

**MINUTES SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP  
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 27, 2019**

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order by Chairman Terry Harris at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 27, 2019. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nick Barnes, Tim Feirick, Bill Zuhl, Terry Harris, Debbie Brown

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jon Tidey, Dave Grabemeyer

OTHERS PRESENT: Recording Secretary Lindsay Krohne

**MOTION TO APPROVE FEBRUARY 27, 2019 REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Bill Zuhl motioned to approve the February 27, 2019 Planning Commission meeting agenda. Nick Barnes seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

**MOTION TO APPROVE JANUARY 23, 2019 MINUTES**

Debbie Brown motioned to approve the January 23, 2019 Planning Commission minutes. Tim Feirick seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

None.

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPORT**

Recording Secretary Lindsay Krohne stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals request for a shed in the side yard setback on a corner lot had been approved the previous Thursday. Lindsay stated that there would be two hearings in March as well as an organizational meeting. Lindsay explained that one of the requests is for another corner lot variance.

## **BUILDING/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **DISCUSSION REGARDING BANQUET/WEDDING VENUES IN AN AGRICULTURAL/RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT**

Chairman Terry Harris began discussion of banquet/wedding venues in agricultural/rural residential district. Terry stated that he figured they would put it in Section 155.078 AR Agricultural/Rural Residential District (C) Special Land Uses (11). Terry clarified that (C) (10) would be Solar Energy.

Chairman Terry Harris referred to the handout he provided members "Township Law E-Letter – The Emerging Trend of Wedding Barns" and read it aloud, published in February of 2017.

Terry Harris stated that if you do an aerial view of the Gould property on google, you can see it very well. He added that if the white barn is the one they would like to turn into a Wedding venue, he doesn't think it poses an issue for traffic, since there is no curve until you get to BT's Pub, and the other direction is a straight of way.

Terry commented that he thought Jennifer Northrop would be present for the meeting. He added that he believes it is their intent to renovate the main barn and an additional barn for a dressing room at the Jack Gould property located at 31164 M-152, and that Mr. Gould would continue living there. He added that there is 55 acres.

Terry stated that their first step is to decide if they want to put this in Special Use, and then expand on it and start developing definitions and begin to write an ordinance to regulate the use and what they require for the development of that venue. Terry stated that it is a specific request for someone, but they need to keep in mind there could be three or four more in the township.

Bill Zuhl agreed and stated that they're not dealing with the Gould property right now, they're dealing with setting up a Special Land Use for wedding venues, it could be anywhere in AR.

Terry Harris questioned if they want to take the step of putting this into their ordinance book as a Special Use, or develop the ordinance first. Bill Zuhl suggested coming up with a checklist for the Special use, so they have something ready for a Public Hearing. Bill stated that they need to get the building up to code for a commercial building as far as ingress/egress, electrical, occupancy, sewer and water, and parking. Bill added that with the Gould property, there is no question that they have plenty of property for parking, but the next one may not. Discussion took place on lighting, hours of operation, and allowing alcohol. Tim Feirick questioned if they can set a minimum distance from neighboring houses or parcels. Bill Zuhl answered that the nice thing about a Special Use is they can include setbacks, so can look at each case individually, since a smaller venue doesn't require the same setback as a larger venue. Terry Harris stated that the Gould property venue is estimated for 150 people.

Terry Harris stated they need a universal generic checklist. Bill Zuhl added that they needed those things on the checklist to be in place so there is no favoritism to any one use permit.

Debbie stated that the load occupancy is dictated by the state, and alcoholic beverages are licensed by the state or otherwise approved by the township. She stated that she tried to look up other places. Debbie referred to friends who had applied for a wedding venue special use for their barn located by Southwestern Michigan College, and it is her understanding that it was just a matter of getting it zoned for a Special Use.

Bill Zuhl stated that his question to Todd Herter would be if you're inviting the public in, does it have to be sprinkled.

Terry Harris stated that the barn he is familiar with is by Jones on M-140, and only allow a licensed beverage vendor. Debbie added that most only allow catered food and don't have kitchen facilities.

Debbie Brown referred to a seminar she went to which included discussion on commercial uses in agricultural districts, for bakeries, breweries, camping, and wedding venues and the relation to the Right to Farm Act as far as noise, etc. Bill Zuhl stated that he does not see this as interfering with the Right to Farm Act.

Terry Harris questioned if they want to allow fireworks. Discussion took place on putting the hours of operation in the ordinance.

Nick Barnes suggested reaching out to Blue Dress Barn to see what rules they established and which of those were mandated by the township.

Bill Zuhl stated that the owners of Blue Dress Barn own several wedding barn venues, and he knows that Millburg is sprinkled. He added that they could ask the owners to come in and tell them what works for them and what doesn't and give them some input.

Terry Harris recommended that everyone do some research and compare at next month's meeting.

Terry Harris stated that he will contact Blue Dress Barn in Millburg for information, as well as the venue in Jones. Debbie Brown stated she will contact Roseland Barns for information.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **REVIEW SOLAR ENERGY ORDINANCE**

None.

#### **COMMISSION MEMBER DISCUSSION**

Bill Zuhl asked for a final copy of the Solar Energy Ordinance to bring to the Township Board Meeting, and Terry Harris stated he would get that to him.

Bill Zuhl stated that March 27<sup>th</sup>, the next Planning Commission meeting date, would be the same night as the Inn-D-Inn SAD meeting for the Township Board. Bill stated that he will be attending the Inn-D-Inn SAD meeting in the main meeting room, and that the Planning Commission could meet in Assessor Bill Kays office if they wish. Discussion took place and it was agreed to hold the Planning Commission on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. instead of the 27<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE**

Chairman Terry Harris stated the next Planning Commission meeting will be Thursday, March 28, 2019.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Nick Barnes motioned to adjourn the meeting. Debbie Brown seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m. by Chairman Terry Harris.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lindsay Krohne  
Planning Commission Secretary

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Jon Tidey, Secretary

To be approved at the March 28, 2019 Planning Commission meeting