

Approved 4-21-2021

Casco Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
March 17, 2021; 6:00 pm
Via Zoom

Members Present: Chairman Lewis Adamson, Vice Chairman Andy Litts, Board Representative Dan Fleming, Secretary Greg Knisley, ZBA Representative Sam Craig and members Kelly Hecker and John Weaver.

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:01 by Chairman Adamson.
2. **Review/Approval of Agenda:** A motion by Fleming, 2nd by Knisley to approve agenda. Litts requested that Wineries be discussed last of the three items under #6 Old Business because it would take more discussion. Roll Call vote: Adamson-yes, Litts-yes, Fleming-yes, Knisley-yes, Craig-yes, Hecker-yes and Weaver-yes. MSC 7-0.
3. **Public Comment – items NOT on the Agenda & Correspondence received:** An email from Don Sappanos, Sr. was read at the end of the meeting, but will be discussed at the April Planning Commission meeting.
4. **Approval of minutes from regular meeting of 2/17/21:** Motion by Hecker, supported by Litts to approve minutes of the February 17th, 2021 regular meeting. Litts suggested adding the word “growing” to page 2, #7 Old Business, 3rd paragraph as follows: Supervisor Overhiser said Medical Marijuana **growing** is indoor only. Roll Call vote: Adamson-yes, Litts-yes, Fleming-yes, Knisley-yes, Craig-yes, Hecker-yes and Weaver-yes. MSC 7-0.
5. **Administrative Reports**
 - a. **Zoning Administrator (Attachment #1):** A commissioner inquired about the item on Feb 11th as to the meaning of “BLA”. The Zoning Administrator said BLA stands for Boundary Line Adjustment.
 - b. **Township Board Representative:** Fleming said the main discussion at the last board meeting was about backlash from residents concerned about the cost of drainage work being done on Casco drain. The cost is higher than residents expected, and people are upset. Fleming said the supervisor explained it is a Statewide system. Fleming suggested looking into the system. It affects area from 109th toward the township hall. The cost for the townships portion is \$400,000. The board decided to pay ½ up front and finance the other ½ over 20 years to save 7,500. In interest.
 - c. **ZBA Representative:** Craig said the next meeting will be April 1, 2021. It will be the first meeting in some time.

- d. **Water/Sewer Representative:** Adamson said they are proceeding with lead goose neck replacements. They are asking for approval from property owners, if they do not get permission, they will skip that resident and they will go to end of line. SHAWSA will probably not get back to the people who do not give permission in about 15 years.

Knisley asked how many residents are affected by the lead having been used, and Casco being newer on the system, will it affect Casco residents?

Adamson said the work is being done over all of SHAWSA, which includes South Haven Township, South Haven City and Casco. Adamson agreed Casco is the newer part of the system and did not have lead in the pipes.

6. **Old Business:**

a. **Proposed text amendment discussion – continued:**

- **Winery – special land use provisions (Attachment #2):** Smalley said she took conversation from the last meeting and plugged in some numbers as a starting point for discussion. Definition used was in other ordinances. Some things will be dictated by the Site Plan Review process. These are a few extra things for winery.

Hecker questioned the hours. The proposed text is ending at 9 PM and she wondered why not 10:00 PM.

Smalley reiterated that she just plugged-in numbers as a start for discussion. It could be 10 PM, or they could even leave out hours and not regulate them.

Hecker said Farm Markets can be open until 10 PM, and Wineries could be the same.

Weaver asked if they were just talking about wineries right now and if fermented ciders would come later?

Smalley said her proposed text talks about fruit, mead or honey. Tasha talks about fruit, mead or honey intended to include them all.

Discussion ensued about whether to include breweries, cideries and distilleries? Or, if because there are different processes used, should they be under separate ordinances? Would they be growing product on the property?

Smalley said State regulations would have to be met also. Basically, the ordinance will be looking at setbacks and protecting neighbors. Also distilleries are not always an AG project.

Fleming suggested titling the ordinance as “Alcohol Production Facility” and include in the ordinance that they must meet State requirements.

