

TEMPLE ZBA MEMBER ROLE

The primary role of a zoning board is to review and decide cases where a special exception or a variance to the ordinance is sought and these are specifically proscribed by law, not whimsy. It is important to note that there is not a commercial ordinance in the town of Temple.

Because we do not have a business zone, any proposed commercial business must comply with the requirements of article 4 section 13 A and B of Temple's zoning ordinance. This is to protect residents according to the ordinances put in place over the years by you, the Temple citizens. It is the responsibility of the applicant to clearly demonstrate to the board their compliance with these requirements. And the Board must be fair and uniform in its decision.

Without stating anything about the merits of this particular case, we must be sure that we are fair across the board, no matter who the applicant is. If there is ever a conflict of interest, a member must recuse her or himself and this is all done in the open, with transparency. The board's work needs to be careful and thorough given the importance of the decision to people on both sides. It is essential that Zoning Board decisions be consistent, reliable, and enforceable in case they end up in Court, and any protracted litigation is expensive for the Town.

While I for one appreciate the incredible success story of young Ben Fiske and applaud those many successes, his popularity must have no bearing on our decision or local zoning becomes meaningless and subject to the whims and personal desires of the loudest and most vocal. This invites a system based on personal bias, influence, favoritism, and enables generally arbitrary practices. Please rest assured that your Zoning Board will not be swayed by the flavor of the month but will instead listen to all stakeholders; we will listen to all of our residents who wish to be heard; and we will apply the facts to render our decision. Your written comments or verbal comments during hearings are always most welcome and will always be listened to.

If you want to stay informed with facts and not just opinion, then please sign up for the templenh.org alerts from the official town website. Ordinances can always be changed and new ones be implemented, but there is a process for it and that does not happen through the ZBA; it is not our role.

Thanks for listening and being involved. It's extremely important and why Temple is such a wonderful place to live. Thank you again and thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mary Beth Ayvazian
Temple ZBA Member