

April 11th, 2019 Page 1

The meeting of the Douglass Township Planning Agency was called to order at 7:04 P.M.

Members in attendance were: Josh Stouch, Joe Richardson, Bill Zern, Tom Wynne, Ed Reitz, Carl Adams, and Joan DiCicco. Also in attendance; Solicitor Matt Doll, Josh Hagadorn of Gilmore & Associates, Maggie Dobbs from MCPC, Supervisor Alan Keiser and 14 residents/developers.

Mr. Wynne led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and asked if there were any changes, corrections, or additions to the Planning Agency minutes of March 14th, 2019. No changes, corrections, or additions were given.

A motion was made by Mr. Reitz, seconded by Mr. Zern to recommend approval of the March 14th, 2019 Planning Agency minutes. Stouch-Aye, Richardson-Aye, Zern-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

Zoning Hearing Application- Peiffer, 193 Schlegel Road, R-1 Farming & Seasonal Accessory Uses (Use Variance). Mr. Peiffer stated that the main use will be farming with a proposed corn maze to be open from the 2nd week of September through the 2nd week of November (11 weeks) with hours of operation Friday – Sunday 11am to 10pm with exception to private groups (school, church, business, special needs, seeing eye dog in training, daycare, birthday parties, and sporting league groups). We have private party areas available inside the corn field. Two temporary garden sheds will be added for ticket sales and refreshments such as prepackaged items like water, soda, chips & pretzels, and candy. 1st Season Projections – 2 cars per hour, 7 people per hour (3.5 people per car), 33 days open x 76 people per day = 2,500 projected attendance. Long Term Projections based upon our highest attended season – 11 cars per hour, 39 people per hour (3.5 people per car), and 33 days open x 424 people per day- 14,000 customers. September and November are slower months and the last two weekends in October are the busiest if the weather is nice. They are expecting to employ 2 - 10 people at any given time; depending on weather, day of week and holidays. They have never had a noise complaint from neighbors, the sound system consists of small speakers scattered throughout the corn field so the volume does not need to be loud for customers to hear the music, and we do not use generators. After the corn maze season is over the corn is harvested and used as feed for cows, there is very little crop loss due to cutting the paths in and around the maze. Approximately 2 acres will be used as open space for a kiddie play area, pumpkin patch and picnic area for groups. 3 acres will be used for parking and in the off season the parking area will be planted with crop (hay). The total acreage of the farm is 69 acres. At other facilities we have never had an issue with traffic or parking, people will be entering the parking area at 196 Schlegel road, Gilbertsville. We will illuminate all common areas including; parking, ticket sales, port-o-potties, and kiddie play area. Dust is not an issue, we always park in fields as well as driveway. At our previous location the sign was a 4ft x 8ft double sided sign taking into consideration visibility when pulling out onto the roadway. We make sure to provide a safe experience for all by giving a 5 minute orientation before entering the corn field going over rule like no running, no cutting through the corn, and anyone under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. We explain about the multiple emergency exits if needed to exit quickly. Perimeters around the field are cleared for emergency responders if need be, there will be areas with water to drink and chairs to rest. Each group is encouraged to carry a 6ft flag with them, if they get confused they are to wave the flag and someone will be available to assist the customer. They met with Montgomery County Land Preservation and this is an allowed use. Not open during inclement weather. They are open to some improvements to Schlegel Road.

A motion was made by Mr. Wynne, seconded by Mr. Reitz to recommend approval of the use variance to the Board of Supervisors and Zoning Hearing Board. Stouch-Abstain (BOS Member), Richardson-Aye, Zern-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

North Forest Development – Introduction of Smith Road Proposal (Roland Wildermuth Farmhouse). Mr. Bastian has the property under contract for 7 acres and would like to build 4 homes, the house and 4 acres is separate. No zoning relief is needed for this proposal. A cell phone tower is presently located on the site. Plans will be submitted later this summer.

