

DRAFT

Germantown ZBA Minutes

October 21, 2021

The October 21, 2021 meeting of the ZBA came to order at 7:00pm. Members who were present were Teresa Repko, Amy Jo Davison via Zoom, Rachel Levine, and Joe Guida.

Following review of the August and September minutes motion was made by Joe Guida, seconded by Rachel Levine, to approve the minutes. All in favor. So carried.

Motion was made by Joe Guida, seconded by Rachel Levine, to close the regular meeting and open the Public Hearing for the application of:

Michael Mayer, represented by Ron Dupont, 26 Lasher Avenue, Tax Map ID #180-1-34.2. All in favor. So carried.

The zoning law allows the height for an accessory structure of 15'. The applicant is seeking a height variance of 19.5' for an accessory structure. Question was raised by Amy Jo Davison whether the current garage could be used for the same purpose as the proposed accessory structure. Rob Dupont explained the current garage would require demolition due to the condition of the building and the cost of adding to the current square footage of the existing building would be prohibitive. Amy Jo Davison inquired about the line of sight for neighbors and themes of foliage during the winter months. Elizabeth Quackenbush, a neighbor located at 588 Church Avenue, spoke via Zoom saying she had no objection to the project. Upon further discussion, it was determined the accessory structure would be used for guests no more than 30 days per year. The applicant also stated the structure would not be used as a rental unit. Motion was made by Joe Guida, seconded by Rachel Levine, to close the Public Hearing and return to the regular meeting. All in favor. So carried. Motion was made by Joe Guida, seconded by Rachel Levine, to approve the variance with the contingencies as follows:

- a) Guest usage would be limited to 30 days per year.
- b) The accessory structure would not be used as a rental unit.

All in favor. So carried.

Laura Sink, 331 Roundtop Road, came before the Board seeking an interpretation of the Zoning Law regarding campgrounds. The applicant explained the current use for the property is short term rentals as a “farm stay” under the name of Gatherwild Ranch with a maximum occupancy of 20-25 guests, and is not a campground. It consists of 4 tents and 4 cabins on 14.5 acres. The previous Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer, Jay Trapp, issued permits which approved the construction of the decks and platforms for the tents. The applicant and her family live on the property and would like to be considered a Major Home Occupation with special permits.

Amy Jo Davison asked how far from the property line the tents are currently placed, the applicant responded there is a 60’ setback. Amy Jo Davison also asked what was being used as a septic system. The applicant’s response was they are currently using compost toilets and would also add a bathhouse, septic and an additional leach field. They are not interested in being a traditional campground but would follow NY State guidelines and requirements based which are in place for traditional campgrounds. Rachel Levine asked if they planned to expand from the current 8 sites, to which the applicant explained only primitive sites would be added to accommodate bicycle riders traveling Greenway Bike Trail. Amy Jo Davison asked about the well, which is located across the road. The applicant stated the well would be moved closer to the area of the bathhouse as part of the whole new system. The applicant also explained the Farm Stay has been in existence for the 5.5 years they have owned the property and is their livelihood.

Motion was made by Amy Jo Davison, seconded by Rachel Levine, to schedule a Public Hearing for the November 18, 2021 meeting. All in favor. So carried.

With no further business, motion was made to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. So carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Desiree M. Webber
Secretary

