01/08/2020 PB Minutes

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM  
Planning Board  
January 8, 2020  
BETHLEHEM TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM  
Minutes  
6 p.m.  
   
Present: Chairman Johnathan Stevenson, Mike Bruno, Chris McGrath, Kevin Roy, Chris Jensen  
   
Absent: Kim Koprowski  
   
Excused absence: Marie Stevenson  
   
Alternates appointed as voting members: Peter Roy and Anthony Rodriguez  
   
Student Liaison: Nick Meachen  
   
Guest: Ed King  
   
Chairman Stevenson opened the meeting and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.  
   
Chairman Stevenson read the agenda.  
   
Chairman Stevenson read the minutes which were approved on a 6-1 vote with Mr. Jensen abstaining since he was not present for that meeting.  
   
Master Plan Checklist  
   
The board had a brief discussion and decided to review the checklist at the meeting on January 22nd.  
   
   
Tara Bamford/Consulting  
   
Mr. Jensen said Ms. Bamford, a professional planner, told him that it would be $500 for her to hold a two and one-half hour class.  
   
The board discussed what might be included in such a class and decided to research that further to make the best use of the time and money.  
   
But there was agreement that some training would be helpful.  
   
Ed King / North Country Council Commissioner  
   
The board considered whether to recommend the select board appoint Mr. King as one of Bethlehem’s two North Country Council Commissioners.  
   
The position was posted last year and Mr. King responded. In his November 25, 2019 letter to the planning board Mr. King said he would like to serve because he believes that the council “is committed to bringing responsible growth to the North Country without negatively impacting the quality of life.’  
   
That letter also cited his experience as general manager of the Littleton Co-Op, where he manages almost 100 employees dealing with 7,000 co-op members.  
   
Mr. King told the planning board at the meeting that his interests range from better broadband to regional composting. He said he thinks there is great potential for the North Country Council to help Bethlehem.  
   
He said he would also value input from the planning board. “Whatever is your focus would be my focus,” he said.  
   
He said he sees the council as an economic development engine for the North Country with a lot of potential.  
   
Mr. McGrath asked Mr. King if he would come to meetings and update the planning board. Mr. King said that would be possible.  
   
Mr. Jensen said he would volunteer to stay in touch with Mr. King. Mr. Jensen said he would let Mr. King know what’s happening with the planning board and would also keep the planning board informed about North Country Council activities.  
   
Mr. Bruno asked that the select board check to see how long the commissioner’s term might be.  
   
Mr. Jensen made a motion to recommend Mr. King for the job. It was seconded by Mr. Rodriguez and unanimously approved.  
   
Rek-Lis Expansion  
   
Mr. Peter Roy said he read in The Courier that the Rek-Lis expansion is 2,200 square feet and that seems like more than the planning board approved. He wondered whether the company might be in violation of the site plan.  
   
Mr. Roy said he does not want to hurt businesses in town, but if the site plan was not followed that is an important issue.  
   
Mr. Jensen said he was also surprised at the building’s size.  
   
Mr. McGrath said he is pro-business, but site plans have to be followed so that the process is fair and rules are followed.  
   
Mr. Bruno said the building looks much higher than he remembers from the site plan.  
   
Board members agreed that select board – which is responsible for enforcement – should look into it.  
   
As the select board liaison, Mr. Jensen said he would check into the issue and report back.  
   
   
   
Adjournment  
Mr. Stevenson made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Jensen. The board unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:49 p.m.  
   
The next meeting will be at 6 p.m. on January 22nd.  
   
Respectfully submitted  
Chris Jensen taking minutes for Debbie Bayley (vacation)