

**SELECTBOARD'S MEETING MINUTES**

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2017**

**7:00 PM – REGULAR SESSION**

**TOWN HALL, 334 MAIN STREET**

**PRESENT:**

**STEVE BANNON**

**DAN BAILLY**

**ED ABRAHAMS**

**WILLIAM COOKE**

**SEAN STANTON- Absent**

**TOWN MANAGER TABAKIN**

**7:00 PM - OPEN MEETING**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Steve Bannon called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

January 9, 2017 Regular Meeting.

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to approve the Minutes from January 9, 2017.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

January 23, 2017 Regular Meeting.

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to approve the Minutes from January 23, 2017.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

February 6, 2017 Special Meeting.

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to approve the Minutes from February 6, 2017.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

**3. SELECTBOARD'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS:**

A. General Comments by the Board.

Steve Bannon informed the attendees of the meeting that the order of agenda was going to be moved around. The objective was to have the Public Hearings that were anticipated to take the longest present last.

Dan Bailly asked the Town Manager to follow up with DPW in regards to the sand/ salt pile in Housatonic for resident use. He noticed it was getting low and asked for it to be replenished.

#### 4. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

##### A. Department Updates.

Jennifer Tabakin announced that the budget meeting schedule will be addressed and finalized on Wednesday, February 15, 2017, the first Selectboard/ Finance Committee joint meeting. In regards to the Berkshire Group's health insurance policy change, discussions are still ongoing. The Town Manager highly encouraged those that are interested in becoming Police Officers for the Town of Great Barrington to take the civil service exam. Notices are placed around Town of where and when the exam will be, there is also an exam prep class held in Pittsfield.

##### B. Project Updates.

MASS D.O.T informed the Town that they will keep the traffic light on flash during the bridge project.

#### 5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- A. **Continuation** of Benchmark Development, PO Box 1823, Lenox, MA, for a special permit for the construction of a new mixed-use development in the Village Center Overlay District and work in Zone II of the Water Quality Protection Overlay District, at 34-38 & 42 Bridge Street, Great Barrington, in accordance with Sections 9.2, 9.6 and 10.4 of the Great Barrington Zoning Bylaw.

(Discussion/Vote)

a. Open Public Hearing

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to open the Public Hearing

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

b. Explanation of Project

Michael Charles/ Benchmark first described how Benchmark's downtown development is aligned with the Town's Master Plan. It will add greater density to the downtown area while also redeveloping an underused site. This mixed use development is following a national trend of more people wanting to live in a downtown area. The building will be set up to allow for PV Solar panels. Michael pointed out that this development will substantially increase the Town's tax base with an addition of condominiums, retail space, and an expansion of the co-op market. After conducting traffic studies Benchmark found no negative impacts on traffic flow. There will be a loading dock in the rear of the proposed building that is intended to improve the delivery flow in and out of the co-op by taking the trucks off the street and into a parking lot. Michael promoted Benchmark's project as a unifier for the downtown area, tying together the residential areas of Main and East Street.

Bill Cooke asked if Benchmark has resolved the easement issue with Wheeler and Taylor. Michael stated that they are still having discussions with Wheeler and Taylor, but there will be a resolution. Dan Bailly asked if there had been any environmental studies done on the former Laramee Cleaners site. Michael said that yes, there have been environmental contamination studies on the location and some remediation will have to take place.

c. Speak in Favor/Opposition

Attorney Jeffrey Cooke, represented John Dewey Academy. He spoke on behalf of the owners of Dewey Academy in favor of Benchmark's development. Mr. Cooke stated that this project will improve the downtown, adding vibrancy, which will help them with enrollment.

Daniel Lesco, Dalton, MA the General Manager of Berkshire Co-op. Daniel was in favor of Benchmark's development. Daniel explained that they want to stay in the downtown district and with the inevitable expansion of the Co-op, Benchmark is providing a way to stay centrally located.

