

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – August 16, 2023

Commissioners in attendance:

Dennis Robinson, Bicky Redman, Jim McDannell, Gary Deardorff, Dale Graves, Eric Miller

Others in attendance:

Lynda Beckwith, PMCA Assistant Zoning Officer; Dominic Picarelli, KPI Technology, Darren Hartzell of Biglerville, Dianna Moy, and Zach Rice, Solicitor.

CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting called to order by Dennis Robinson, Chairman, at 7:00pm.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 2023 MINUTES

- **MOTION to APPROVE July 2023 minutes, by Gary Deardorff, seconded by Bicky Redman.**
 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SKETCH PLANS

- None

PLANS

- None

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- 265 Seven Stars Road – Zoning Change Request
 - Summary: Mr. Zach Rice, representing the interested party Mr. Sokias, discussed the request to use a property at 265 Seven Stars Road for traditional agricultural practices. The property is currently in an industrial district but is being used for farming. Mr. Rice proposed two options: either amending the text of the industrial district to allow normal agricultural operations or amending the map to move the parcel into the agricultural district, which is nearby. The Board of Supervisors had recommended this consideration to the Planning Commission.
 - During the discussion, questions arose about the number of acres on the farm, the nature of agricultural activities planned (including dairy farming and crop cultivation), and concerns about the property's location within the Marsh Creek watershed, near a drinking water source for Gettysburg Municipal Authority.

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – August 16, 2023

Some Planning Commission members expressed a desire to preserve the industrial zoning to support economic development.

- The debate continued regarding whether to allow livestock raising in the industrial district. Some commissioners were in favor, emphasizing that it should be permitted by right or through special exceptions with certain conditions, including appropriate manure management, nutrient management, and water resource impact studies. Others suggested deferring the decision until a broader review of zoning uses was completed to ensure consistency.
 - Mr. Rice expressed his client's hope for a resolution and a willingness to cooperate with the Commission's recommendations, but also raised concerns about potentially imposing unnecessary regulatory processes.
 - In the end, the Planning Commission considered two recommendations: one for no recommendation on the zoning change request and the other to add livestock raising as a permitted use in the industrial zone, contingent on the specified conditions. The Commission agreed to make no immediate changes but to review all uses in the future.
- **MOTION to *make NO RECOMMENDATION* on the request for zoning change for 265 Seven Stars Road, by James McDannell, seconded by Denny Robinson.**
 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
 - **MOTION: As part of the Planning Commission's ongoing review of current zoning uses, the Planning Commission *RECOMMENDS* adding the use of Raising of Livestock as a permitted use in Industrial zones, contingent on a Manure Management Plan and a Nutrient Management Plan approved by the County Conservation Office and a Water Resources Impact Study, by Bicky Redman, seconded by Denny Robinson.**
 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- Mr. Arend Visser – Request to Determine Definition of Establishment for Zoning
 - Mr. Visser formally identified an issue with existing zoning ordinance in the absence of the definition of “establishment” as it relates to multiple businesses in the same development. Mr. Visser's proposal is to either:
 - Create a definition for the word establishment, mirroring the definition used by the Pennsylvania Secretary of State, or;
 - Change the number of establishments that defines a shopping center or mall to 4 or more (currently code states “two or more.”).
 - Mr. Picarelli, the Township Engineer, expressed reservations about changing the definition of establishment, citing the dictionary definition as a business organization, public institution, or household. He suggested the current

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – August 16, 2023

definition in the ordinance was adequate for generic business organizations. The discussion shifted towards the definition of "use" and its relevance in zoning regulations. The concept of accessory use and principal use was explored, particularly in the context of shopping malls.

- The issue of parking was a major concern raised by multiple participants. Mr. Visser proposed the idea of shared parking to reduce parking space requirements for multiple uses on a single property. Setbacks were also discussed, with Mr. Visser highlighting that increasing setbacks could hinder property development, especially on narrow lots like the one in question.
 - Zoning Officer Beckwith raised concerns about allowing two uses on one property without classifying it as a shopping mall, citing zoning regulations that require each use to meet applicable zoning requirements. Mr. Visser proposed a solution to differentiate between 1-3 businesses and 3 or more businesses on a property to address the setback and parking concerns.
 - The Planning Commission expressed the need to hear from more voices, both proponents and opponents, before making a recommendation. Mr. Visser agreed to extend the timeframe for discussion and proposed changes to allow for more public input.
- **MOTION to *RECOMMEND DISAPPROVAL* on the proposal to create a new definition of establishment or to change the number of establishments determining a shopping center or mall. The Planning Commission needs to hear additional public comment on this topic from other proponents and potential opponents before taking any action. Mr. Visser has stated he is willing to extend the proposal timeframe to allow for this public comment to occur, by Bicky Redman, seconded by Denny Robinson.**
 - **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

GUESTS

ADJOURN

- Meeting adjourned at 8:25pm by Dennis Robinson, Chairman.