

CUMBERLAND TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
1370 Fairfield Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325
Minutes of April 11, 2019, Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Jim Henderson.
The meeting was recorded.

ATTENDANCE

Present were; Jim Henderson (Chairperson), Barry Stone (Vice-Chairperson), Kenny Caudill, Steve Tallman, Dennis Hicketier, Michele Long (Zoning Officer), Annelise Niner (Administrative Assistant).

MINUTES

Approval of Minutes from February 14, 2019.

Motion: Mr. Caudill motioned to approve the submitted minutes.

Seconded by Mr. Tallman.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at this time.

ACTIVE BUSINESS

There was no Active Business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Gettysburg Foundation

Recommendation

The applicant is seeking conditional use for a non-profit "living museum" in the Agriculture/ Residential zoning district as required per Section 27-402 of the Cumberland Township Zoning Ordinance. The property is located at 488 Blacksmith Shop Road.

Mr. Jeff Lobach, Esquire of Barley Snyder LLP for the Gettysburg Foundation presented the Application for a Conditional Use for the Spangler Farm located at 488 Blacksmith Shop Road.

The applicant is seeking a Conditional Use for the existing farmhouse located on the property. The Applicant intends to restore the farmhouse to its 1863 appearance and utilize the farmhouse as a not-for-profit "living museum" to advance the Applicant's charitable mission of preserving and curating the structures and artifacts pertaining to the Battle of Gettysburg and related events and educating the public as to their significance.

A walking trail is planned between the subject property and the Museum and Visitor's Center which would be augmented by a shuttle service operated by the Applicant.

The first floor of the building will be converted to consist of a meeting room for small group training and for learning programs held on the site. The second floor will be converted to office space for two to three full – time office employees that oversee the program at the site and other programs and operations of the Applicant.

Mr. Lobach reviewed the Application Standards with the Planning Commission as well as the General Standards.

A discussion was held in regards to the handicap parking, employee parking, as well as large charter buses coming to the location. Mr. Shaffer, a representative from the Gettysburg Foundation, explained that there is a small shuttle bus that takes the public to and from the farm as well as a walking trail from the Visitor's Center. There is parking for two or three park rangers that will be working at the location. There is handicap parking available for the public if needed. Mr. Shaffer explained that with the large charter buses they park along Blacksmith Shop Road, and have the park police help with traffic while the buses are unloading and loading. This is due to the existing drive way back to the location does not have adequate room for such large buses. In addition, they have spoken with the new owners of Artillery Ridge Campground and they will allow the larger buses to come into the campground and drop off the visitors in a location that is adjacent to the farm.

Township Solicitor Mr. Sam Wiser questioned Mr. Shaffer in regards to having a pull-off area at the entrance of the farm for the large buses to unload safely. Mr. Shaffer explained that they had spoken with the Township and Cumberland Police Department and it was deemed not safe due to sight distance.

Mr. Wiser also asked about the number of parking spaces for the employees and for visitors. Mr. Shaffer explained that there is adequate parking for the two park rangers and the buses that shuttle people to and from the farm. Mr. Shaffer added that the hours of the museum are Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm.

Mr. Wiser asked about the proposed lighting of the farmhouse. Mr. Lobach stated that the proposed lighting does comply with section 103 of the Zoning.

Mr. Wiser asked if the Zoning Officer along with the Road Superintendent and the Police looked at the area for the possible pull off, as well as looking at the existing parking for adequate parking. The Zoning Officer would relook into the possible pull off along with the Road Superintendent and Police.

Motion: Mr. Stone motioned to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the Conditional Use for the Spangler Farm, with the condition for an improved parking pull off area for charter buses. Seconded by Mr. Tallman.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0

The applicant is seeking a variance from Section 27-503 of the Cumberland Township Zoning Ordinance for the maximum height of a principal structure to be 35 Feet. In order to construct the proposed water tower at its necessary height, a variance from Section 27-503 is needed. The property is located at 1875 Herrs Ridge Road.

Mr. Bernard Yannetti, attorney representative for the Gettysburg Municipal Water Authority presented the Zoning Variance to the Planning Commission for the proposed water tower to be located 1875 Herr's Ridge Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

Mr. Yannetti explained to the Planning Commission that there is an approved Preliminary Plan that located a water tower on the property. To improve the current hydraulic flow and to get adequate water pressure for fire safety.

Mr. Yannetti explained that they are seeking a height variance for the proposed water tower.

The applicant has worked with engineers for the proposed water tower for the best design. The proposed design of the water tower is at the minimal height of 160 feet in order to obtain adequate water pressure. GMA (Gettysburg Municipal Authority) will have a parking place at the base of the tower for their trucks and most likely a light will be placed on the top of the tower due to proximity to the airport, awaiting to hear back from the FAA.

Mr. Yannetti added that 15 years ago, homes along Skyline Court complained about water pressure, they had booster pumps added which would burn up within a year and asked to have additional water supply added. The added water tower would remedy that issue. In addition, with the proposed added homes out in the area, this would help with fire suppression.

A letter from the National Park Service (NPS) has been submitted in the packets as well according to Mr. Yannetti. The National Park Service is okay for the proposed water tower. Mr. Yannetti explained that the Park Service has several criteria that needed to be met and the proposal has met all their requirements.

Mr. Wisser went over the criteria for the water tower with the Commission.

Mr. Mark Guise, Utility Manager from Gettysburg Municipal Authority, explained that the current booster station will remain in operation. There are no plans to do away with it.

Mr. Hickether asked Mr. Yannetti, what would you do if you do not get the variance for the height? Mr. Yannetti expressed they do not have an alternative plan at this time. If it is denied they would appeal the decision.

Mr. Tallman expressed his concerns about the height of the proposed tower. Mr. Tallman asked if they had looked at alternatives to this proposed tank? Mr. Yannetti explained they have in great detail, there are no other alternative designs for this.

Mr. Tallman was also concerned with the placement of the houses around the proposed tower, Mr. Guise along with Mr. Yannetti explained that GMA has worked closely with the developer on the placement of the homes. Mr. Tallman also asked if this meets any setbacks? Mr. Wisner explained that there are no current setbacks in regards to utility and water towers.

Motion: Mr. Barry Stone motioned to recommend the proposed variance to the Zoning Hearing Board with the condition that during the Land Development Plan review the Board of Supervisors check the distance of the houses and that there be a fence around the base of the Water Tower.

Seconded by: Dennis Hickethier

Vote: 5 Yea, 0 Nay

Motion carried.

GENERAL

Zoning/Code Officer's Report for February & March 2019

Ms. Long reviewed the February & March building/zoning activity with the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm by motion of Mr. Tallman. Seconded by Mr. Hickether.

Annelise Niner- Administrative Assistant