

Town of Sheffield
Zoning Board of Appeals
Thursday, June 18, 2020 at 7pm
Virtual Meeting

Zoning Board of Appeals members present:

Eric Carlson, Chair
Mark Bachetti
Allison Lasso
John Reilley
Paul Nardi

Members of the Public: Elizabeth Coffee, Yaroslav Shukel, Rene Wood

Chairman Carlson called the virtual meeting to order at 7:00pm. R. Wood took minutes.

Special Permit Application of Elizabeth Coffee and Yaroslav Shukel for the installation of a yurt on property located at 467 Berkshire School Road. The hearing was opened at 7:01pm by Chairman Carlson; the reading of the hearing notice was dispensed with as all present had read it. The applicants presented their Special Permit application for an accessory building, which would be a semi- permanent, wood and canvas, no foundation yurt. It would have a wood stove. The yurt would be set back from neighboring lot lines. Sheffield Zoning By-Laws require, because they do not have the necessary frontage, they must come to the ZBA as the lot is a pre-existing non-conforming lot. (The property is to the left as one drives into the SBRSD campus, using the Mt. Everett entrance and while not physically on Berkshire School Road has that address.)

Chairman Carlson opened the hearing up to Board member's questions or comments:

Mark Bachetti: Question: Are there any plans for taking it down during the winter? Answer by applicant: No, but if we needed to move it, it could be done as it is easy to move.

Question: What will be its use? Answer: It will be used as a guest house; will have bed and chair. Applicants referred to it as a glorified tent.

Question: Will it have permanent wiring? Answer: No, it will have a solar battery.

Question: Will it have water? Answer: No plumbing.

Question: Will it have windows? Answer: It will have 2 windows a door and a skylight.

Question: Where is it located? Answer: Right off of the entrance to Mt. Everett School, off to the left.

Allison Lasso: Question: What buildings exist now on the property? Question: a house, garage, and shed. A. Lasso noted there are several other yurts in Sheffield and the only reason this is before the Board is because it is a non-conforming lot.

Chairman Carlson: Question: What is the yurt's longevity? Answer: 10 – 15 years. There was a brief discussion on how it appears as it ages and it was noted by the applicants that while the exterior is white, it is a canvas mixed fabric exterior, which may be replaced by buying a new exterior shell. Question: Where will it be located and what will be its visibility? Answer: Really can't be seen when drive in on the road to the school and if you do see it, it will be for a brief moment.

Judy Owens: Member of the public and an abutter who received a notice from a town, made a positive comment on yurts.

J. Reilley: Commented on his experience with yurts in Colorado and their attractiveness; no issues with their holding up; attractive. Noted it may require less maintenance than a regular structure because of the fabric used.

A question was asked regarding the Building Inspector's involvement. Chairman Carlson said because of no frontage, and it being a non-conforming lot, the applicants were sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a Special Permit, as required in the Zoning By-Laws.

P. Nardi : Question: Will the access be through existing driveway? Answer: Yes.

Chairman Carlson noted granting the Special Permit will not make it more non-conforming or detrimental to the neighborhood. Chairman Carlson closed the public input at 7:13pm and opened deliberations for Board members. He polled each Board member and each was in favor of granting the Special Permit, as presented.

M. Bachetti moved to approve the Special Permit application for the property located at 467 Berkshire School Road for the construction of a 20 foot yurt as per the location in the Application with the following conditions: 1) if the applicants decide at some time to move the yurt, they must maintain the 40 foot minimum setback as specified in the Sheffield Zoning By-Laws; 2) no permanent water or wiring may be installed; 3) no foundation may be installed and 4) the applicants must obtain a permit for the woodstove. The motion was seconded by J.Reilly and Board members voted, 4-0-0 by a roll call vote, as follows: A. Lassoe, AYE; P. Nardi, AYE; J. Reilly, AYE; M. Bachetti, AYE; and Chairman Carlson, AYE.

Approval of Minutes: Board minutes of 4/16/20 virtual meeting were reviewed. **On a motion by J. Reilley, seconded by P. Nardi, and a roll call vote of 4-0, the Board accepted the minutes of 4/16/20 as presented.**

Other Business: None

Board Adjournment: On a motion by M. Bachetti, seconded by E. Carlson, and unanimously approved 4-0 on a roll call vote, the Board adjourned at 7:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rene Wood



Meeting Materials: Meeting Notice/Agenda for June 18, 2020; Application for Special Permit filed by Elizabeth Coffee and Yaroslava Shukel, dated 5/14/20