

June 23, 2010

Re: Recent ZBA Appointment

Dover City Council,

Please read this aloud at the meeting tonight and place it into the record.

At your last regular meeting you appointed an alternate member of the ZBA to a regular member. During the appointments committee report by the Deputy Mayor, it was mentioned that the recommended appointment was due to a member whose term had expired.

Other than the appointments committee, how many of you understood that the regular member whose term had expired was requesting another appointment. It appeared to me by the way the Deputy Mayor presented the information; he made it sound as if the member whose term expired was not seeking another term.

The regular member not being appointed to the ZBA was Masi Denison, then chairperson. Ms. Denison has been a member for two previous terms, a total of six years. To the best of my knowledge, Ms. Denison has done an excellent job as chair, and has served the City well by keeping the ZBA perceived as a fair and conscientious board.

Ms. Denison is well accomplished professionally as owner of her own company with offices in various cities across the country and has a Masters of Business Administration from Harvard, she has great people skills, and is well respected.

Ms. Denison has attended almost all available land use training programs to enhance her zoning skills. The ZBA is a quasi-judicial board and their work must be done judiciously since any appeal goes to court. You need well trained and experienced people on the ZBA.

Why did the Council vote to remove Ms. Denison from the ZBA?

Is this just a political appointment?

Perhaps Ms. Denison was not appointed because she was a woman, and the only woman on the ZBA.

Perhaps it was because she is an intelligent and independent thinker. Is she feared because of her abilities?

Certainly she fits the profile that seems to be the unstated goal of the current Mayor and friends; younger and wealthier residents while getting rid of the aged and poor by attrition or financial starvation.

I don't recall in my 21 years on the ZBA, and the additional 2 years on the Council, anyone not being appointed to another term when the incumbent requests reappointment. What precedent is being sent with this action, or what precedent is being used?

In not reappointing Ms. Denison and moving the alternate to regular member, a vacancy created on the ZBA. It is difficult to keep the ZBA to full membership, why create vacancies when well competent qualified members are basically told they are fired?

What is the message we are sending our volunteers? We beg for them to come forward then we give them the boot at a whim.

The Appointments Committee has failed in their job not being honest with their conscience and by not being open and transparent with the Council.

Who in the Council will stand against this injustice and move to rescind their vote and then move to reverse this shameful insult to our volunteer citizenship.

Again, please read this aloud at the meeting tonight and place it into the record.

Thank you,
Rick Callaghan
Ward 6
32 Horne Street
Dover