

**BERLIN ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
MEETING ADMINISTRATIVE MINUTES**

**MEETING DATE/LOCATION:** Wednesday, August 10, 2022, via Zoom Webinar 823 1915 9757

**TOWN OFFICIALS (& OTHERS) PRESENT:**

John Campbell, Louise Janda, Conservation Commission; Chris Keefe, Select Board

**MEMBERS SITTING/PRESENT:**

R/A		34 South St
R	Lynn Ryan, Chair	S
R	Dennis Bartlett	S
R	Pat Jackson	S
R	Jim Royer	A
R	Ginny Zukatynski	S
A	Sue Roberts	S
A	Keith Soucy	P

Regular/Associate                      Sitting/Present/Absent

**34 South Street – Sign at Berlin Memorial School**

Chairwoman Ryan opened the hearing at 7:03pm. School Principal, John Campbell, reported Mr. Pusateri, District Facilities Manager, resigned and he (Mr. Campbell) would continue as the petitioner moving forward.

Mr. Campbell reported he met with the Select Board and Planning Board. The Select Board is comfortable with using Town property for the sign and expressed their desire for the new sign to meet the zoning by-laws as closely as possible. The Select Board offered a suggestion that the sign be powered by solar. Mr. Campbell reported the sign company states the technology for that is not there yet – the solar panel would end up larger than the school sign in order to supply enough power. The Planning Board had differing opinions regarding the sign. Their concern mainly being if an exemption for LED lighting were to be granted, other entities would want to be allowed the same exemption.

Associate Board Member Roberts read into record a portion of the memo from Margaret Nartowicz, Town Administrator, dated July 12, 2022, in which it states...

“The Board further discussed the sign placement request and noted its appreciation of Principal Campbell’s interest in working with the Town on a practical solution. The Board expressed its desire that the request go through the proper channel(s) for approval, and requested that the school sign be in accordance with the Town’s existing Zoning bylaws (setbacks, lighting, size) to the greatest extent possible.

Understanding that zoning issues need to be discussed with the Planning Board and ZBA, the Board unanimously approved the following:

The Berlin Memorial School request to replace & relocate the school sign previously located on the left-hand side of the driveway entrance to 34 South Street and to place the replacement sign on either the left- or right-hand side of the driveway entrance subject to Planning & Zoning Board approvals and in compliance with the Berlin Zoning Bylaw.”

Mr. Campbell is proposing a sign that is 4' by 6' illuminated on both sides with non-scrolling messages from 7am to 7pm. It would be 79" off the ground to the top of the sign and 84" across. Mr. Campbell proposes the following sign limitations:

- Alphanumeric text on a neutral background
- No flashing messages
- Only images to be used are the school mascot (blue jay) or the seals of the town and the school district

The sign could be used by other town departments as approved by the Select Board. The sign programming is all web based and can be accessed remotely. The school could facilitate the use by other groups.

Board members expressed concern for the brightness of the sign and the potential distraction of drivers. It was noted there has been no feedback or opposition from any residents. The consensus of the Board is that the sign is progressive and would foster a positive image and would be good for the Town, however, as an agent of the Town, it should be done correctly and within the current by-laws.

Variations for size, height, illumination, and hours of illumination are being requested. The Board feels more information is needed:

- Clarification on intensity of lighting (Section 1031.2)
- Deflection (Section 1031.4)
- Hours of operation
- Standard operating procedures for who controls content

A motion was made by Associate Board Member Roberts to continue the hearing until October 12, 2022, at 7:00pm to allow time for the petitioner to obtain additional information pertaining to the questions posed and to meet with the Select Board and Planning Board. The motion was seconded by Board Member Bartlett, and the motion passed 5-0 by roll-call vote (Ryan, Bartlett, Jackson, Zukatynski, Roberts).

### **Administrative**

A motion was made by Board Member Bartlett to approve meeting minutes of July 13, 2022 as presented. The motion was seconded by Associate Member Soucy, and the motion passed 6-0 by roll call vote (Ryan, Jackson, Zukatynski, Bartlett, Roberts, Soucy).

Chairwoman Ryan informed the Board she had received correspondence from Kyle Tucker who is the contractor for renovation work at the former Flat Penny restaurant. Ms. Ryan referred Mr. Tucker to the Building Commissioner.

The next meeting of the Board will be Wednesday, September 14, 2022, with a continuation of the hearing for 10 Bigelow Road, Berlin/Hudson for the cannabis cultivating and manufacturing facility. Chairwoman Ryan intends to remind the petitioner the deadline to file an additional petition for special permit and site plan approval for the September hearing is next Wednesday, August 17, 2022.

There was a brief discussion regarding the spreadsheet to be constructed by Board Members Jackson and Zukatynski through the Senior Work-Off Program.

A motion was made by Associate Member Roberts to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Board Member Jackson, and the motion passed 6-0 by roll call vote (Ryan, Bartlett, Jackson, Zukatynski, Roberts, Soucy). The meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm.

*Respectfully submitted by:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Liane Leahy, Clerk for Berlin Zoning Board of Appeals*