

Jim Thorpe Planning Commission
June 15, 2021

Meeting called to order: 6:32 PM

Members present: Lou Hall, Nancy Porambo, John McGuire, Joanne Klipsch, Dr. Clem McGinley, Joe Micko, Bob Schaninger

Visitors present: Jake Arner, Joe Irwin, Katrina Gonsorick, Brian Evans, Jessica Crowley

Motion to approve May minutes: Clem motioned, John seconded, motion carried.
April minutes will be voted on next month.

Hearing of visitors:

Visitor: Katrina Gonsorick would like us to consider rustic camping on Flagstaff. They propose 6 sites what includes a managers' tent site and 5 tent sites for students, 100' apart from each other. Port-a-potties would also be available. They would teach students how to camp and hike safely. The space on Flagstaff would be a 1acre lot. They have been in touch with Maureen Minnich from zoning. They want to go forward through us without going through land development. There is no modification to the area.

Lou asked Jake what area (S) zoning district allows camping on agritourism. They have to apply for a zoning permit. The zoning officer looked at it. Paragraph K says that a zoning permit is required for permanent structures, attached to the ground.

Jake indicated have done everything to comply with the zoning officer. He wants to assist in getting this through so she can get her business moving. He made a zoning application.

Jake has provided maps showing where the winery is and where the tent set-up will be. Six tents and four port-a-potties are all the changes that they will be making. Everything else has been passed before and they are not disturbing anything.

Lou stated we need comments from the zoning officer and he stated he will ask the solicitor to review the original plan that is being presented. We needed more detail on the project.

Lou said Maureen Minnick's correspondence indicated Katrina must go through land development and she wasn't changing her mind. She did indicate that the permanent structure didn't apply. She agreed, there is nothing permanent.

Joanne indicated she didn't understand what was being proposed. She went up to Flagstaff and looked around.

Katrina indicated she has her own liability insurance. Jake said he has a 4M policy that covers liability except for serving wine.

Lou stated this information is not sufficient. Bob asked that she be given a step-by-step procedure. Lou said county first, then that gives us the authorization to give a decision. We cannot give permission without county permission.

Lou said you may not need to deal with zoning. If it complies with county, they can move forward.

Katrina indicated they already went to council. The PC, however, makes recommendations to council to approve the plan.

Jake indicates he responded to Nancy Porambo's email asking him for more information as was requested from the last meeting. Nancy has no record of receiving Jake's email. It was forwarded during the meeting to John McGuire and it was read by chair. The email indicated they must go through the county.

Lou asked Katrina if she has information in writing, she indicates she did not think this would go to this extent. Jake submitted information today to the county. Lou said the county will make recommendations, then it comes back to PC, we then make our recommendations. Lou said he is not sure if it has to go to zoning. With agritourism, she may not have to. We just have to make sure it's consistent with the Saldo. Port-o-potty inspection has been done. They have also enlarged parking as they were asked to do.

Bob asked if Katrina could get a letter from Maureen Minnich so that they indicate they are ok with this and have fully complied. Lou said the building code office doesn't make decisions on Saldo.

John states "accessory uses need to go through land development". John said he meets the set-backs, parking, handicap. An application was submitted to the Boro with the original plan (this, what he submitted today). They charged him fees and the zoning application to the zoning person. It was done in April. Maureen's letter states there was an application, she reviewed it. John states that Jake applied for zoning. He asked if Jake went through a Saldo application. He states all the info was submitted for the winery. Jake states he is adding agritourism to the 140-acre piece. Katrina said it's about educating and bringing something positive to the community.

Lou recommended we table it and will look into it. He will get in touch with county and have a conversation with them to see what can be done. Hopefully, we can make a recommendation. John suggested that Nanovic be contacted about camping and land development. Katrina asked if she has to wait till next meeting. Lou will give updates and he asked John for help. Jake asked why not submit support for the project since all are here. Lou states there is no forward movement until they can get a response from county. County's (Meixell) has the information. Jake will go to the Boro office and will submit an application. It will be formally submitted to the county. He will also appeal.

There was no motion on the floor to table because there is nothing to make a decision on.

Visitor: Brian Evans – At a recent Boro council meeting, it was his understanding that there is a proposal against a medical marijuana ordinance. The information he received was wrong. John stated you cannot be within a certain radius of a school.

Brian feels it would be a poor idea to reject it. He is not a user, not an advocate. He is a business owner. Lou said all we did was to make certain recommendations as to where an establishment can be located. We did not have a local ordinance. We are just defining what the state said.

Status of completed tasks:

Short-term rentals: Many didn't comply with the paperwork. 43 out of over 100 have come into the office to apply for their permit. There are four going before the zoning board.

Permit parking ordinance: Joanne states it is at a standstill. Bob states there was opposition. Nancy indicated there was a public meeting on the permit parking, suggestions were made and it appeared to have a positive outcome.

Medical marijuana: Nothing new

Future projects:

Elderly assistance (grass cutting, snow removal). Nothing new on this.

Adjournment: Clem motioned to adjourn, John seconded, motion carried.