Discussion went to setbacks and whether they should be the same in RR and AG. The setbacks for other structures are currently different in RR and AG; 25’ and 50’. It could be the same as Farm Markets which is 50’ from property line and 165’ from all non-Farm Markets. With a 3-acre minimum, that should not be a problem.

Adamson asked Smalley to revise it and present it at the next meeting. Smalley said she would also like to research the idea of a “Alcohol Production Facility”.

Fleming said the PC needs to keep the mind set as to why we are here. The purpose of the PC is not to create opportunities, but protect residents. We need to get out of the way when we are in their way. If it wasn’t for us, they may not need help.

- **Farm Market move to General Provisions (Attachment #3):** Adamson reminded members of where they left off last meeting. He recalled they were discussing whether to keep Farm Markets in just AG and RR, or open it up more.

Litts said just RR and AG.

Hecker said it is currently a SLU and needs to move to general due to State regulations.

Smalley said it needs to be moved to General Provisions and a few minor things brought up to date.

Litts suggested removing the first paragraph.

Smalley said the first paragraph was taken from GAMP, so people understand why it is allowed and what the purpose is. She put this in at the Supervisor’s suggestion. She added you cannot require less than GAMP. Most people do not read GAMP, which is why it was put in.

Hecker agreed with Litts, she does not know why the paragraph is needed.

Smalley said she used 50’ from any property line in #5 because that is the current setback for any structure.

Knisley asked if a Farm Stand would be considered in GAMP.

Smalley said it applies to structures over 120 sq. ft. If it is over 120' it is required to meet commercial codes. Roadside farm stands are typically under 120 sq ft.

Adamson stated commissioners agreed Farm Markets should only go in AG or RR.

Litts made a motion to approve proposed text, supported by Weaver.
Roll Call vote: Adamson-yes, Litts-yes, Fleming-yes, Knisley-yes, Craig-yes, Hecker-yes and Weaver-yes. MSC 7-0.

- **Campground – Number of sites to have a “store” (Attachment #4):** Craig stated there is already a Campground Ordinance, and inquired if this is just on the number of campsites required to have a store? Hecker and Litts said 5 sites is a good number to have a store. Five to 59 campsites could have a 1,000 sq ft store; and 60+ could have a store not to exceed 2,500 sq ft. Litts made a motion to approve the proposed text, supported by Fleming. Roll Call vote: Adamson-yes, Litts-yes, Fleming-yes, Knisley-yes, Craig-yes, Hecker-yes and Weaver-yes. MSC 7-0.

- b. **Any old business that may come before the commission:** None.

7. **New Business:**

- a. **Preliminary Site Plan review: 397 Blue Star, Campground:** Preliminary review. Chairman Adamson said there would be no decisions tonight. The Site Plan Review will be next month.

Smalley said Don Sappanos sent an email for public comment. Chairman Adamson said the email would be covered next month.

Smalley said it should be attached to the minutes as public comment. Adamson said it could be attached as received to this meeting minutes, but discussion will be next month.

Missy Fojtik, resident applying for the campground, asked if she could have a copy of it.

Adamson said this is an informal meeting to introduce Fojtik's plan and give commissioners time to review it before the Public Hearing next month. There will be no decisions made at this meeting.

Fojtik said she is living in Fennville where her children attend elementary school. She has been interested in starting a business in the area for a couple of years. She

wants to be sure her application is in step with what Casco is looking for and take a high-level look. She is planning a concierge camping. This will be for people who have no tents and camping equipment. She will provide a tent, linens, mattress, etc. There will be a clubhouse with showers and bathrooms. She is updating the existing clubhouse. It is a different type of accommodation. She would like an artisan atmosphere and offer activities like kayaking. She hopes to begin construction this summer.

Knisley said in looking at her application, it looks like a lot of dreams. He said looking at it initially, what are we approving? You have a kitchen, food service, camping, wind turbines, a store with liquor. There is a lot here. What is your timeline.

Fojtik said it will take several years and they will learn as they go. She understands there will need to be a road for EMS, which she might not have originally budgeted for. She said she has a limited amount of capital. She was advised to ask for everything up front as opposed to slowly. She hopes to remodel the clubhouse and have tents surrounding the pool for phase I. The back area will be phase 2. She will see how phase I is going before starting phase II.

