



**Town of Becket
Planning Board
557 Main Street
Becket, Massachusetts 01223
(413) 623-8934 ext. 120 fax (413) 623-6036
planning@townofbecket.org**

Meeting Minutes for December 14, 2022

Attendance includes ZOOM

Board Members Present: Robert Ronzio, James Levy, Alvin Blake, and Ann Krawet. Howard Lerner on Zoom. Gale LaBelle absent.

Administrative Assistant: Susan Crossley, Jessica Perotti

Public: Olivia Pattison, Ryan Eley, Larry Geotz, Charles Francis and Loretta Francis. Zoom Attendees Lei-Anne Ellis, Laurie Friedman, Offer Sharaby, Julia Kay-Grace, Tess Lundberg, Cathy Terwedow, Henry Terwedow, Karen Karlberg, Kathy Dickinson, Coleen Cox, John Lowell, Adele Levine, Emily Pfeifer and Robin Mathiesen

1. **Call to order:** Robert Ronzio calls the meeting to order at 6:01pm and reads the rules of the meeting Mr. Ronzio introduces the board members present

2. **Board to review and approve meeting minutes:**

- a. September 14, 2022
- b. November 9, 2022

Ms. Krawet makes the motion to review the minutes of November 9th Mr. Blake seconds the motion. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll call vote.

James Levy – aye

Howard Lerner – aye

Alvin Blake – aye

Ann Krawet – aye

Robert Ronzio – aye

Minutes for November 9, 2022 unanimously approved.

The board discusses the minutes of September 14th, Ms. Krawet would like to have a change made to the wording under old business to reflect she was Chairperson at the time of the short term rental bylaw committee and that the wording should state enforcement procedure. The Administrative Assistant Ms. Crossley will amend the minutes to reflect this. Mr. Blake makes the motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Levy seconds the motion. Mr. Ronzio calls for a vote.

James Levy – aye

Howard Lerner – aye

Alvin Blake – aye

Ann Krawet – aye

Robert Ronzio – aye

Minutes for September 14, 2022 unanimously approved.



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3. Old Business:

- a. Board to discuss future meeting attendance requirement

The board discusses the merits of holding the meetings in person and by Zoom. Mr. Blake makes the motion to keep the meetings as hybrid meetings. Mr. Levy seconds the motion. Mr. Ronzio calls for a vote.

James Levy – aye

Howard Lerner – aye

Alvin Blake – aye

Ann Krawet – aye

Robert Ronzio – aye

Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Blake makes the motion to move the discussion on short term rental bylaws to the end of the meeting. Ms. Krawet seconds the motion. Mr. Ronzio calls for a vote.

James Levy – aye

Howard Lerner – aye

Alvin Blake – aye

Ann Krawet – aye

Robert Ronzio – aye

Motion passes unanimously.

4. Continuation of Special Permit for Olivia Pattison:

- a. Public Hearing – Special Permit hearing re-opened at 6:21 pm. Olivia Pattison seeks relief from § 3.4.6 of the Becket Zoning Bylaws to reopen the Becket General Store at 30 Washington Street map/lot: 206/39 under a new name Neon Newt to operate as a general store and restaurant: Ms. Pattison provides the board with a copy of a stamped survey and a parking plan per the board's request at the last hearing. The board asks about Ms. Mindle having anymore objections. Ms. Perrotti calls Ms. Mindle and she has no more comments to make she would just like to know the outcome. Meeting is being paused so that Ms. Crossley can scan in the documents provided and send to Mr. Lerner. Hearing resumes at 6:30. Mr. Ronzio wants to know if there is a contract for the water testing since the planning board and the board of health will both need it. Ms. Pattison says there is and will provide it to the board. Mr. Ronzio and Mr. Levy both bring up the position of the handicapped parking spot stating that it is too close to the building and could be blocked in by other vehicles. Ms. Pattison tells the board she is willing to move the handicapped spot to be more accessible. Mr. Ronzio asks for public input there is none Ms. Krawet makes the



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motion to close the hearing to the public and Mr. Blake seconds the motion. Mr. Ronzio calls for a vote.

