

TOWN OF THORNTON

Zoning Board of Adjustment

Approved on:	3/24/22
ZBA Initials:	gm m
Rec'd by Town Clerk on:	3/29/22
Town Clerk Initials:	ACK

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING MINUTES

October 28, 2021

WELCOME:

Chairman Joe Monti welcomed the members.

CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR:

Mr. Monti called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL BY CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Monti completed the roll call.

The following members were present:

Chairman Joe Monti, Joan Marshall, Alan Rawson, Jerry Sobolewski

The following members were present via teleconference: None

The following members were absent: Vice-Chairman Ken Miller

Also Present: Kerrin Randall, Board Assistant; Steven Babin, Nancy Decoteau, Peter Laufenberg

Mr. Monti informed the Board that Maureen Patti has been appointed as an Alternate member.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon distribution and review of the meeting minutes of June 24, 2021, the members took the following action:

MOTION: "To accept and approve the Minutes of the June 24, 2021 meeting as amended."

Motion: A. Rawson

Second: J. Marshall

Discussion: Mr. Rawson submitted grammatical changes for the minutes.

Roll Call Vote: 4-YES, 0-NO, 0-ABSTAIN

Motion passes.

Upon distribution and review of the meeting minutes of June 28, 2021, the members took the following action:

MOTION: "To accept and approve the Minutes of the June 28, 2021 meeting as amended."

Motion: J. Marshall

Second: J. Sobolewski

Discussion: Mr. Rawson submitted grammatical changes for the minutes.

Roll Call Vote: 4-YES, 0-NO, 0-ABSTAIN

Motion passes.

MOTION: "To add line numbers to meeting minutes moving forward."

Motion: J. Sobolewski

Second: J. Marshall

Discussion: None.

Roll Call Vote: 4-YES, 0-NO, 0-ABSTAIN

Motion passes.

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50 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

51

52 **NEW BUSINESS:**

53 • 2022 Meeting Dates

54 Upon distribution and review of the 2022 Meeting Dates, the members took the following action:

55 **MOTION: "To accept and approve the 2022 Meeting Dates as amended."**

56 **Motion: J. Marshall**

57 **Second: J. Sobolewski**

58 **Discussion: None**

59 **Roll Call Vote: 4-YES, 0-NO, 0-ABSTAIN**

60 **Motion passes.**

61

62 • Remanded Application to the Planning Board

63 ○ September 7, 2021 Planning Board Meeting minutes

64 Mr. Monti acknowledged Mr. Babin, Mr. Laufenberg, and Ms. Decoteau as members of the Planning
65 Board in attendance.

66

67 Mr. Monti clarified that several members of the ZBA were unhappy with comments made by members of
68 the Planning Board in the meeting minutes of September 7, 2021. Mr. Monti asked the ZBA members for
69 their thoughts on the minutes.

70

71 Ms. Marshall stated she does not see any value in further discussing the comments made; the members of
72 the Planning Board are welcome to state their own opinions, as are the members of the ZBA. Ms.
73 Marshall stated both Boards did their due diligence in coming to their respective decisions regarding the
74 Vertex Tower Assets, LLC project.

75

76 Mr. Sobolewski stated the ZBA worked very hard on the issues and concerns of the residents regarding
77 the tower. He stated the comments in the Planning Board minutes indicating that the ZBA does not have
78 the Town's best interests in mind are entirely false, and that reading those comments hit him and the other
79 ZBA members hard.

80

81 Mr. Monti stated the original plan submitted by Vertex had the driveway access coming off of Treeline
82 Road, and the ZBA made them change the location of the road based on what the residents wanted. He
83 stated there is a gap in cellular coverage that needs to be filled, and the location of the tower in a
84 residential zone was the only solution available. Mr. Monti wanted to make clear that the ZBA and
85 Planning Board both take all matters brought to them seriously, and think their decisions through; they do
86 not act cavalierly, as legal and expert counsel and opinion are taken into account.

87

88 Mr. Babin agreed with everything the Board said and stated that both Boards had the best interests of
89 residents in mind when rendering their decisions. He stated the ZBA did everything within the confines
90 of the law but feels that non-residents interpreting the Town Ordinances leaves room for error.

91

92 Mr. Babin stated the Planning Board is currently working on amending the Zoning Ordinance, including
93 the Telecommunications Facility Ordinance. He stated he does not agree with how the process of the
94 Tower proceeded, but landowners have a right to do what they want on their land within the Ordinances.

95

96 Mr. Babin stated comments made in the Planning Board meeting minutes were not intended to offend,
97 and he apologized if any one was offended. Mr. Babin stated there was perception of the Boards being at
98 odds with one another, but that was never the case; both Chairs acted admirably. Mr. Babin thanked the

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99 ZBA for all their work, and the Planning Board will let the ZBA know when the next work session for the
100 Zoning Ordinance Amendments is to get feedback.

101
102 Mr. Laufenberg stated he wanted to offer an apology to the ZBA if his opinions expressed in the Planning
103 Board minutes caused offense. He stated the ZBA put a lot of work into their decision, and he didn't
104 want to come across as if he was attacking the Board's character.

105
106 Ms. Decoteau stated her reason for abstaining from the vote on the Vertex Tower reads differently than it
107 was intended. She stated when the Planning Board received the remanded application, it felt like a
108 decision had already been made and there was nothing left to decide. Ms. Decoteau stated she was
109 frustrated with the process as a whole and felt like the ZBA got to make the final decision. She stated by
110 no means did she intend for her comments to indicate that the ZBA did not do their best to make a well-
111 informed decision.

112
113 The ZBA members thanked Mr. Babin, Mr. Laufenberg, and Ms. Decoteau for their comments this
114 evening. Discussion continued on the process in which the applications were heard, and ways to get more
115 resident participation in public meetings.

116
117 Mr. Monti thanked Mr. Babin, Mr. Laufenberg, and Ms. Decoteau for attending.

118
119 **COMMUNICATIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS:** None

120
121 **OTHER BUSINESS:** None
122 Mr. Monti reviewed the new contact list for ZAB members.

123
124 **ADJOURNMENT:**
125 **MOTION: "To adjourn at 6:44 p.m."**
126 **Motion: J. Marshall**
127 **Second: A. Rawson**
128 **Roll Call Vote: 4- YES, 0- NO, 0- ABSTAIN**
129 **Discussion: None**
130 **Motion Passes.**

131
132 Respectfully submitted,

133
134 Kerrin Randall
135 Zoning Board Assistant