning code. Ms. Bajouwa stated for the record that, going forward, the Board be notified of permit applications regarding repairs/improvements to properties within the TN/MU1 and TN/MU2 zones.

Ms. Vincent said she had seen evidence of repairs being done to the back of the blue building. Mr. Lippert stated that there are currently no permits or applications for work on the blue building and that for interior "clean up" no permits are required.

Mr. Lippert stated that the cupola that was removed from the blue building was less than ten years old and therefore not considered historic and did not require PB review prior to being removed. The cupola was removed by the new owners (Fox Creek Market/Cecunjanin) to prevent water damage. Mr. Lippert said that the cupola should have been reviewed by the PB ten years ago when it was constructed. Ms. Bajouwa asked Mr. Lippert to clarify for the record what will be addressed within the Historic District and presented to the PB for review. Mr. Lippert replied, "Any exterior change."

Ms. Bajouwa stated that the amount of signage at the Fox Creek Market is beyond what is allowed by Town Code. Ms. Vincent agreed that the store is in violation of the sign law and should be cited and comply.

Scott Green stated that he is worried about the sight distance on Route 6 near Robert Ronconi's honey stand. He suggested that there be a gravel pull off due to the potential for an accident at that location.

Mr. Schwendeman stated he had reviewed the draft comprehensive plan in regard to signage in the Town. It suggested using Welcome signs and preserving rural character. Briefed Board on Bethlehem, Guilderland, and Knox sign laws and compared with Town's.

Mr. Rapp suggested that the Town Board advertise for an alternate for the Planning Board.

Mr. Vincent moved to recommend that the Town Board appoint Ms. Bajouwa as PB chair for 2018. Ms. Vincent seconded and the motion passed, 4-0. Ms. Bajouwa abstained.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Vincent moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. - seconded by Mr. Vincent - and the motion carried, 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Brown
Planning Board Secretary