Alvin Blake – aye

Ann Krawet – aye

James Levy – aye

Howard Lerner – aye

Robert Ronzio – aye

Public portion of the meeting is closed at 6:46 pm.

Discussion: The board discusses the merits of the project. Mr. Blake said the applicant did a nice job addressing the concerns of the board. Ms. Krawet agrees. Mr. Ronzio calls for a vote for the board to approve or deny the permit. Ms. Krawet makes the motion and Mr. Blake seconds the motion. Motion is being taken by paper ballots.

Alvin Blake – **Approves**

Beneficial to the town, conforms to all requirements, fosters community Gatherings and brings additional tax revenue to the Town of Becket

Ann Krawet – **Approves**

Conditions - Handicap parking to be moved from in front of the store.
Water and septic to be tested by MA DEP and Housatonic
Water Basin

James Levy – **Approves**

Conditions - Confirmation of water testing by Board of Health
Movement of handicap parking space to a superior location

Howard Lerner- **Approves**

Conditions - Water to be tested by Housatonic Basin and approval of the
Board of Health

Robert Ronzio – **Approves**

Conditions- Copy of the agreement with Housatonic Basin to be submitted
To the Planning Board and Board of Health and the parking
Site plan to be amended to show the moving of the handicap
Parking spot to be more accessible.

Special permit granted unanimously by the board. Ms. Pattison thanks the board for their time.

- b. The board discusses the Himalayan High site plan. Mr. Ronzio let the board know that an updated site plan has been filed by Foresight Land Services showing the elimination of moving the well but the existing septic system will be replaced to allow for a system that



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traffic can drive over. It is a board of health issue but Mr. Ronzio wants the board to be aware of what is going on.

- 5. New Business:** –Mr. Ryan Eley seeks relief from § 3.4.6 of the Becket Zoning Bylaws, to reestablish the Becket Country Store as a convenience store and diner at 609 Main St; map/lot: 212/31. Hearing opens at 7:04 pm. Mr. Ronzio asks Ms. Crossley have all the abutters been notified and have all fees been paid. Ms. Crossley replies yes. Mr. Eley presents his application to the board. Mr. Eley explains he has been remodeling the interior and working on the building for the past 6 months and is looking to reopen in late winter or early spring. Mr. Eley just emailed the plans he brought in for the board. The board pauses the meeting so Ms. Crossley can email them to Mr. Lerner. Hearing resumes at 7:20. Mr. Ronzio explains that Mr. Eley has already been given a permit by the Board of Health and the Building Inspector but that it should have gone before this board first since it is non-conforming. Mr. Ronzio notes that the plans being submitted to the board have no stamp on them. Mr. Eley does have a stamped site survey he will submit. The board discusses with Mr. Eley the parking, the forty foot container placement along with trash containers and ways to keep out people and animals from foraging in them. Mr. Eley states the container and trash containers will be enclosed with a fence. Mr. Ronzio says he is glad to see the propane tanks will be moved and located fifty feet from the building. The board asks about the parking plan. Mr. Eley states he is holding back on that due to the fact he is in talks with a company about installing electric charging stations and should have that information in about a week. Mr. Ronzio asks if there will be parking on the left side of the building Mr. Eley replies yes. Mr. Ronzio says it needs to be designated on the map. Ms. Krawet asks about the demarcation between the ball field and the store Mr. Eley says there is already a tree line and a fence and he will be cleaning it up and making it easier for people to come thru from the ball field to the store. Mr. Levy asks how many will be employed Mr. Eley states between three and five. Ms. Krawet asks about the hours of operation and Mr. Eley states around five am to eight pm that it will fluctuate with the market.

