

VILLAGE OF OLD BENNINGTON
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

March 11, 2024

Members Present: Nancy Coseo (Chair), Galen Jones (Vice-Chair), Renny Ponvert, Brian Scheetz

Others Present: Deborah Towslee (Zoning Administrator)

Absent with Regret: Carl Feltz

Community Members Present: Mary Walsh

Call to Order: 7:03:21 PM

Changes to Agenda: Ms. Coseo recommended discussing the gate installed at 88 Monument Avenue and new business in advance of additional Bylaw review discussion.

Public Comment: None.

Motion: To approve Minutes of the Planning Commission Regular Meeting February 12, 2024. Motion to approve by Mr. Jones, second by Mr. Scheetz. Approved unanimously at 7:11:43 pm.

Mrs. Walsh discussed the Town of Bennington easement across her property, why it exists and the reasoning for the posts and chains the Town of Bennington installed along Monument Avenue. The Town of Bennington Department of Public Works Assistant Superintendent indicated to the ZA via phone prior to the PC meeting that the fence/chain was installed as a temporary measure to keep traffic off the area until the grass seed could take, but Mrs. Walsh is hopeful that it will be permanent. The property was vacant for a lengthy period, according to Mrs. Walsh, so pedestrians utilized her property where the easement now exists to access Bennington Museum's George Aiken Wildflower Trail.

Mrs. Walsh entertained questions from members about plans to mitigate pedestrian traffic, whether signage, landscaping, and/or permanent fencing if necessary. The committee members reiterated the current fence bylaw and the permitting process after which Mrs. Walsh excused herself from the meeting.

Ms. Coseo shared her recollection of an email exchange she had with the tree commissioner and the property owner at 11 West Road prior to the adult trees being removed as discussed at the January meeting of the PC. After careful consideration, the members recommended that Mrs. Towslee reach out to the homeowner and obtain documentation from the contractor that the trees were diseased or dying and obtain a landscaping plan the tree commissioner requested in advance of the work that the property owner did not provide.

After discussing terminology language in the Lighting section of the Bylaw and after reviewing the language required due to the HOME Act, the committee agreed that Mrs. Towslee will redline the existing adopted Bylaw ahead of the next Regular Meeting scheduled for Monday, April 8, 2024. The amended land use regulations (Bylaw) will be shared with the BOT after which the amended Bylaw must go through a state-mandated process that begins with public engagement. Mrs. Towslee can be reached via email at vobvtzoning.dmt@gmail.com for questions about adopting land use regulations.

Motion: To Adjourn. Made by Mr. Scheetz, second by Mr. Ponvert. Agreed unanimously at 9:48:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Towslee

Zoning Administrator [Saturday, March 16, 2024, 12:12:20 pm]