

**BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
PLANNING BOARD MEETING**

RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING

January 27, 2020

Mayor Amatorio called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Amatorio, Mr. Rivas, Abenoja, Mr. Knowles, Councilman Lodato, Mr. Acosta, and Mr. Vasquez

Absent: Mr. Berger, Mr. Cabrera, Mr. Naylis, Mr. Polandick, and Mr. Pomante, Board Engineer

Also Present: Ron Mondello, Planning Board Attorney and Hilda Tavitian, Planning Board Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Councilman Lodato.

OATH OF OFFICE TO APPOINTED/REAPPOINTED MEMBERS

Ernesto Acosta

Miguel Vasquez

Robert Rivas

Nomination of Chair:

Robert Rivas

Motion by: Councilman Lodato

Second by: Mr. Knowles

All ayes. None opposed.

Nomination of Vice-Chair:

Michael Knowles

Motion by: Mayor Amatorio

Second by: Mr. Abenoja

All ayes. None opposed.

Nomination of Secretary:

Councilman Lodato

Motion by: Mayor Amatorio

Second by: Mr. Knowles

All ayes. None opposed.

Nomination of Board Attorney:

Ronald Mondello

Motion by: Councilman Lodato

Second by: Mr. Abenoja

All ayes. None opposed.

Ron Mondello was the only one who responded to the RFQ.

Nomination of Board Engineer:

Boswell Engineering

Motion by: Mr. Knowles

Second by: Mr. Abenoja

All ayes. None opposed.

The following engineers had submitted RFQ's for Board Engineer:

Boswell Engineering, Suburban Engineers, Neglia Engineering, Pennoni Associates, and T & M Engineers

Nomination of Board Clerk:

Hilda Tavitian

Motion by: Mr. Abenoja

Second by: Mr. Knowles

All ayes. None opposed.

Accept By-Laws as amended in 2008:

Motion By: Councilman Lodato

Second By: Mr. Knowles

All ayes. None opposed.

APPOINTMENTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Mr. Rivas stated the appointment of standing committees will be carried to the next Planning Board meeting when more members are present.

APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – December 16, 2019

Motion from board members to approve minutes.

Motion By: Mr. Abenoja

Second By: Mr. Knowles

All ayes. None opposed.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Any resident may comment or question any subject not on the agenda.

John Smith, resident, stated the liaison to the Zoning Board of Adjustment never attends the Zoning Board meetings. Jerry Naylis can't be appointed as Class II member of the Planning Board. He is not an employee of the borough. Mr. Smith stated he had brought this issue to the Mayor and council at the council meeting last Tuesday night. The borough does not have commissions, jut committees. Mr. Smith stated the ordinance states he has to be a member of a commission. Mr. Smith stated either the borough ordinance is changed or speak with the senators to change it to be committee member. Mr. Smith stated there was a big fire on Spring Street today that was recently renovated. It was a subdivision

that had come before the Planning Board. He had complained about it at the time. Mr. Smith stated Planning Board members need to look at the plans to see what they are going to do, what materials they are using, and if it is too close to other homes should be taken into consideration. The zoning board has been denying 5 ft. variances. Mr. Smith stated he's not knocking the board, just asking for the board to look and see what is being constructed and materials being used in the future. The board has to think about the safety of the town as the houses are being built too close. Mr. Smith stated it's time for the Mayor and council to update the ordinances. The Planning Board makes recommendations to the governing body. The Planning Board can look at what other towns are doing and present that to the governing body. The Zoning Board has been going back and forth with the governing body for years regarding pavers. Mr. Smith stated the Mayor and a council member is on this board as well as on the council.

Board attorney Ron Mondello stated that decision falls under the jurisdiction of the governing body. The Planning Board does not make those decisions nor tell them they are eligible or ineligible. Mr. Mondello stated if it was a subdivision as of right, there were no variances, there are no plans submitted as to what the houses would be. He doesn't have any recollection of the house Mr. Smith mentioned. There isn't much the board can do if it is a subdivision as of right. If there is a subdivision and the houses are too close to the side yard the Zoning Board decides, not the Planning Board.

Mayor Amatorio stated the issue is how to interpret the difference between a committee and a commission. Mr. Naylis is a member of one of the committees of the borough and whether that is similar to what the ordinance states. Mayor Amatorio stated this is something the governing body will address in the future and he has had discussions with the borough attorney already. Mr. Naylis was already appointed and it is for the governing body to decide whether the appointment is recalled. He will take Mr. Smith's comments into consideration.

Mr. Acosta stated that is the responsibility of the building officials as he knows the code.

Councilman Lodato stated the Planning Board has the right to grant bulk variances. If the subdivision is in an R-5 zone, the board knows they will be a building a one or two family house. If they will be building anything other than that, they would have to appear before the Board of Adjustment for use variance. The Planning Board doesn't have any say as to what materials they will be using.

Board Chairman Rivas stated a representative from this board will be at Zoning Board meetings going forward. The Planning Board is going to work hard this year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Motion to Memorialize Resolution – Samiron Group, 136 School Street, Block: 251 Lots: 10 & 11

Motion By: Councilman Lodato

Second By: Mr. Abenoja

All ayes. None opposed.

Board Chairman Rivas asked if there are brochures/pamphlets that are published that will inform board members what is expected of them. It's more than an orientation. There's something that says complete guide for Planning and Zoning Board members. Mr. Rivas stated he would like the board members to have a handy guide that they can refer to.

Mayor Amatorio inquired if Mr. Rivas is asking for an orientation kit. The Planning Board can submit a request for the pamphlets to the governing body and the borough can purchase them.

Mr. Mondello stated there are mandatory course requirements that must be completed within 18 months of being appointed and that pamphlet is usually given to the board members. Hilda can order them. They are about \$15-30. The Planning Board has their own budget so they can ask the board secretary to order as many as the members feel they need. It is considerable and he thinks it is a worthwhile investment.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

Motion By: Mr. Abenoja

Second By: Councilman Lodato

All ayes. None opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

NOTE: No applications will be heard by the Board that were not on the agenda at the time of publication release to the newspaper or applications that do not comply with Article VIII title "Hearings contained in the By-Laws of the Bergenfield Board".


Hilda Tavitian
Planning Board Clerk