Mr. Ronzio asks the public for input and Mr. Henry Teredow asks if he is leasing the diner and store are there any prospects. Mr. Eley replies that there are a couple but no decision has been made and he will be advertising for help early next year. Julia Kay-Grace speaks and is glad to see the store being reopened and wishes Mr. Eley good luck. There are no more public comments.



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Mr. Ronzio brings up the signage requirements and explains that only one sign is allowed since the signage was not included in the plans submitted to the board. Mr. Eley says there will be only one sign. Ms. Krawet asks about the lighting plan since there is nothing submitted. Mr. Lerner makes the comment that he does not feel the board has enough information to approve a special permit at this time and would like to continue the hearing. The board agrees and asks Mr. Eley if he would like to continue the hearing. Mr. Eley asks the board what they are looking for to get an approval. The board explains they need a site plan signed by a registered surveyor, parking plan, signage and lighting to be included. After discussing what would be needed Mr. Eley and the board sign a continuation agreement for the next meeting on January 11, 2023.

Mr. Charles Francis addresses the board about the two properties 78 Washington St. and 74 Washington St. map/lot: 206/33&34 that he and his wife own. He is in talks to purchase a piece of land from DNC Real Estate LLC located at 52 Lyman St. directly behind and adjacent to his two properties. Mr. Francis lets the board know the addition of the land will not affect the septic or well setbacks at 52 Lyman St. The property on the side of 78 Washington will be used for a driveway. Mr. Ronzio states that they will need a curb cut from the State. Mr. Francis lets the board know he already has that in place. Mr. Ronzio lets Mr. Francis know that once he has a survey he can submit it to the board and they can sign off on it since it is an Approval Not Required and then Mr. Francis can register it at the Registry of Deeds. Mr. Francis thanks the board for their time.

Emily Pfeifer asks the board a question about what she can do with a tiny unbuildable lot she is purchasing on Long Bow Lane West. She wants to do something to store things for when they come up. Mr. Ronzio explains that she cannot put any accessory buildings on the lot. Ms. Pfeifer is going to go before the Conservation Commission for a permit to put a dock in the water. Ms. Pfeifer understands the board's position and thanks them for their time.

6. Budget: No discussion

- 7. Old Business:** Since the time is running late Mr. Ronzio explains the board will be discussing short term rentals at another meeting. Julia Kay-Grace asks to speak since this is why she is joining the meeting. Ms. Grace is concerned with the controlling of the short term rentals in Becket. Ms. Grace says there is no market to rent her duplex and because of that she is depending on the income from the short term rental. Mr. Ronzio brings up the concerns of people buying up homes for the sole purpose of short term rentals. Mr. Ronzio states that when the bylaws are drawn up that the bylaws would have to be presented at a public hearing



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and at the annual town meeting and that it would be up to the voters to decide if they want it and it would take a two-thirds majority for it to go into effect. Mr. Levy explains that the properties are not currently regulated, there is no health inspections or fire inspections and the town gets no tax revenue from them. Currently there are far too many people occupying the house while no one is overseeing them. Mr. Levy states that landlords have many stipulations on their properties and short term rentals should have the same. Ms. Grace agrees with Mr. Levy on this and states that landlords who are absent are the worst abusers. Ms. Grace would like to be on the committee to work on the bylaws. Mr. Blake explains that the town attorney has said that no one with a fiscal interest in the short term rental field can be on the committee. Mr. Ronzio stops the discussion and advises Ms. Grace to come to any meeting on the short term rentals the board is having. Ms. Grace thanks the board.

- 8. Adjournment:** Mr. Lerner makes the motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Blake seconds the motion. Mr. Ronzio calls for a vote:

Alvin Blake – aye
Ann Krawet – aye
James Levy – aye
Howard Lerner – aye
Robert Ronzio – aye

Motion is carried meeting is adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Meeting minutes reviewed and approved for December 14, 2022 by:

Robert Ronzio, Chair

James Levy, Vice Chair

Ann Krawet, Clerk

Alvin Blake, Clerk Pro Tem



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