Subdivisions and Land Developments

Graterford Properties – 400 Gilbertsville Road, 10 residential lots, to BOS for Final Approval of Plan & Waivers. (On Hold)

Quigley Bus Service – (Land Use Appeal Pending). Will attend future P/A Meeting.

Danny Jake/Hallowell Cluster- (Possible Plan Revisions Pending)

Wynstone Subdivision – New Hanover Township, no new information.

Danny Jake Corporation, Zern Tract – Proposed 241 Single Family Townhomes on 28.5 acres, Zoned R-3. BOS Approved Final Plan Resolution. (BOS Solicitor is working on Escrows & Agreements, awaiting BMMA Agreement)..

Minister Creek LP – Mixed use project – (Project on hold).

Sign Ordinance – U. S. Supreme Court Case, revisions pending.

PA Medical Cannabis Legislation – No new information.

Holly Road – Neighborhood mixed use on 52 acres. Revised Sketch Plan Review dated 9/12/18.

Preliminary Plans received 4/1/19.

303 Gilbertsville Road – 20 lots, E-mail and Sketch Plan dated 3/8/19.

650 Englesville Road – R-3 Andrew Bellwoar & Rolph Graf – Mixed use Overlay Ordinance Amendment recommended approval by P/A to BOS.

Specht Family – Rezoning of residential properties along Swinehart Road.

Joseph Margusity – Avante Apartments Expansion, E-mail & Chronology of 200 Gilbertsville Rd. dated 3/8/19.

Helmer-Owens Properties LLC – Land Development Plan Submitted March 2019. Preliminary/Final Plans, G&A review and Waiver Request (4/4/19). Lindsay Dunn provided an overview of the project. 3 parcels to be merged, the engineering has been completed. G&A review letter dated 4/4/19. MCPC will provide landscaping ideas and reconnection to the site. The applicant is requesting a recommendation of their 4/4/19 waiver request letter regarding storm water recharge facilities and buffering requirements.

A motion was made by Mr. Wynne, seconded by Mr. Stouch to recommend both waivers as provided. Stouch-Aye, Richardson-Aye, Zern-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

A second motion was made by Mr. Wynne, seconded by Mr. Stouch to approve the Land Development Plan contingent upon MCPC providing landscaping recommendations for the site specific to parking islands and walkways, and buffers. Stouch-Aye, Richardson-Aye, Zern-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

Workshop Items

(ACTIVE)

- a. Act 209 Study – Act 209 Committee Meeting Schedule TBA
- b. Signage/Lighting
- c. Zoning/SALDO Updates (Codification in process) Draft Code to Township for Review.
Ordinance updates required.

(INACTIVE)

- d. Green Building Ordinance
- e. Revitalization

Pottstown Metro Regional Planning Commission Update – Ed Reitz

A representative from Pottstown Borough provided a presentation of the PART Transit Development Plan. Public outreach through surveys were performed. Discussed was extending service to Reading and connection with BARTA. There were many requests for train service in this region. There was also discussion of the FY2020 DVRPC Work Program Project. This study will identify improvements for High Street including more efficient traffic circulation and corridor beautification. The Borough is focused on revitalization of the Pottstown Downtown District.

Public Comment

No comments given.

Deadline Dates for Subdivision Submittals:

- I. Cobblestone Commons – Indefinite.
- II. Quigley Bus Service – Land Use Appeal Pending.
- III. Zern Tract – Awaiting Final Plan
- IV. Graterford Properties – Indefinite
- V. Holly Road – December 2020
- VI. Gilbertsville Road – Sketch Plan

A motion was made by Mr. Wynne, seconded by Mr. Reitz to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm. Stouch-Aye, Richardson-Aye, Zern-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Reitz-Aye, Adams-Aye, and DiCicco-Aye. Motion passed.

The next Planning Agency Meeting will be held on May 9th, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by,
Peter Hiryak
Marcy Meitzler