PLANNING BOARD - TOWN OF KNOX - ALBANY COUNTY

P.O. Box 56, Knox, N.Y. 12107

Established 1822

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes: 12 May 2016
Present: Bob Price, Bob Gwin, Betty Ketcham, Tom Wolfe, Dan Driscoll, Debra Nelson
- Meeting was called to order at 1940.

Approval of the draft minutes of the previous month's meeting.
- Minutes of the April 2016 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved without modification.
- Minutes of the April 2016 special meeting were reviewed and approved with modification.

Old Business

Bob Price updated the Board on the outcome of the last Town Board meeting. The public hearing for the Noise and Light amendments and the various typographical corrections is scheduled for June 13, 2016.

Zoning Ordinance-*Commercial Solar Array Amendment*

The Board discussed the Town Board's comments regarding the solar array amendment. The Town Board questioned the section related to allowable lot coverage and asked about the decommissioning requirement, which Debra Nelson explained is standard in the industry. The Board discussed the allowable lot coverage clause and whether or not the percentage includes cleared land *and* the buffer area. Debra, Betty and Bob G. will discuss further and provide a recommendation.

The amendment will undergo further fine tuning, taking into consideration how neighboring towns such as Berne, Bethlehem and New Scotland are amending their ordinance. There will be added language to distinguish between roof-mounted/ground-mounted arrays and the desire to support open space and rural character while allowing for renewable energy. Dan Driscoll noted that the minimum lot size is 10 acres for Agricultural and 15 acres for Residential and should be updated accordingly.

The Board discussed a recent scenario in Berne where a small-scale array was placed in the front yard of a house in the historic district. Per the Zoning Ordinance, a small-scale array as an accessory use should not be in the front or side yard. Currently, cases such as this would require a permit from the BZA, variance by the ZBA and public hearing/notification to adjoining property owners. Tom Wolfe asked the Board to consider further defining the "yard envelope", that is the space surrounding the house that would be comprised of front, side and back yards. Dan Driscoll suggested adding three categories:

- *Ground-Mounted Small-Scale—C*
- *Roof-Mounted—P*
- *Large-Scale—A*

The Board discussed large-scale solar arrays, lot coverage and visibility but ultimately decided they were not ready to make a collective change. Dan Driscoll suggested changing verbiage from "adjoining" to "surrounding" or "nearby" lands. Under the Purpose and Findings section in the accompanying memo, Dan suggested adding verbiage to stress the importance of "visual impact". Debra, Betty and Bob G. will discuss further, engage Dan and provide an updated version.

Business Districts

The Board discussed the area around Route 156/157 as a possible business district, as mentioned in the Town's comprehensive plan. Dan Driscoll prepared and presented maps of the area, which include property that was once the site of a restaurant, Mike Hammond's woodshop and a boat storage garage. Debra Nelson encouraged the Board to consider other factors that favor a suitable business district including landscape, road infrastructure and traffic patterns.   Debra read through the 1994 comprehensive plan section related to business districts. Ultimately, a business district should be designated in an area where the Town would want and be able to support growth.

Dan Driscoll made a motion that they return a recommendation to the Town Board that it is not appropriate to create an additional business district at this time. Betty Ketcham seconded the motion. There were 5 Yea and 1 Nay.

With no further questions from the audience, Dan Driscoll made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Tom Wolfe seconded the motion. There were 6 Yea and 0 Nay.

Meeting adjourned at 2150.   Next meeting - Thursday, 9 June 2016 @ 1930.