



Town of Becket
Planning Board
557 Main Street
Becket, Massachusetts 01223
Phone (413) 623-8934 Ext. 120
planning@townofbecket.org

Meeting Minutes for May 12, 2021

Meeting held via ZOOM

Board Members Present: Robert Ronzio, James Levy, Alvin Blake, Ann Krawet and Gale LaBelle*

Board Members Absent: Howard Lerner

Administrative Assistant: Jessica Perotti

Public Present: Mary Jane White, Victoria Bleier, Dan Weinstein, Cortney Dupont, Jeff Lynch, Steve Mack, Minh Tran, Ozair Hasan, Nancy Kalodner, Daniel Osman, Jeff Wilkinson, Sarah Hoecker, Lori A. Robbins- Esq. and Paula Langton

1. **Call to order:** Robert Ronzio calls the meeting to order at 6:09 PM and reads the rules of the meeting.
2. **Board to review and approve meeting minutes of:** Alvin Blake **makes a motion** to move this after item 5, Public Input. Ann Krawet **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- Ann Krawet: aye
- Alvin Blake: aye
- James Levy: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Howard Lerner: absent
- Gale LaBelle: absent*

All in favor. **Motion passes.**

- a. **March 19, 2018:** Following public input, Mr. Blake **makes a motion** to approve the minutes of March 19, 2018. Ms. Krawet **seconds the motion**. Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- Alvin Blake: aye
- James Levy: aye
- Ann Krawet: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Howard Lerner: absent
- Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.**



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- b. **April 14, 2021:** Mr. Levy **makes a motion** to approve the minutes of April 14, 2021. Mr. Blake **seconds the motion**. Hearing no discussion, Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- James Levy: aye
- Alvin Blake: aye
- Ann Krawet: abstains
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Howard Lerner: absent
- Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.**

3. **Old Business: Informal discussion regarding making revisions to Section 6.2, Mobile Home Regulations, of the Becket Zoning Bylaws:**

- a. **Board to review revisions submitted by Becket ZBA:** Mr. Ronzio notes Victoria Bleier sent correspondence earlier today but it was not seen to be submitted to the Board until just before the meeting started. Mr. Ronzio reads the email into the record. Mr. Ronzio notes the suggested revisions that include adding the word *consecutive*: twelve (12) consecutive months and changes to the definition of a mobile home- including the title to *mobile dwelling*. Ms. LaBelle suggests that *consecutive* should be put throughout the document wherever 12 months are mentioned. Mr. Ronzio asks Ms. Bleier how she would like to proceed. Ms. Bleier lets the Board know she has been taking notes that will be discussed at their next **Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** meeting. Mr. Ronzio asks Ms. Bleier to add a footer to note what version is being used so that alternate versions aren't being used by various members of either board throughout the process; Ms. Bleier agrees. There is a brief discussion regarding the enforcement of this bylaw which is ultimately the responsibility of the Zoning Enforcement Officer, William Girard. Ms. Krawet notes her concern with mobile homes that are currently scattered around town that need to be removed.

4. **New Business:**

- a. **Informal discussion with Dan Weinstein regarding establishing a campground:** The Board recognizes Dan Weinstein. Mr. Weinstein informs the Board they are under contract to purchase the Dreamaway Lodge. He introduces the members of his team present at the meeting. He begins by letting the Board know that he is working with a



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company called "Hit the Road Investors" which is a company that specializes in camping and glamping; glamping is basically short for glorified camping. They currently have locations in such states as Texas, New York, California, Utah and Maine. This would be their first location in Massachusetts. Their campsites would include tents and/or cabins. They would like to provide a fun, natural experience for friends and families. Mr. Weinstein asks the Board what they would like to see in their application when it is submitted.

Mr. Ronzio notes that under the Table of Use Regulations, in the Becket Zoning Bylaws, campgrounds fall under the approving authorization of the Planning Board. He also notes that due to the need of septic waste disposal, Board of Health regulations will also need to be followed. Ms. LaBelle, who is also Chair of the Board of Health, lets Mr. Weinstein know that they may require multiple septic systems and asks if that is included in their plans. Mr. Weinstein agrees and lets the Board know they plan on having two (2) sites per acre.

