

TOWN OF TAGHKANIC
ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
April 18, 2016

Meeting called to order at 5:40 p.m.

Members present: Chairperson Joyce Thompson; Members: Donn Critchell, Kathy Bainer, Al Huehnel, Moisha Blechman, Elizabeth O'Donnell, John Roberts, ZC Secretary Linda Swartz, and ZC Consultant Ted Fink.

Excused: Dennis Callahan

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes of March 21, 2016, was made by Kathy Bainer and seconded by Donn Critchell

Ayes: 4 (Bainer, Critchell, Huehnel, Blechman) **Nays:** 0 **Abstained:** 2 (O'Donnell, Roberts)

A motion to accept the notes from the unscheduled April 11 meeting (which was called to make up for the April 4 meeting that had been cancelled due to snow), was made by Kathy Bainer and seconded by Moisha Blechman

Ayes: 3 (Bainer, Blechman, Roberts) **Nays:** 0 **Abstained:** 3 (O'Donnell, Critchell, Huehnel)

Solar Energy:

Today, Joyce attended a New York Planning Federation training session on the Visual Impacts and Zoning for Solar Energy. There are currently two "solar farms" in the works in nearby towns; one near Taconic Hills School and the other on County Route 31 (Blue Hill Road) in Greenport. Joyce learned that some towns have enacted a moratorium on solar farms and she asked Ted if it might be a good idea for Taghkanic to do the same based on our desire to protect our prime farmland soils and rural character. At the April 11 meeting, Dennis said that he had received a few inquiries, but because the use is not specifically permitted in our current zoning, it is prohibited. Ted feels that it might be a good idea to enact a moratorium at this time, giving us time to consider the use and where in town they could be located if permitted.

This training session also included a discussion of micro-breweries, which are an emerging business and are being promoted by the State. Ag & Markets is supportive, but they are not going so far as to protect micro-breweries in the way that they protect agricultural exemptions. Joyce will write up her notes and send them out to ZC members via e-mail.

Joyce suggested that we try to increase public awareness and involvement by asking for the public to submit photos depicting rural character, and Donn suggested that paintings and sketches also be included. It is hoped that increased public awareness and the opportunity for people to be involved might lead to better understanding of the need for zoning and greater public participation in the process. Submissions will be put together into a display which would keep zoning in the forefront of people's thinking, as we discuss issues like accessory buildings and solar energy.

Material From Ted: Articles 20, 40 & 80:

Ted went through Minutes from past meetings and his notes to update the Table of Uses. He noted that special conditions and requirements have not been fully formed for some of the uses. Article 80-C. lists thirteen General Standards which must be considered by the ZBA and the Planning Board when reviewing an application for a Special Use Permit; and if no special conditions are listed, the use is bound by those 13 General Standards.

The ZC reviewed and briefly discussed each of the 13 General Standards. Elizabeth noted that they are quite vague, and Ted said that this is intentional since these 13 standards serve as a general guidance tool for the Planning Board and the ZBA. Following that exercise, specific standards would be applied to the use.

Along with Ted, we looked at several of the uses listed under Article 40-B.:

During the discussion of circuses and carnivals, we found that we have no definition or regulations for events like music festivals which could be held annually. Ted will create a "**Public Events**" category and we will consider impacts such as noise, lighting, traffic, parking, water and facilities. We might consider having the Town Board issue a one-time permit for these types of occasional uses rather than controlling them through zoning.

We also need a definition for "**farm industry**" which differs from our definition of "agriculture" in that it would be a use which supports farming, but is not farming itself - like farm machinery repair. Ted will work on a definition.

In response to a question from Linda, Ted explained that Boarding House and B&B is listed on the Use Table under "Residential" rather than under "Business" because boarding houses and B&Bs are usually owner occupied and therefore considered to be a residence.

We will use the new Use Table as the "driver" and match it to the Use Table in the current zoning code. This will make it easier for the Town Board to see the changes from the current zoning.

Those uses which we did not have time to review in this meeting were divided up as follows:

Donn: Roadside Stand thru Timber Harvesting
Elizabeth: Accessory Dwelling Unit through Welling Unit, Multi-family
Kathy: Group Home/Community Residence through Townhouse
Moisha: Adult Use, Passive through Campground
John: Carnival through Gasoline Filling Station
Al: Kennel through Theater

ZC members are instructed to look at the definition for each use then consider the Special Conditions (if any). Are the Special Conditions appropriate for the use? Are more conditions needed? Fewer conditions?

ZC members should also look through the "new" definitions provided in Ted's Article 20 and be prepared to discuss.

New or Continuing Business:

From the Commission: Linda read from a magazine article which makes the argument that single family homes are becoming obsolete and that zoning laws must be updated to allow for this reality as well as to allow the expansion of home-based businesses, and this is what the ZC has been trying to accomplish all along.

From the Public: None

Next Meeting:

- The next **regularly scheduled meeting of the ZC is May 2** beginning at 5:30.
- The ZC will meet for a **full-day session on Saturday, May 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Coffee and snacks will be provided and we will walk to JoJo's for lunch. The public is welcomed to stop by for all or part of this important work session. (This meeting had originally been scheduled for May 7, but was changed due to several conflicts in schedules.)

Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 without a motion.

Prepared by: Linda Swartz

Public audience: None