

FRENCHTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
September 21, 2023

SIG 
APPROVED

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call: Dennis Staelgraeve Tim Stiff
Brian Dotson Fred Calkins
Bill VanDaele Don Abrams Chris Collins
Absent: none – all present

Also present: Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning, Marketing & Economic Development

Al VanWashenova, Supervisor
Gary Dahl, Building Official, Frenchtown

11 interested citizens in person.

A quorum being present, Dennis Staelgraeve called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was held under the Open Meetings Act.

Item No. 1 Call to Order.

Item No. 2 Pledge of Allegiance.

A Pledge of Allegiance was conducted.

Item No. 3 Roll Call.

A Roll Call was taken. All Commissioners present.

Item No. 4 Approval of Agenda.

Planner McIntyre noted that Parcel # 07-012-008-00 would not be part of the rezoning/public hearing.

Motion

Moved By: Abrams Supported By: Stiff

A Motion was made to approve the agendas, with correction.

MUC

Item No. 5 Approval of Minutes of August 17, 2023.

Motion

Moved By: Abrams

Supported By: Dotson

A Motion was made to approve the Minutes as presented.

MUC

Item No. 6 Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items Only.

No comments.

Item No. 7 New Business.

- a. **Public Hearing – Rezoning:** To hear and consider a request to rezone Parcel #07-009-016-00, located at 7447 N. Telegraph Road. The 12.61-acre parcel is currently zoned R-1-D, Single Family Residential. The applicant is proposing to rezone the entire parcel to C-3, General Commercial.

Motion

A motion was made to accept and place on file the Legal Notice and supporting documents published in the Monroe Evening News on September 5, 2023, along with the Affidavit of mailing for the Parcels 009-016-00, 479-001-00, & 012-023-00. A total of 48 mailings were sent for the subject properties.

Moved By: Calkins

Supported By: Abrams

MUC

Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning gave a presentation on request and reviewed the standards for rezoning a property. The request is to rezone approximately 12.61 acres from R-1-D, Single Family Residential to C-3, Highway Commercial. She stated that the future land use plan supported the rezoning, and she recommended that the Planning Commission send a positive motion of approval to the Township Board.

Applicant/ Representative Casey Bross, Claybel Properties, LLC was present to answer questions regarding the proposed rezoning.

Motion

A Motion was made at 7:09 p.m. to open the public hearing.

Moved by: Abrams

Supported by: Collins

MUC

No comments were made during the public hearing.

Motion

A Motion was made at 7:09 p.m. to close the public hearing.

Moved by: VanDaele

Supported by: Stiff

MUC

Board Members discussed.

No further discussion

Motion

A motion was made to recommend to the Township Board approval of the rezoning as it satisfied the criteria to rezone the parcel.

Moved By: Abrams

Supported By: Stiff

Roll Call Vote: Dennis Staelgraeve -yes Brian Dotson yes- Bill VanDaele- yes
Chris Collins - yes Don Abrams – yes Fred Calkins- yes Tim Stiff - yes

MUC

- b. **Public Hearing – Special Land Use:** To hear and consider a request for a Special Land Use permit for an Agri-Tourism event space on a 4.92-acre parcel, located at 3150 Bluebush Road. The Parcel number is 07-479-001-00 and the property is zoned Agricultural (AG).

Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning gave a presentation on the proposed event space under the new use category agritourism. Strong Roots Event Space, LLC is an invitation only event space, on a 5-acre agriculturally zoned parcel, proposed to serve a maximum of 200 people. The applicant is proposing invitation-only events including weddings, graduations, and birthdays, from May 1st through October 31st. They estimate approximately 30 events per year with the maximum number of attendees not to exceed 200 people. Proposed hours of operation are limited from 10:30 AM to midnight and all guests and vendors must be off the premises by midnight. The applicant is proposing a one-way drive to alleviate traffic, with guests entering the property at the eastern driveway and exiting at the western driveway. Two parking areas on site with 81 vehicle spaces are proposed. A designated loading and unloading area is shown on the site plan with the understanding that loading and unloading will not take place during the event. The applicants reside at this location and have complete control over all events.

McIntyre discussed agritourism and that it is allowed as a Special Land Use in the Agriculture district. The Zoning Ordinance lists the specific standards that must be met for a Special Land Use Permit. McIntyre recommended approval of the special land use for Strong Roots Event Space, conditioned upon the following:

1. Acknowledgement from the applicant that should the number of events increase, or use intensify beyond those stated on their application, a new/revised/expanded Special Land Use permit must be sought;
2. Paving of the driveway approach to the property;
3. Sufficient landscaping be provided along the south property line (Bluebush) to screen vehicles and lighting from travelers on the roadway;
4. Administrative site plan approval; and
5. Review and approval from all applicable consultants and departments and agencies.

Applicant/ Representative Kelly Poupard, 3150 Bluebush, was present to answer questions regarding the Special Lands Use for an Agri-Tourism event space. He added that the events are not limited to weekends only but will not exceed the total of 30 events for the season.

Motion

A Motion was made at 7:33 p.m. to open the public hearing.