Mr. Ronzio asks how many people will be allowed per campsite. Mr. Weinstein advises there are typically three to four (3-4) people per site. Mr. Ronzio lets Mr. Weinstein know they will need to know the maximum occupancy per site. He also suggests they take into account the need for roadways within the campsite itself.

Mr. Ronzio asks what their plans are for the current restaurant there. Mr. Weinstein says they plan on keeping that open as a restaurant.

Mr. Ronzio asks if trailers will be allowed on site. Mr. Weinstein assures the Board that trailers will not be allowed at the campground. They have canvas eco-pods at their campsites. These are very environmentally friendly. Mr. Ronzio says it would be very helpful to the Board to see brochures or something similar from some of the current locations across the country.

Mr. Blake compliments Mr. Weinstein on the concept of his proposal. He has seen such camping/glamping establishments. Mr. Blake asks if each site will have its own restroom facility and septic system or will there be communal places. Mr. Weinstein



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says that ideally, they would like to provide each pod with its own bathroom facility. Mr. Blake asks if showers will be included in that or if that will be provided communally. Mr. Weinstein says that different sites provide individual facilities and some communal or a combination. Since each site will have its own bathroom, they don't plan on providing communal areas. Mr. Blake asks if the lot with the old log cabin will be included. Mr. Weinstein agrees it will be included and will become the entry for the campground. He clarifies that since they are keeping the restaurant open to the public, they want to keep a separate entrance to the campground. Lastly, Mr. Blake asks when they plan to open if approved. Mr. Weinstein says their goal would be next summer.

Mr. Weinstein says they will have different price points so it won't be geared to a specific demographic.

Mr. Levy says someone may require a traffic study because that roadway is not a main road and someone may want to know how much of an increase to expect. Mr. Levy suggests that anything they can provide visually will be a tremendous help to a proposal; a detailed site plan is ideal.

Mr. Ronzio asks if they will be open seasonally or year round. Mr. Weinstein says while they expect a drop off in business during the winter months, they plan on being open year round.

Ms. Krawet asks if the pods would be taken down during the winter due to the extreme conditions that can occur in Becket. Mr. Weinstein says they are structures that could withstand winter conditions. They were designed in Europe and are manufactured in Tennessee. Ms. Krawet asks if they plan on doing any clear cutting of trees. Mr. Weinstein says if there is any tree cutting, it will be minimal. They want to do as little impact to nature as possible as to allow others to enjoy it. Ms. Krawet asks what type of roads or access will be given to each site and throughout the campground. Mr. Weinstein says they typically use stone dust for the paths. Ms. Krawet lets Mr. Weinstein know that his proposal sounds wonderful and hopes the requirements are met.



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Mr. Ronzio opens public comment beginning with Sarah Hoecker who is a member of the Becket ZBA. Ms. Hoecker wonders if the applicant is looking into **LEED** (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification or those standards for low impact development. Also, Ms. Hoecker is in favor of a traffic study possibly to include what type of traffic is expected within the campground itself and specifically at the entrance. Mr. Weinstein is temporarily dropped from the meeting but when he returns, agrees that the roadways would sustain emergency vehicles to each campsite.

Mr. Blake adds a question regarding heating and cooling the pods and cabins. Mr. Weinstein says they use a noncombustible form of energy and will include the specifications in the presentation.

Mr. Ronzio points out they will need to include road maintenance in their plans. Depending how wide the roadways are, cutouts may need to be put in along the way for cars to pull over allowing others to pass- especially emergency vehicles. Mr. Ronzio asks them to be specific if the sites can be reached via car, walking or **all-terrain vehicle (ATV)**.

Ms. Krawet wants to be sure adequate setbacks are met between sites. Mr. Ronzio clarifies that since this isn't a traditional subdivision, the only setbacks that need to be met are the outer perimeter setbacks of the campground itself.

