

## Hamiltonban Township Planning & Zoning Commission

23 Carrolls Tract Road, Fairfield, PA 17320

Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 28, 2019

Chairman Russell Ryan called the meeting to order at 7 PM. He announced that the meeting is being recorded for the sole purpose as a review aid in compiling the written minutes.

**Commission Members Present:** Russell Ryan, John Iaea, Betty Izer, Stephen Jacobs and David Peters were present. There was a quorum.

**Supervisors and Staff/Consultants Present:** Supervisor Robert Gordon, Rob Thaeler of the Adams County Office of Planning and Development, Township Planning Consultant and Fred Heerbrandt of Wm. F. Hill & Associates, Township Engineering Consultant were present.

**Public Present:** John Messeder of the *Gettysburg Times*, Clifford Frost, Terry Sheldon and Brothers John and Joshua representing the Hermits of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, and Stephen Reid attended.

**Approval of the Agenda:** The Commission approved the Agenda by consent.

**Approval of the Minutes:** John Iaea made a motion to approve the April 23, 2019 minutes as written. Betty Izer seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:** Chairman Ryan said the discussion scheduled for 700 Fairfield Station Road at this point in the agenda was cancelled earlier in the day at the request of Adam McClain. He then opened the floor to comments on any agenda items.

Clifford Frost then read an email of questions he sent to the website of which he informed the Planning Commission at the April 2019 concerning the Hermits of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. The questions included plans for the site, frequency and number of overnight guests, number of on-site staff, toilet facilities planned for each building, their financial plan, and why the Swamp Creek Lane site was chosen over other sites. Mr. Frost said the website acknowledged receipt of his questions only but provided no answers. There was no further discussion of Mr. Frost's questions.

### Plans:

**a. Iron Springs (ISP) Plan:** No action was needed at this time.

**b.1661 Cold Springs Road - Nicholas Kalathas:** No action needed at this time but Chairman Ryan said action will be needed by the Planning Commission at its meeting on June 25.

**c. Hermits of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel - Swamp Creek Lane - Conditional Use Application:** Chairman Ryan asked Terry Sheldon to explain the changes submitted in the revised plan. Mr. Sheldon said the changes are a result of two separate meetings with the Fire Chief and they constitute a turnaround lane for emergency vehicles and a gravel road for emergency vehicle access to most of the ten hermitages. Mr. Sheldon added that a few more minor changes will be

needed to the plan at the request of the Fire Chief and that Swamp Creek Lane will be improved starting at the gate. Mr. Sheldon also said all ten hermitages will be constructed of masonry and will not have cooking facilities to reduce fire potential.

Chairman Ryan then asked if Mr. Sheldon or the two Brothers could address the four concerns the Planning Commission raised at its meeting last month. Brother John explained that the web site which Mr. Frost brought to the Commission's attention was outdated. That particular web site was for a plan on a 97 acre plot in another township and the 17 acre plot in Hamiltonban Township will not have a retreat center and will not accommodate any overnight guests. In response for clarification, Brother John said only the ten Hermits will sleep at the site. Brother Joshua explained that the request for an exemption to the height restriction for the chapel was only for aesthetic reasons. Lastly, Chairman Ryan asked if there were any plans at a future date to add any additional hermitages beyond the ten initial ones planned and was told there would be no expansion of the site. Then Chairman Ryan made a motion to inform the Board of Supervisors that all four issues raised at the Planning Commission last month have been satisfactorily addressed and recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the Conditional Use request at their June 18 meeting with the first three of four conditions listed at the end of Rob Thaeler's March 25 2019 comment letter. Betty Izer seconded the motion which passed with Dave Peters abstaining.

At the end of this discussion all three representatives of the Hermits of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel left the meeting.

**New/Old Business:**

**a. Draft Zoning Ordinance:** Rob Thaeler said he would provide the bulk of the presentation at the Commission's June 24 Public Meeting and Chairman Ryan offered to help in any way he could. Rob also said he would work with the Township Secretary to ensure the advertising process conforms to requirements.

**Township Engineer's Report:** No additional comments.

**Township Planner's Report:** No further comments.

**Public Comment:** Clifford Frost requested that the Planning Commission revisit its recommendation to approve the conditional use request with conditions with the additional conditions that the applicant provide peak load figures for the septic system and that no overnight guests be allowed. Mr. Frost said he had a concern that during heavy rainfalls water from higher up the hill would flow down across the Hermits' site and wash effluent into Swamp Creek. Fred took a few minutes to explain how septic spray systems work stating that during certain weather conditions such as heavy rain or high winds, spraying is not permitted and the septic product must be stored in a retention pond until spraying is again permitted. Furthermore the size of the spray field which will be required by DEP ensures that all the spray is absorbed into the soil also preventing runoff.

Lastly, Stephen Reid expressed the opinion that in his experience the gravel road added to most of the hermitages in the new was inadequate.

**Township Meeting Dates:** All public meetings are held at the local prevailing time of 7:00 PM at 23 Carrolls Tract Road, Fairfield, PA unless otherwise noted. Rescheduled changes of date or time will be advertised via the *Gettysburg Times*. Cancellations will be via a notice on the office door.

- Board of Supervisors - June 4, 2019.
- Parks and Recreation Commission - June 11, 2019
- Conditional Use Hearing continued - June 18, 2019
- Special Planning Commission re: Draft Zoning Ordinance meeting - June 24, 2019 at Fairfield Fire Hall, 106 Steelman Street, Fairfield
- Planning Commission - June 25, 2019
- Board of Supervisors Workshop - June 27, 2019

**Adjournment:** At 7:58 PM John Iaea motioned to adjourn the meeting. Steve Jacobs seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David Peters  
Hamiltonban Township Planning & Zoning Commission Secretary