Moved by: Abrams

Supported by: Stiff

MUC

Dustin Martin, 3194 Bluebush, expressed concerns over the potential noise and was happy to see that there are plans to mitigate the sound.

Motion

A Motion was made at 7:36 p.m. to close the public hearing.

Moved by: Abrams

Supported by: VanDaele

MUC

Motion

A motion was made to accept and place on file the review letter and supporting documents.

Moved by: Abrams

Supported by: Calkins

MUC

Board Members discussed. The Commission questioned the amount of toilet facilities. It was decided that McIntyre would review and follow the best practices of number of guests and facilities. Collins had a concern over the access to the pond and discussion regarding a fence ensued. The Commission felt comfortable with the applicant's suggestion of low, lighted bollards, with rope and signage to limit access to the pond.

No further discussion.

Motion

A motion was made to approve the Special Land Use permit for Strong Roots Event Space, conditioned upon the following:

1. Acknowledgement from the applicant that should the number of events increase, or use intensify beyond those stated on their application, a new/revised/expanded Special Land Use permit must be sought;
2. Paving of the driveway approach to the property;
3. Sufficient landscaping be provided along the south property line (Bluebush) to screen vehicles and lighting from travelers on the roadway;
4. Bollards and rope be installed around the pond with "no access" signage;
5. Best practice standards for the minimum number of toilets be followed;
6. Administrative site plan approval; and
7. Review and approval from all applicable consultants and departments. and agencies.

Moved By: Abrams

Supported By: Stiff

Roll Call Vote: Dennis Staelgraeve - yes Brian Dotson - yes Bill VanDaele- yes Tim Stiff - yes
Chris Collins - yes Don Abrams – yes Fred Calkins- yes

MUC

- c. **Public Hearing – Rezoning:** To hear and discuss a request to rezone parcel, located at 7934 Newport South Road. Parcel number 07-012-023-00 is 60.35 acres. The property was zoned Industrial (I) pursuant to the recently adopted Zoning Map. The Parcels were previously zoned Agricultural AG and are proposed to be returned to Agricultural AG.

Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning, explained that there was a clerical error on the Zoning Map that was approved as part of the 2023 Zoning Ordinance Update. The subject property was mistakenly designated as Industrial. This rezoning is the formal process to correct the error and rezone the property back to Agricultural.

Motion

A Motion was made at 7:56 p.m. to open the public hearing.

Moved by: Calkins

Supported by: Stiff

MUC

No comments were made during the public hearing.

Motion

A Motion was made at 7:56 p.m. to close the public hearing.

Moved by: VanDaele

Supported by: Dotson

MUC

Board Members clarified with McIntyre that this was simply a clerical mistake being corrected.

No further discussion.

Motion

A motion was made to send a positive recommendation to the Township Board to approve the rezoning of the parcel.

Moved By: Calkins

Supported By: Stiff

Roll Call Vote: Dennis Staelgraeve - yes Brian Dotson - yes Bill VanDaele- yes Stiff - yes
Chris Collins - yes Don Abrams – yes Fred Calkins- yes

MUC

- d. **Public Hearing – Text Amendments:** To hear and discuss proposed text amendments to Zoning Ordinance No. 300 regarding Section 2.10 Table of Permitted and Uses with Specific Standards, Section 4.05 regarding Animals, Section 4.06 regarding Vehicle Repair Facilities, Section 4.35 Outdoor Storage, Section 4.41 Campground and RV Parks and Section 8.01 Definitions.

Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning presented the proposed text revisions to the Zoning Ordinance. Revisions are needed after a major update. As the ordinance is used may find corrections that are needed. Additionally added Campground/RV Park text language that was discussed at the August 17, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

Motion

A Motion was made at 8:07 p.m. to open the public hearing.

Moved by: Abrams

Supported by: Stiff

MUC

No comments

Motion

A Motion was made at 8:07 p.m. to close the public hearing.

Moved by: VanDaele

Supported by: Stiff

MUC

Discussion on the proposed edits. Calkins expressed that the adopted language to restrict chickens to the Agriculture district (exclusively) does not reflect the desires of the residents of Frenchtown. McIntyre explained that while the Planning Commission made a recommendation to permit on residential lots greater than 1.5 acres, the Township Board changed the language.

Motion

A motion was made to send a positive recommendation to the Township Board to approve the text amendments as presented.

Moved By: Abrams

Supported By: Stiff

Roll Call Vote: Dennis Staelgraeve - yes Brian Dotson - yes Bill VanDaele- yes Stiff - yes
Chris Collins - yes Don Abrams – yes Fred Calkins- no

MUC

Board Members discussed.

No further discussion.

e. Planning Commission Annual Report- 2022: Review Annual Report.

Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning presented on the Planning Commission 2022 Annual Report.

Motion

A motion was made to accept and place on file the Planning Commission Annual Report- 2022: Review Annual Report.

Moved By: Calkins

Supported By: Stiff

MUC

No fi=further discussion.

f. Old Business.

No discussion.

g. Public Comment on Non-Agenda items.

No discussion.

h. Adjournment.

Motion

Moved By: VanDaele

Supported By: Stiff

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

MUC