Lori Robbins is recognized. She informs the Board that she is the attorney for Daniel Osman, the current owner of the property. She lets the Board know she was discussing the zoning requirements with Jeff Lynch, the attorney representing the buyer, and asks for clarification if two (2) permits would be needed to operate both the restaurant and the campground together. Mr. Ronzio says he would like to read through the bylaw thoroughly before answering her question. Secondly, she wonders why a traffic study would be required as the only place she can find it would be required is for a site plan review. Mr. Ronzio thought it might be necessary because this road is not a main road and may not be designed to handle such traffic if expected. Based on the conversations, Mr. Ronzio expects approximately fifty (50) cars coming



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and going at a time. Mr. Weinstein says that seems accurate. Mr. Ronzio says that if that is the case, he wouldn't require a traffic study. There is a brief discussion regarding a past application that expected less traffic but there was mention of the possible need for a traffic study. Ms. Robbins wants to be sure the question regarding the number of permits needed is addressed at some point.

Mr. Ronzio asks Mr. Weinstein when they expect to submit an application. There is a brief discussion regarding the process of a special permit application. Mr. Weinstein says they would like to move ahead as soon as possible. They will begin drafting a plan that will be submitted for review. Mr. Weinstein thanks the Board for the helpful information and looks forward to getting a presentation together that will make the Board comfortable giving the approval.

Following the discussion, Ms. LaBelle excuses herself at 7:33 PM.

b. Informal discussion regarding the closure of Big Bass Lane- in the Crystal Pond

Association: Mr. Ronzio lets the Board know this subject was brought up at the last Select Board meeting. Mr. Ronzio invited a representative of the association to tonight's meeting as this is a Planning Board matter. Apparently, they were not able to attend. There is a brief discussion regarding the layout of the road; it is closed off on one side during the summer. Since there isn't a sufficient area to turn a vehicle around, it is becoming a problem. Mr. Ronzio lets the Board know he suggested putting in what is known as a hammerhead section, which would allow enough space for vehicles to turn around, at the Select Board meeting. There is a brief discussion regarding the circumstances of other roads in town that have been closed. Mr. Ronzio confirms that if this road were to be closed, it would need to be approved by the Planning Board.

c. Informal discussion regarding siting a small scale wind turbine next to Town Hall:

Mr. Blake says it was his understanding that this matter was settled at the last meeting. It was determined that because it would be placed on a 5 acre parcel, it would not need formal approval. Mr. Blake says they are still looking into the matter before acting on it.

5. Public Input: As discussed throughout.



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6. **Budget:** Ms. Perotti asks for a motion to pay an invoice, in the amount of \$137.80, from New England Newspapers regarding the public hearing held for the parking ticket increase. Mr. Levy **makes a motion** to pay the invoice from New England Newspapers. Ms. Krawet **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- James Levy: aye
- Ann Krawet: aye
- Alvin Blake: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Howard Lerner: absent
- Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.** Mr. Ronzio points out that the Board usually receives payment from the applicant for such hearings. He asks if the Select Board will be paying the invoice. Ms. Perotti says she can send a request.

Ms. Perotti requests to get a "RECEIVED" stamp if there is enough money in the budget at the end of the year. Mr. Ronzio asks Ms. Perotti to get some other general office supplies too.

7. **Correspondence:**

- a. **Town of Washington – Town Plan draft:** Mr. Ronzio lets the Board know that Washington consulted with **Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC)** costing them \$100,000.00. Mr. Ronzio asks the Board how they would like to proceed to update Becket's Master Plan. The Board agrees that putting out a survey would be the best place to start to find out what the residents are concerned with most and determine a starting point.
- b. **Becket Planning Board appointments:** Following a brief discussion, Mr. Ronzio says this item will need to be tabled until after the elections.
 - i. Planning Board Associate Member
 - ii. Representative to Becket Community Preservation Committee
 - iii. Representatives to Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

8. **Any other business to come before the Board:** There is a brief discussion regarding the upcoming town election. Mr. Blake would like to see more advertisement and enticement for open positions on town boards and commissions.



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Mr. Blake lets the Board know that Western Massachusetts has lost some of its population causing the need for redistricting the area. Mr. Blake points out that the Berkshires may lose some of the attention it has been receiving.

9. **Adjournment:** Mr. Blake **makes a motion** to adjourn. Ms. Krawet **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- Ann Krawet: aye
- Alvin Blake: aye
- James Levy: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Howard Lerner: absent
- Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.** Meeting is adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Meeting minutes reviewed and approved on June 9, 2021 by:

Robert Ronzio, Chair

James Levy, Vice Chair

Ann Krawet, Clerk

Alvin Blake

Gale LaBelle