

Jim Thorpe Planning Commission  
October 22, 2019

Meeting called to order: 6:34 p.m.

Roll Call: Lou Hall, Nancy Porambo, John McGuire, Dr. Clem McGinley, Jolene Evans, Joanne Klitsch.  
Missing: Joe Micko.

Visitors: Jake Arner, James Kratz (attorney), Solicitor Nanovic, Maureen Sterner, Kerry Good, Diane and Anthony Raudino

**Arner Project:** Attorney James Kratz representing developer for project. He was able to submit a letter on Friday electronically to Borough Manager for distribution. Plans are proposed for North of Flagstaff road. He is planning to sub-divide.

Question 1 – three tracks of land. A number of lots north of Flagstaff Road, parcel 8317j2.04, upper parcel for residential lots. Thirty seven (37) lots, smaller sized, on a track by itself. In middle of plan other lots are labeled. Proposed limited winery near a label called lot 1B Agritourism. They are proposing land development there. In that district, (S) district, different from piece to North (R2), that's "special". There is a lot below it labeled Arner residence.

They are proposing a limited winery and other Agritourism events. That's where cabins and RV's will go. To be specific with Agritourism: winery operations (wild berries), he can add on vegetables/fruits, walking tours, trails, (all identified on the map). There are two different walking trails, organic farming education program. He has a limited winery license from the State. There are 275 lots for RV/camping, 174 acres.

He spoke with a certain non-profit (unnamed) during an approval process that is interested in working with him.

Third parcel – Arner, LLC parcel. Residence will be there for his family. The lot is created already. They don't want to consolidate all three tracks. He wants his residence by itself. He will subdivide and sell lots to people in the one area, camping (accessory).

He is operating on prior approval on the farm piece. He will seek approval on the 174 acre piece plus the other Agritourism use listed in his letter.

Question 2 - Bagel Bunch –The patrons (campers) could use the parking lot of the Bagel Bunch and he could use their lot for shuttles. They already have an agreement for the bus line. He is doing the same agreement to bring more customers to them.

Arner indicated he heard concerns about coming thru Jim Thorpe. Flagstaff Road would be made a better road for buses. The sharp turn would be wider, Mahoning suggested it. They would take them on Oak Street, from the Bagel Bunch parking lot. Buses coming from North, go to Bagel Bunch or from Lehigh side to access Flagstaff Rd.. They will put it on their site. They don't want them coming through Jim Thorpe.

Maureen, where are you going to park? Arner, they will drive up and they would shuttle them to JT. Their RV's would make the turn up to Flagstaff Park. Greyhound buses (JT side of building), there is room to turn around to go up to Oak St.. They have an agreement to pick up and drop off people at Bagel Bunch because they don't want them getting picked up in downtown JT.

Nanovic, he wants to know why he needs an easement. Lou, where Oak St. comes in, you can't make the turn with an RV. Maureen had concerns that you are using Bagel Bunch as a thru-street. He is not proposing to build anything. Maureen said it's having another use of the property. Her concern is Mahoning Township and what if Mahoning turns it down and puts them in a different direction due to the use of the property. Arner, said it's a commercial parking lot and it doesn't require a zoning agreement. Lou, what about Packerton turn-off? Arner, Bieber Street, it's steep. Joanne spoke about the liability? Arner, he has a 3ML policy and he will name them as additional insured. He feels it's adequate.

Must Mahoning Township be notified? It's not a thru-street and Katz doesn't believe it's necessary to get approval. Katz said he should have raised that question. The question is does this plan meet the requirements here?

Shuttle buses – the patrons will use tram if and when that materializes. Camping patrons will provide vans or buses and run them on a schedule to JT. It would be based on the volume of people who need transportation.

RV designated lots? Tents? Patron demand will determine that. It can be RV's or tents.

Full-time residents – No, that's not what is proposed. Solicitor would have to work with him on a rental agreement language that would be sufficient. Nanovic, what is he proposing. What determines full-time. Is there a term limit? What are you proposing. He can speak to this – plan is short-term rentals. Ex – two weeks, can someone re-rent, (Katz). You would want to rent up till the time the Borough says no. Nanovic, that's not the dilemma, it's is there someone living there 7 days a week?

Katz said there would have to be language as to what is acceptable. Joanne, cut-off time would need to be determined. Katz, there needs to be more thought there and make a proposal on language.

Park model RV? He provided Commission information on Park Models. It's the industry's definition. Not designed for permanent occupancy, you don't drive them. He provided a website to view how they look. (Buttonwood Camping). Arner provided a video. He produced wine in his home, bottled it and placed bottles in front of each Commissioner. The labels were federally approved as to sulfides and alcohol. There are 7 wines, 5 sweet, 1 white dry and 1 red dry. Red Raspberries were picked on his property, what is grown in JT.

Arner showed a video about the RV models he proposes to use. Lots Arner proposed are 175 feet deep. There will be a lot more trees and space between sites. It will be more attractive to people. Major complaint about camping, they're too close together. Their lots will be spacious. Lehighton Pool is accessible and there are many amenities they will add as they go. Maureen, tent companies? Bush Tek Safari said he will put tents there (1B) would be good to start, "glamping" tents could be put up. Are tents allowed in agriculture? Kratz, you haven't designated any spots for that, he corrected. He said he could put them along the edge.

They would like to make a beautiful resort with cabins. They have to experience JT. Maureen, every time we're here, the plans change. Kratz, start with cabins, modular or stick cabins, it's a good way to get it up and running. What is the harm to the Borough if Mr. Arner fails? He may have to sell property or come back and ask for approval. Nanovic, it becomes a mobile home park and police are up there all the time. Nanovic, do the RV modular have wheels on bottom? Can they be moved? Arner, Mobile homes, there is upkeep and will it stay nice? Kratz, short-term rentals, revenue stream.