Hecker asked what Glamping is?

Fojtik said she would have a permanent wood base with AC and heat oscillating through a vent in the bottom. She is hoping to use incinerator toilets. She would like to educate people on off grid methods such as a wind turbine and solar. She has been researching and piecing together what she will be able to do. Tents will be geodesic domes with hardwood floors or vinyl and insulation.

Litts asked what the clubhouse would be used for. Would the kitchen be used for only guests on site, or others?

Fojtik said they have a nice commercial kitchen and bar, and she would like to utilize it. There is a requirement that 50% of the sales are retail. They would like a snack bar, hot dogs, hot wings and that sort of thing. She does not want to run a restaurant. They have decided on more of a convenience store. Sausage, cheeses, more than 50% of sales are retail. Solar and a wind turbine will come later.

Adamson said she is asking for a lot of different aspects. He is not sure how they will cover it all in a meeting? He suggested it would be better to cover the main items now and get to the others later.

Smalley said she will work with Fojtik on her application for a campground and bring the next phase when ready.

Clay Griffendorf, 439 Blue Star Highway, South Haven said he lives near the golf course property. He questioned what we are protecting and what we are allowing. One concern he has with a campground being approved is that it is a commercial enterprise. What about noise, fireworks and smoke? He questioned how it fits into planning and how it affects him. He said Fojtik mentioned existing wells. Those are just irrigation wells.

Fojtik said she had the wells tested and they passed. She said the health department will also be testing the wells.

Griffendorf said he is also concerned about wind turbines.

Fojtik said her wind turbine would not be huge; maybe 80'. It would be at the back toward the freeway and may even block out some of the freeway noise. Fojtik said she did not want to make anyone uncomfortable and would be open to discussion and negotiation.

Smalley said the site plan will be available at the Township Hall once it has been noticed in the paper. She could also email a pdf file if someone requested it. Smalley said everyone within 300' of the property will be sent a notice.

Fojtik invited her neighbors to stop by and discuss her plans.

Monica and Doug Harris, 7180 Windcliff Drive, live across the street from the complex. The neighbors are concerned about curfews, noise, people cutting through their gated community to get to the lake.

Fojtik said she is trying to get an agreement for beach access, but if she does not, it is only 2 miles from the nearest access, and she plans to have bikes for her guests. She added as far as noise, the pool will be behind the clubhouse, so there should not be noise from there. Fojtik offered to post signs to keep her guests from crossing neighboring properties.

At request of citizens, Smalley read the email from Don Sappanos, Sr. (Attachment #6)

In response to Sappanos' email Fojtik said she is not planning on having music. Sappanos has already made her aware of possible arsenic on the property and she had it tested. She already planned to keep tents and structures away from Sappanos' property.

Ginger Adamson, 473 Blue Star Highway, owner of Martha's Vineyard said she spoke to Fojtik on the phone within the last month and Fojtik told her it would be a beautiful place for weddings. There would be music at a wedding.

Fojtik said she is not planning on using it for venues but could put up a fence if Adamson wanted her to, but that would block the view of her beautiful trees.

Adamson said she did not want a fence.

Fojtik added she would be happy to work with Adamson, and that is why she called her. Fojtik invited Adamson to stop by and talk like neighbors.

b. **Any new business that may come before the commission:** None.

8. **General Public Comment:** Debbie Wilson said she would clarify the discussion on the drain project. The cost to her for the drainage project is \$38,000 about drainage project. Cost. That cost is \$38,000. Some residents are paying more, some less. To say the project is more expensive than planned does not really tell the story. They are not complaining about a small assessment. She is paying \$2,000. a year for the next 20 years, in addition to her previous yearly taxes.

9. **Adjourn:** 7:23

Attachment #1: Zoning Administrator's report

Attachment #2: Proposed Winery text 3/17/21

Attachment #3: Farm Market Text

Attachment #4: Proposed Campground Text

Attachment #5: Documents for Preliminary Site Plan Review, Missy Fojtik Campground

Attachment #6: Don Sappanos letter objecting to Glamping