

Town of Knox, Albany County, NY

Established 1822

Planning Board Meeting Minutes November 14, 2013

Members Present:

Earl Barcomb, Brett Pulliam, Betty Ketcham, Bob Gwin, Tom Wolfe, Dan Driscoll, Bob Price, Recording Secretary Pam Fenoff

The meeting was called to order at 1931.

1. Approval of the draft minutes of the 10 October 2013 meeting.
 - Dan moved to adopt as written, Earl seconded. Minutes approved as written.
2. Review of a proposed boundary adjustment to some property located in the south east corner of the intersection of Bell Road and Rte 146.
 - Mr Walrath passed out a map and explained his intentions.
 - Two lots, 3 acres and 4.32 acres, were owned by the Martins. They want to sell the house on Rt 146 with 3 acres (min req.). Bob P asked a few questions... discussion ensued. All agree it's straightforward and that it falls under the Knox One Cut rule.
 - Mr. Walrath requested a town stamp of approval for the county. Bob P will keep the maps, stamp them and return them to Mr. Walrath.
3. Further discussion regarding the changes to the boundaries of the proposed Business District 1. The goal would be to finalize the boundaries and then create a revised Notice of Public Hearing to present to the Town Board for their December meeting.
 - Bob P reviewed the newly set boundaries for Business District 1, discussed at the October Planning Board meeting. It basically encompasses the Knox lighting district. Bob said that he had received a phone call from a real estate agent asking about zoning restrictions, etc, on the 53 acre Trotter farm. He explained that it is currently being considered as part of a business district which will also allow residential use.
 - Bob P asked about the old Laundromat – Dan feels that should not be included since there are a few active agricultural farms in between and those should remain agricultural.

- On the eastern end... Dan would want to include all parcels that are in the Lighting district. Bob P doesn't feel that we should pick up the house, but end prior to that. All agreed to that suggestion and that that follows a lot line. Along Berne-Altamont Road, it will go as far as the entrance to the cemetery. The north boundary would be the north boundary of the lots along the north side of Rt. 156 / Berne-Altamont Road.
 - Discussion ensued about the south boundary of the business district, and that it should follow the south boundary of the lighting district. Betty will get a map of the parcels that are included in the lighting district.
 - Dan mentioned the emails sent by Amy Pokorny over the last month from residents who are unhappy with the businesses that are popping up all over Knox and the wide array of types of businesses that are not allowed. Last month we agreed to recommend expanding the Business District definition to allow Residential use in a Business District. Dan feels that we don't need to expand or change the list of allowed businesses, since we have Site Plan Approval by the Planning Board and Special Use Permits by the Zoning Board of Appeals to prevent inappropriate businesses.
 - Tom read the same letters and felt that the writer wanted more businesses and that she was objecting to the restrictions in the Zoning Ordinance.
 - Dan also pointed out that Amy's other email contained a list of design parameters/standards that Berne requires for incoming businesses. He feels that we should consider some such guidelines for Knox, as we move forward. Dan feels that this should be part of the proposal... Betty agrees, Tom and Bob, also. Brett asked if this can be part of Site Plan Review. Dan says this would give guidance to all those who have to go before the Planning Board and those who don't. Bob P feels that this would take an excessive amount of time and would like to keep this as part of the site plan review process after we get the boundaries defined and forwarded on to the Town Board.
 - From the audience Amy Pokorny reviewed what she sent to the Planning Board, i.e. emails that covered design guidelines from Berne and Schaghticoke. All agree that this should be reviewed prior to deciding wording for the proposal for Business District 1. It is agreed that we will review these design standards during the meeting next month.
4. Discussion regarding some changes to the Zoning Ordinance to include language which defines the interest of the Town in protecting biodiversity when considering approval of proposed land use changes in Knox.

- Biodiversity... diversity among and within plant and animal species in an environment.
- Betty feels that we don't have much biodiversity in Knox. Tom agrees.
- Discussion ensued.... Brett and Earl went to a similar seminar and feel that a paragraph should be added to the Zoning Ordinance.
- Bob suggests we refer people/developers to Hudsonia's standards which are kept up to date.
- Dan reviewed the seminar that he, Bob G. and Betty attended. One speaker covered design standards, one reviewed DEC's new SEQRA forms, another examined the consequences of the government's reduction in flood insurance subsidies.

5. Questions from the audience.

- Bud Myers, 366-0403, 789 Knox Cave Road – has purchased the old Virginia Shaw property, 14.3 acres, on Knox Cave Road, built a house, wants to subdivide. He wants to give about 4 acres to his brother, who is currently on a 1 acre lot so he will have 5 acres total. Then another 6 acre cut for his parents to build on in their retirement. The Board informed him that one division would fall under the One Cut rule, doing both now would require approval of a Minor Subdivision from the Planning Board. Mr. Myers was asked to come to the December Planning Board Meeting with more information in order to start the process.
- Ron Shelmerdine, 872-1134, bought property on Sacandaga Lake from Nick McLane and now McLane has approached him and has offered to swap McLane's land in Knox for Shelmerdine's land at Sacandaga Lake.

Mr. Shelmerdine wants to see if this property, on the Berne Altamont Road (Old Trotter Farm) can be subdivided. He is considering donating the northern portion, approx. 35 acres, to the Town for part of the park and developing/subdividing the lower section into 7 acre lots. He asked if the town would be willing to continue the mobile home use of the property. Dan pointed out that the mobile home usage isn't relevant since it's been abandoned, and it hasn't been lived in for more than 18 months. Dan also explained he could do a cluster development.

- It was recommended that he approach the state/Voorheesville DOT office to see if it's even feasible, given the number of proposed road cuts. He was also informed that five or more lots would constitute a Major subdivision.

Meeting adjourned at 2107 by Earl, Dan seconded.