

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM
Planning Board Meeting
May 28, 2025
Minutes

Present: Alecia Loveless, Linda Moore, Jerry Blanchard, Rob Gilgen, April Hibberd, and Sally Fitzgerald

Absent: Sean Gawlik

Alecia Loveless called the meeting to order at 6:00.

The first order of business was a conceptual design for an outdoor pavilion at the Rocks Estate, located at 107 Glessner Rd. Carl Murphy from the Society for the Protection of NH Forests and Dana Southworth of Garland Mills were in attendance to present the plans.

The new pavilion will be a permanent structure and be used for outdoor events at the Rocks Estate. It will measure 30' by 50' and be constructed using timber harvested from the Forest Society's Heald Forest in southern New Hampshire. The Forest Society worked with Garland Mill to produce a timber frame to be constructed on the site. They went on to say that the pavilion will be able to provide power to the events and that the Carriage Barn has plenty of restrooms for guests. It was also noted that there is plenty of parking on site.

Alecia Loveless reminded the board that a pavilion style sports court site plan review was waived for another non-profit in town a couple of years ago.

Linda Moore motioned to waive the site plan review for the Rocks Estate's new pavilion. Jerry Blanchard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The second item on the agenda is a Site Plan Review for a renovation/expansion at Reklis Adventures LLC. Ben Southworth and Molly Maloy of Garland Mills are in attendance to present the plans to the board.

Alecia Loveless opens the public hearing and reads the public hearing notice.

The Planning Board reviews the checklist. Linda Moore motioned to accept the checklist as complete. Sally Fitzgerald seconded the motion; a unanimous vote followed.

Ben Southworth outlined the project which would consolidate all the kitchen needs into one space, which would eliminate the staff having to run around in loops to get to the different kitchen areas. The project would also create a new waiting area and provide space for three restrooms on the main floor.

Rob Gilgen noted that there were no plans to increase seating. Ben Southworth confirmed that the project would only increase the square footage for the kitchen area. Rob also noted it was a big job to take on while keeping the establishment opened to which Ben replied "yes!"

Linda Moore noted that the plan involved a lot of restructuring while Rob wondered what the time frame was.

Ben hopes to have the design completed by the end of October and begin the groundwork at the beginning of November with the new kitchen being first on the list. The anticipated timeline has the project completed in June or July of 2026, hopefully closer to the beginning of July. The project will also cover a lot of deferred maintenance.

Rob asked about how the construction traffic would impact route 302. Ben felt that would be minimal; move an excavator in and some concrete trucks in and out. Rob noted he was more concerned about the building materials.

Alecia opened the floor to the public for comment.

Stanley Scism of 51 Maple Street had two concerns; noise from outdoor dining and the storage of garbage and how that relates to the bear population.

Rob Gilgen moved to Site Plan Review for Reklis Adventures' renovation/expansion. Alecia Loveless seconded the motion, a unanimous vote followed.

The next agenda item was a brief update from Nick Storella on the Skate Park.

Nick handed out a rough design sketch of the new skate park and explained it would take roughly two weeks to install, mostly because there is no need to remove any of the existing materials. The Skate Park Committee is in the process of putting together the RFP, and once a designer is chosen, they will come before the Planning Board for a site plan review. Alecia Loveless asked if there was a timeline. Nick is uncertain due to all the hoops they need to jump through for the USDA grant but thinks it will be towards the end of '25 or beginning of '26.

The board reviewed the minutes from May 14, 2025. Linda Moore motioned to approve as written. Alecia Loveless seconded the motion, which passed 5-0. Sally Fitzgerald abstained due to absence.

The board reviewed the minutes from May 21, 2025. Rob Gilgen motioned to approve as written. Jerry Blanchard seconded the motion, which passed 5-0. Alecia Loveless abstained due to absence.

Rob Gilgen raised concerns regarding the Planning Board signing off on Sign Permits, mainly because the ordinances state the application needs to be signed by the Select Board. The clerk suggested the Planning Board review the applications and then make the recommendation to the Select Board to approve the application. Then the Planning Board could propose an amendment to the ordinance at the next town vote.

There being no further business before the Planning Board, Jerry Blanchard motioned to adjourn the meeting. Alecia Loveless seconded the motion. A unanimous vote followed.

Respectfully submitted by,

Dawn Ferringo
Planning and Zoning Clerk