

**NORTH EAST TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

May 6, 2024

MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order: Vern called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Present: Vern, Char, Dennis, Matt, LeAnn and Jay

Minutes of the April 1, 2024, meeting were reviewed. Char motioned for approval, Matt seconded, approved.

Old Business:

1. Michael Bartlett and Isaiah Bartlett presented the final plan to subdivide Arnold Road parcel 37-033-130.0-001.02. Planning Commission members gave preliminary approval of the plan during their meeting on March 4, 2024. No changes have been made to the plans. Char motioned for approval, Dennis seconded, approved. **Final R-1**

2. Rick Burnham, West Main Rd., parcel 37-019-070.0-008.00 presented the replot plan for this property (the former car dealership). Planning Commission members gave preliminary approval of the plan during their February 5, 2024, meeting, but asked for some changes. They are adding buffer areas to the west and south of the former car dealership property for snow removal purposes. Separating the vineyards from the dealership property is intended to make the dealership property more marketable. They removed the frontage along US 20 from the proposal as suggested at the February meeting. Matt motioned for approval, Dennis seconded, approved. **Final B-1/B-2**

3. Craig Zonna and Jack Gartner discussed revisions to the proposed plans for the properties of Evandale Farm LLC, located on Cole Rd., property parcels 37-029-131.0-008.00, 37-029-116.0-038.00, 37-029-134.0001.00 and 37-029-116.0-028.00. Prior discussion on planned use for the parcel was held during the September 5, 2023, Planning Commission meeting. There was much discussion about plans and phasing of the project. Some conclusions from the meeting include:
 - The revised plan was not detailed enough for any sort of approval for conditional uses by the Planning Commission.
 - Basically, the PC is OK with proposals for growing/harvesting crops and livestock for human consumption, hiking/biking trails, horseback riding, equine activities, farm tours, gardening classes and instruction, U-Pick fruits/vegetables, and corn maze/pumpkin patch.
 - Concerns were expressed about camping/glamping and temporary/mobile cabin rentals, as well as farm to table dining.
 - The latter was resolved when agreement was reached that farm to table dining would be a "special event" and therefore would fall under the updated zoning codes provisions for special events.
 - The camping/glamping would likely consist of "Yurts" type units provided by Evandale Farm LLC and the temporary cabins would likely be a form of "Farm Stay." People would NOT be bringing in their own tents or RV's. Photos of sample "Farm Stays" were shown to the PC. They appear to be RV type units of about 400 SF that would be in specific areas, separated from others for

privacy, and containing holding tanks for sewage while being connected to water lines for potable water. Evandale Farm LLC would pump out the holding tanks and dispose of the waste at an approved facility. Water lines from existing wells would be connected to the units. Any glamping (Yurts) would require public restrooms and showers, some of which are currently available but possibly not in a convenient location.

- A maximum of twenty “Farm Stay” units is proposed and initial location would be in the “Orchard” area indicated on the map. Electric, gas and water are available at this site.
- Gravel or farm roads would be located throughout the property and PC recommended that they be fourteen’ wide for emergency vehicle access.
- It was also recommended that the current fire suppression systems in the ponds be upgraded to be consistent with fire department equipment. The five ponds exist.
- PC requested more information on locations and sizes of parking areas, and how buses would be addressed.
- Coordination with the County Health Department and DEP is required for approval of septic and water plans.

No approval was given at this meeting, although the discussion was very helpful to all parties.

Next steps include:

- Jack will acquire professional engineering services to prepare a detailed plan of all proposed improvements.
- If detailed plans are available and the owners wish to proceed prior to the approval of the updated Zoning Code, then the PC will pursue a Conditional Use permit based on the proposed zoning update and the Ag Tourism provisions, after discussions with the solicitor about how to properly proceed.
- Jay will present this scenario to the solicitor for his approval.
- Char and Matt will develop a definition for “Farm Stays” to include in the updated Zoning Code, including possible design standards. “Farm Stays” will be added to the Ag Tourism definition and design standards. PC wants to be sure that Farm Stays are associated with a planned and approved Ag Tourism venue, so that everyone with a vineyard or orchard cannot just add housing units (“Farm Stays”) on their properties.

Jack mentioned that they have the former PNC building under contract and are considering moving some of these proposed events/activities to that building and/or the Haynes House. Plans for Haynes House should be available in July or August, and construction should start.

New Business: None

Variance Hearings: None

Discussions: Dennis mentioned that he attended the solar seminar, but that there was not a lot of new info from the previous one that some of us attended. The models that were promised last year should be available in July or August. There are over 450 solar projects in the works in PA. These would produce the same amount of energy as one coal fired mega plant!!! We feel good about our Attachment A: Requirements for a Conditional Use Permit for Crawford Road and can use that again if needed. Jay mentioned that he has had another inquiry. Dennis mentioned one critical issue---there should be roads

between the rows of panels so that if there is a fire or problem, the panels are accessible. We may want to add that to our Attachments A: requirements for a Conditional Use Permit.

Char mentioned the training seminar for Planning Commission members that Erie Area COG is sponsoring, and John McGranor is presenting at, on Thursday, May 16 at the Summit Township building. Since North East Township is a member of EACOG, admission is free for any of us who want to go.

Adjournment: Char motioned for adjournment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charlene M. Kerr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charlene M. Kerr, AICP, Secretary