

WRIGHT TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES  
JULY 16, 2018, 7:30 P.M.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Dausman with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Prayer. Commission members present: Rich Dausman, Gary Karr, Dan VanDyke, Steve Gray and Steve Van Timmeren. Also present were Township Planner Brian Werschem and Clerk Maureen Carmody as Recording Secretary. Several members of the public were also in attendance (see attached list).
2. No parking in the reserved fire spaces was announced.
3. There were no additions to the agenda.
4. A motion was made by VanDyke and supported by Van Timmeren to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2018 Special Planning Commission meeting as written. Motion carried.
5. There was a Public Hearing request from Westside Coffee, LLC for a Special Use Permit for parcel 70-06-35-303-008 located at 1523 Jackson St., Marne, to allow 8 residential units on one property in the Village District. Applicant Brian DeSmit gave a brief summary of the proposed project to convert the former Berlin Baptist Church into a seven (7) unit multifamily dwelling with a shared common space gymnasium. Planner Werschem also summarized the project, informing the Commissioners that it would be a simple change of use utilizing an empty building, and that it is an allowed use in the village district. Also, in order to meet ordinance requirements for onsite parking, parcel 70-06-35-003-008 (parcel 1), would need to be combined with parcel 70-06-35-303-004 (parcel 2) located at 14747 Washington St. to the north of the existing building. There was discussion among the Commissioners, Werschem and the applicants regarding discrepancies between the legal descriptions on the site plan submitted by the applicants and the descriptions of both parcels provided by Werschem in the memorandum. It was determined that despite not being described accurately on the site plan, it is still clear which parcels are being discussed. Van Timmeren also noted that the memorandum indicated that parcel 1 has 155 feet of frontage along Washington St., but the site plan indicated that parcel 1 actually has 168.14 feet of frontage along Washington St. Werschem stated that it is only important that the parcel have at least 150 feet of road frontage. It was also clarified that required onsite parking for residents would be satisfied by the parking area to the north (parcel 2), and that combining parcel 1 and parcel 2 would be a condition of approval for the Special Use Permit.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:51 p.m. Ed Niemi, 2890 Leonard St., had questions regarding whether the steeple would be removed (the applicants stated that there were no plans to remove it at this time), was fire protection addressed (Werschem stated that the plans would be reviewed by the fire chief), would the common area be for residents only or also available to be rented (Dausman replied that would be up to management. The company would have to comply with ordinances), and finally, what makes this project different from barns being used as commercial venues (Dausman stated that restrictions for commercial uses of barns were put in place to protect nearby residents). Dan Whipple, 14753 Main St., had concerns regarding what would be done to protect nearby residents' back yards from trespassing. He would like to have fencing be a requirement for approval. There was discussion of whether the applicants should be required to erect a fence and the potential number of occupants that could reside in the proposed multifamily dwelling. Commissioners determined that it would not be appropriate to require the applicants to erect a fence to solve a problem that doesn't exist yet. It

was also noted that the Special Use Permit can be revoked by the Township if the applicants do not comply with the conditions of the permit. Whipple also expressed a concern that it would be low income housing. The applicants responded that it is not intended as low income housing, and that is not their target market. Harry Rogers, 14754 Main St. inquired whether there was a projected deadline for completion. The applicants responded that they want to complete the project as soon as possible, but it is dependent upon contractors' schedules. Niemi asked whether all of the proposed dwelling units would be wholly contained within the existing structure and was told by the applicants that they would be. Debra Elliot, 14636 Washington St., asked if she could view the plans for the project, and was told that she could visit the office during regular business hours to view the plans. She also expressed her opposition to the project, and would rather see the building used for retail purposes. Werschem stated the area is zoned village district which allows many uses. The public was informed that if the applicants meet the standards required for the issuance of a Special Use Permit, the permit must be granted. The Public Hearing was closed at 8:31 p.m. Dausman summarized the conditions for the issuance of a Special Use Permit as presented in the memorandum provided by Planner Werschem. A motion was made by Gray and supported by VanDyke to grant the special use permit as all standards of approval (a-f) have been met, and that parcel 70-06-35-303-008 (parcel 1) and parcel 70-06-35-303-004 (parcel 2) be combined into one parcel. The motion was later amended to remove (a-f). Motion carried.

6. The Westside Coffee, LLC site plan application for parcel number 70-06-35-303-008 (parcel 1) and 70-06-35-303-004 (parcel 2) was submitted for review. Parcel 1 is located at 1523 Jackson Street and parcel 2 is located at 14747 Washington St., Marne. There was discussion of where the well would be, and Werschem replied that the current well is not sized for that number of residences and the location will be determined by the Ottawa County Health Department. Karr noted that there would only be changes to the façade of the building, not to the footprint. There was discussion of egress from the building and traffic exiting onto the off ramp of the highway. The applicants were asked to clarify how many exits there would be from the building. The applicants responded that the main entrances would be those as were used by the church previously, and that most residents would not be exiting toward the adjacent neighbors. A motion was made by Karr and supported by Gray to approve the site plan as submitted, and that the plan shall conform to all applicable requirements of local, county, state and federal statutes. Motion carried.
7. There were no Commission member concerns.
8. There were no Wright Township Board communications.
9. A motion was made by VanDyke and supported by Van Timmeren to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Maureen Carmody  
Recording Secretary