

TOWN OF BENNINGTON
PLANNING BOARD
Minutes of the Meeting- October 27, 2014

Present David McKenzie, Chairman
 Christopher Maple, Vice Chairman
 Jeffrey Rose, Ex-Officio

Guest Holly Mecheski

Chairman MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

The minutes of the September 22, 2014 meeting were reviewed and accepted as written.

The minutes of the October 13, 2014 meeting were reviewed and accepted as written.

Holly Mecheski approached the Board noting that the ZBA sent her to the Planning Board to identify the variances that would be required at Map 16 Lot 9 for her to have two residential buildings and a business on one lot. The Board mentioned that the provision for two residential buildings on one lot is an in-law apartment, which she does not qualify for as she is looking to use the building as rental property. The lot contains a residence, a take-out food business, and a building that had been last used as an antique shop. Both the residence and antique shop on the lot pre-exist the Zoning Ordinances. The building that Ms. Mecheski would like to change to a rental unit has not been used in four or more years. Ms. Mecheski noted that at one time the building had been a residence, but has not been used as such in at least ten years. The building has been updated recently. The Board searched to find a variance for change of use from a residence to an antique shop, but found none. It was determined that as the use had been abandoned for more than a year, it would lose its grandfathering. The Board determined that the variances that would be required would be; VIIc- setback and frontage, VIId2-multiple residences on the same lot, X5b+c- density and use in the Water Resource Protection Zone, and VIIj- non-conforming use. The Board recommended not applying for a special use for a guest cottage as it was unlikely that it would apply. A list of the required variances will be sent to Ms. Mecheski at her residence in Windsor.

Chairman McKenzie shared an e-mail that he received advocating that the State become able to provide the food that New Hampshire needs and that Planning Boards loosen the regulations for farming.

The Board reviewed the vision statement and noted that according to the survey under land uses, small farming was a top concern. The Board discussed the possibility of amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow farming in all districts in town with a possible restriction on lot size. It was determined that the setback would control the amount of use on small lots. It will be added to the vision statement that the town's people would like to see more small scale farming. Chairman McKenzie will edit the vision statement. The farming amendment was tabled.

The Board received new rules for the notification of Hearings for the Zoning Ordinance. If a hearing is to be scheduled that is pertinent to a district which has 100 or fewer property owners, all property owners in that district must be notified. Notification may be made by first class mail. This would apply to permitted use, minimum lot size and zoning changes.

There being no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Debra Belcher
Planning Board Recording Secretary