Mike McGuire, Hollenbeck Ave, board member of the Co-op, was in favor of Benchmark's project. Mike explained that it is extremely important to him and the rest of the board that Berkshire Co-op stays downtown Great Barrington.

d. Motion to Continue

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to continue the Public Hearing for Benchmark Development Special Permit application to Monday, February 27, at 6:30PM, Town Hall.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote:** 4-0

B. Berkshire Aviation Enterprises Inc. for a special permit for an aviation field in a zone at 70 Egremont Plain Road, Great Barrington, in accordance with 3.1.4 E(1), 7.2 and 10.4 of the Great Barrington Zoning Bylaw. (Discussion/Vote)

a. Open Public Hearing

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to open the Public Hearing

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote:** 4-0

b. Explanation of Project

Laurie Robbins represented Berkshire Aviation Enterprises Inc. She said that they own 94 acres in an R4 Zone. There are currently 4 structures on the property, an office, a repair shop, and two hangars. The project is to be reviewed by the Planning Board, it proposes the construction of 3 additional hangars, with the ability to harbor 16 aircrafts each. Ms. Robbins stated that the Walter J. Koladza airport is in alignment with the Town Master Plan. The addition of hangar space will provide valuable financial impact and will continue to increase the Town's tax base as well as employment opportunities.

Mary Berryhill, Hurlburt Rd. wanted state her support the Great Barrington Airport doing what is necessary for them to stay in business. Mary said this airport is vital in terms of emergency transfers and provides Great Barrington and Fairview with exceptional emergency care.

Holly H, Seekonk Rd. said that too many questions remain unanswered and to protect the integrity of our zoning laws, the Selectboard should reject this special permit.

Ed Abrahams said that he would also like to know whether or not they are voting to approve the airport as it is now or allowing for future expansion with this special permit.

Mike Peretti, Seekonk Rd. said that he is not against the airport, but he is opposed to the inevitable increased air traffic these hangars will bring. He is opposed to the obstruction of a beautiful view of the surrounding landscape. Mike asked that the Selectboard to not approve this special permit until further research is conducted.

Mark L, Valatie, NY. is a patron of the airport and he would like to have his airplane garaged in a hangar. He said that he has been using the airport for many years and when he is in Town he shops at local stores, eats in local restaurants. He wanted to confirm that the airport does attract economic interest. Mark also raised the point that if the airport were to go out of business, it is in a residential zone and as many as 40 single family homes could be constructed in place of the airport. Bill Cooke asked Mark if it mattered as an airplane owner where the hangar is located. Mark responded that to him, it does not.

Benny B, Cornwall Drive was concerned about the increase in vehicle traffic with the addition of the hangars will bring to already dangerous intersections.

Ari, West Sheffield Rd. and his brother own an airplane they store at the Great Barrington Airport. They would like to have additional hangar space to keep their airplane out of the elements. Ari said that the airport is a sentimental and cherished place to him and that he believes it is one reason why Great Barrington is so desirable.

Ann Frederick, Seekonk Rd. said that the increase in fuel brought in to accommodate more planes will threaten the water supply. Ann said there is a serious mismatch between what is presented in the plan and what the neighbors are being told.

Margaret, Egremont Plain Rd. pointed out that the general aviation community is not the same as the general Berkshire community. The application does not give enough detail on the environmental impact.

Jim Sock, Lakeville, CT has been using the GB Airport for 40 years, he also believes it to be a vital asset to the community. Without the new hangars the airport might lose tenants and meet its demise. He encouraged the Board to do whatever they can to support the airport.

Noah, West Sheffield Rd. said that the airport is never going to expand the runway because of the property line.

Robert P, Egremont Plain Rd. was opposed to the hangar construction because it will depreciate his property value. He was also concerned about potential light pollution.

Michael M, Pittsfield, MA. said when there is snow or ice on the airplane during flight it is a serious hazard and to be able to garage the airplane, it will eliminate this safety hazard. Michael also pointed out that it is

illegal to do fuel changes anywhere besides a specified repair garage, so this should do away with concerns that fuel will contaminate the water supply.

Rob Green, NY. Said jets cannot land in Great Barrington due to the size of the runway.

Serge, NY. Said that there are many young people who are doing positive things with their free time at the airport. The Town of Great Barrington should support this. Serge said that if he could keep his airplane in a hangar it would be better for the environment because he wouldn't have to let his plane idle for as long.

Joe K, Seekonk Rd. was against the expansion. He said that hangars were unnecessary because you can always put a cover on a plane to shield it from the elements.

Jason A, Hartford, CT. said that the dream of flight is what Great Barrington Airport provides. Jason said this inspires kids to achieve their dreams of flying.

