
FOR APPROVAL

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES March 5, 2020

Call to Order: Chairman Dave Hoffman called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Present were Planning Commission (PC) members John Gontarz, Chuck Phillips, Mark Harris and Brent Van Lith. Also in attendance on behalf of the Township were PC Alternates Dave Gerstenhaber (arrived at 7:30 p.m.) and Zach Elwyn, Mgr./Treasurer Joan McVaugh, Assistant Mgr. Jeff Eastburn, Zoning Officer Jeff Vogels and Secretary Sharon Norris. Approximately twenty members of the public were in attendance.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes:

- a. *February 6, 2020 PC Minutes:* Mr. Phillips moved, seconded by Mr. Van Lith to approve the February 6, 2020 PC minutes as submitted. Motion passed 5-0.

Planning & Zoning:

- a. *Sketch Plan for Chisel Creek Golf Course:* The applicants, Jose and Jasmine Sabastro, were present as well as their engineer, Tom Schrier from Hillcrest Associates. Mr. Sabastro began the discussion by providing background information regarding his professional career, his involvement in the community and the goals that he and his wife have for their family's future. They believe the Chisel Creek property provides the opportunity for them to realize some of their goals if they can determine that their plans are economically feasible and sustainable. They have a mid-April deadline for a go/no go decision on their offer and are hoping that having the PC and the Township engineer review their sketch plan will give them enough clarity to make that decision. Mr. Schrier presented the sketch plan, the concept of which is to subdivide the property (107 acres) into 8 lots – 5 residential, a limited industrial parcel, the clubhouse parcel and a parcel to be conveyed. The applicants plan to build a home on one of the parcels and to repurpose the clubhouse to accommodate a brewery in the basement and social events and gatherings on the main floor. They will need to obtain Conditional Use (CU) approval for the brewery. The plan would require several waivers from the Township's ordinances, one of which would allow the cul-de-sac to be extended to 1,600 ft. which would have the benefit of providing access to lot #4 which is currently land-locked. A waiver of the requirement that the width of a private right-of-way must be 50 ft. was also discussed. The applicants want to use the conventional development plan design rather than the open space design. There will be additional waiver requests. Because their plan includes a private access driveway off of Rt. 896, they will need a Highway Occupancy Permit from PennDOT. The availability of an adequate septic system and possibility of digging a well in the wetlands was discussed. The PC went over Engineer Eisenbrown's review letter of February 28, 2020. Mr. Eisenbrown cautioned that a sketch plan review is general in nature and does not offer a detailed review of the project or a complete evaluation of waivers. The applicants realize that the Township cannot take away all of the risks involved in this venture but their hope is that the PC would advise them of any major road blocks that exist in the plan and/or the CU application. Chairman Hoffman summarized the PC's discussion of the sketch plan by saying that it looks like a good use for the clubhouse and it would get rid of the existing issue of the landlocked parcel.

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b. Conditional Use Sketch Plan for Chisel Creek Clubhouse: As discussed in the review of the sketch plan, a key component of the applicant's overall plan is the successful repurposing of the golf clubhouse as a small brewery. It is a permitted use pursuant to the Township's Zoning Ordinance Section 27-1718 – Winery and Brewery as Accessory to Agriculture and Section 2313 Conditional Use provisions. Mr. Schrier provided an overview of the applicant's intent for the clubhouse, their CU Application, and Township Engineer Eisenbrown's review letter dated March 5, 2020. PC discussion points & questions from the public included the following topics: what crops would be planted and the location and timing; disposal of solid waste from the brewing operation; parking lot distance from the bldg. and related buffering; type of events envisioned; concerns about businesses involving the sale of alcohol in residential areas; sidewalks; having more than one entrance road or a different entrance road to the clubhouse; lighting at the entrance; days and hours of operation; the parcel being conveyed; signage identifying the brewery and should it be part of the CU application; music and noise concerns – the need for additional buffering that isn't required by the ordinance. Chairman Hoffman indicated the PC's support of the applicant's concept for the property. This use, if it can be achieved, is in line with maintaining the rural character of the Township.

Dr. Harris moved, seconded by Mr. Phillips, that the PC recommends to the Board of Supervisors that the CU application for the Chisel Creek Golf Course, be approved with the additional condition that more screening and buffering, in accordance with the Township ordinance that governs different uses between parcels, be added as a condition. Motion passed 5-0.

c. Green Energy Ordinance: Was not discussed.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Adjourn: Chairman Hoffman adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Gontarz
Planning Commission Secretary

PC Mtg. 03.05.2020.v.2er