What section for park model RV's? By industry standards, they are introduced until they make 15% (270 x .15) - That comes to 41 Modular RV's. Pocono Whitewater and Blue Mt. said they would book for ski season, 40 weeks of occupancy would already be made. Lou, the minutes from August, the response was that Jake intervened and he said yes, RV lots will be sold. Kratz said he thought they could be sold and he clarified they could not be.

Lots transitioning to cabins – what lots? Park Model RV's can be brought in right away, build interest and then build cabins. 15% would get him up and going. Arner said he would do it up to customer demands. He believes for benefit for Borough and allow what the people want or they won't come there. Lou wants a commitment on an absolute number. Lou doesn't want to see 250 Park Model Rv's and it becomes a mobile home park. He is concerned Paul Fogel will ask for more facilities and he wouldn't be able to produce it. He doesn't want a limit.

Will RV Park have an association? No, not an association operating the campground, a company will operate. Lou, the meeting in August, he stated there would be an association operating septic system. Arner, why would Borough not allow them to sell them? There are people outside the area and would love to rent it out. They would put money into cabins and could rent it out and make money.

Last council meeting he was given permission to sell lots. (Nanovic). He doesn't know what your looking at. You have approval for a house. Now you want to have the best of both worlds, for the Borough and businesses in town. Traffic will drop 30% by train leaving. Arner feels it has to be made up right away.

John, will it be a subdivision? Nanovic, this would be a land development. He said tell me what you are proposing. Arner, he can sell lots. They will go by exact words of ordinance and go by it. Bring it in for short-term rentals. Kratz, the 174 lots cannot sell the RV lots. Park Model RV's are permitted, can start with 15%, then come back in? Arner understands he can't sell those lots on the 174 lots. He doesn't want to have to come back in and ask for approval again.

Park rules and regulations – determined by Franchise agreement? He doesn't have that yet. He's independent, he will need rules and regulations. He will suggest that to him. We've said ATV's things like, golf carts aren't ATV's.

If you propose something, they will consider it. If Arner feels he is able to address it, he will. He doesn't want snowmobiles on the track.

Limited winery – what parcel. He addressed it.

Kratz said he is starting out. Arner residence will be moved to 174 acre track. He doesn't have a permanent structure yet. Not worth the investment. He will start with what was approved previously and move it over to 174 track.

Winery in Nesquehoning – product on property? Timeline? They don't have one. Recognize he has a long way to go.

Farming activities – Kratz named several Agritourism opportunities. He will add amenities. He is asking for land development on 174 acre track. His plan is as big as it can get. He wants to get the winery off his property and he wants to farm.

Food vendors – approved food vendors and other community events vendors.

Agricultural – non-profit doesn't want to be involved until approved.

Sewer systems – community sewer system must be obtained by PA Dept. Environmental Protection. Joanne, you must have an idea now. Kratz, Borough engineer should be able to help you with that. With the DEP application, they would copy Borough engineer, yes? Borough would need to be involved to make comments. Arner, I will be working with Andrew to get sewer line down-hill. Flagstaff property is in bankruptcy. Nothing can be done until the bankruptcy court determines what and who it goes to. Andrew frustrated, he is too. Rob Stermer told him he expected it should be an easy approval. DEP would approve the community system. Joanne, will it work, Arner, should, community system. He would rather hook up to JT.

Central sewer disposal – is this different? Nanovic, if problem with the system and owned by separate entity, it can be two separate owners. Lou, Agritourism said it occurs on same lot? Kratz, no. Nanovic, earlier question, is it all on same lot. Yes. He plans on moving it.

Kratz, Jake Arner LLC Farms, Canyon Rim I, LLC. One property can give easement to the other. That will be part of the project. To address concern, it would be wise, access to facility, an easement can be granted to benefit the other property.

Joanne, have lots been sold? Kratz, four lots (Awesome View Properties). They have their own sewer/water. Most recent lot has an approval that was renewed. It was outside the 84 lot subdivision. The Awesome View lots are neighbors. Nanovic, Council has to act at the November meeting unless you want more time.

Lou, Agritourism, it is a zoning issue. Lou, researched it also. As a PC, it states that we take into consideration zoning. Kratz, Mr. Nanovic and he are different in how they view this. Lou asked for more time. Kratz said Arner inclined to grant an extension. Nanovic doesn't want to keep pushing it back. December 31<sup>st</sup> (Kratz). We need one more chance to make a review.

No motion is needed. Kratz granted us time to review until the 31<sup>st</sup> December. The December meeting is scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup>. We will need to discuss. John motioned and Jolene seconded to propound the decision to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December.

The 25<sup>th</sup> (Monday) of November is the next meeting date.

**Grant Applications** – we are supposed to review what the projects are and if they meet planning. Maureen proposed the following that meet the cap. The handicapped curve cuts, if they can do under a grand, it would be good. \$80,000 per intersection, work on streets up to it.

Facilities upgrade project – Borough garage and renovations \$4.2 ML  
Community Centers grant – hall area - \$53,000  
Motion made by Joanne, John seconded. Motion passed unanimously

Multi-modal PennDot grant – stretch paving dollars and we will match and provide handicapped. They can go up to \$650,000.

Motion made by Clem, Lou seconded. Motion passed unanimously

**Permit Parking** – PC will reconvene parking committee and work on parking issue.

**Commissioner Terms:** Joanne Klitsch – Joanne expressed an interest. John asked if this needs to be advertised? He will contact Maureen. PC needs to make a recommendation to Council by 12<sup>th</sup> of December. Jolene is also up for renewal.

Motion to adjourn made by Joanne, seconded by Jolene. Motion passed unanimously Time: 9 PM