Claudia S, Great Barrington. Claudia is opposed to the construction of the additional hangars.

c. Speak in Favor/Opposition

d. Motion to Continue

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to continue the Public Hearing until Monday, February 27, 2017 @ 6:30 pm.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

C. The East Asian Cuisine, Inc. d/b/a The East Asian Cuisine, Yaling Zheng, Manager for a Transfer of Common Victualler All Alcoholic Restaurant Liquor License from Yeung Corp. d/b/a The East, Chung Yeung, Manager at 305 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230. (Discussion/Vote)

a. Open Public Hearing

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to open the Public Hearing

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

b. Explanation of Project

Laurie Robbins spoke on behalf of The East. Laurie explained that the new tenet would like to transfer the liquor license to her name, Chung Yeung.

c. Speak in Favor/Opposition

d. Motion to Close Public Hearing

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to close the Public Hearing.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

e. Motion re: Findings

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to approve the facts and findings on the application of The East Asian Cuisine, Inc. d/b/a The East Asian Cuisine, Yaling Zheng, Manager for a Transfer of Common Victualler All Alcoholic Restaurant Liquor License from Yeung Corp. d/b/a The East, Chung Yeung, Manager at 305 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230. The findings are that the benefits of the proposal outweigh any possible detrimental impact.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

f. Motion re: Approval/Denial/Table

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to approve the Common Victualler All Alcoholic Liquor License.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

D. National Grid Application to remove or prune public shade trees in the Town of Great Barrington in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Chapter 87, Public Shade Tree Law, Section 3 (Cutting Public Shade Trees; Hearing; Damages) along Division Street, Park Street, Old Stockbridge Road and Lake Buel Road. (Discussion/Vote)

a. Open Public Hearing

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to open the Public Hearing

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

b. Explanation of Project

Mike Peretti, the Great Barrington Tree Warden identified 87 trees as hazardous to the public and to power lines. Ed Abrahams asked whether or not Mike or the Tree Committee has personally inspected each tree on this list. Mike said he had seen each tree intended to be pruned or removed and even reduced the original list by about 40 trees. Mike informed the Board that they do not have to replace all removed trees but will be applying for grants in order to replace most of them.

c. Speak in Favor/Opposition

d. Motion to Close Public Hearing

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to close the Public Hearing

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

e. Motion to Approve

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to approve the National Grid Application to remove or prune all shade trees in the Town of Great Barrington in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Chapter 87, Public Shade Tree Law, Section 3 (Cutting Public Shade Trees; Hearing; Damages) along Division Street, Old Stockbridge Road and Lake Buel Road.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

## 6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. SB – Appointment of member to the Tree Committee. (Discussion/Vote)

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to appoint Mike Peretti pending any further legal clarification.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

Ed Abrahams asked since Mike is an employee of the Town will his serving on a Town Board be a conflict of interest? Town Manager Tabakin said that she has already sought advice from the Town Counsel and Mike will need to sign a waiver.

B. SB –Town Counsel Re-appointment. (Discussion)

The Selectboard decided that they would revisit this discussion once the budget season is over. They instructed the Town Manager to place it on an agenda in June or July.

C. National Grid and Verizon New England Inc. to install 1 Joint pole and 1 Joint owned pole (p87-1 Monument Valley Road) approximately 2090' southeast of Lovers Lane for electrical service to customer at 235 Monument Valley Road. (Discussion/Vote)

**Motion:** Dan Bailly moved to approve.

**Second:** Ed Abrahams

**Vote: 4-0**

## 7. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:

None.

## 8. SELECTBOARD'S TIME:

None.

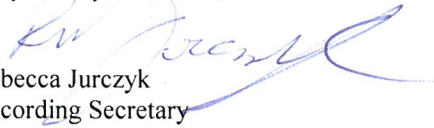
**9. MEDIA TIME:**

The Berkshire Eagle- Eoin Higgins asked the Board about the rumor of an ICE raid occurring in Great Barrington the previous weekend and if they had heard anything on the subject. The Board had not heard anything. Eoin asked if the Town Hall is typically informed when Black Hawks arrive at the Great Barrington Airport. Steve Bannon responded that historically the Selectboard and the Town Manager have not been informed. Mr. Higgins asked the Board if they had any comment on the robbery at Salisbury Bank this afternoon. The Town Manager responded that she will have a press release but it is too soon to comment.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion made by Daniel Bailly, seconded by Ed Abrahams the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Rebecca Jurczyk  
Recording Secretary