

Conestoga Township Planning Commission Minutes: October 23, 2023

Present: Scott Kriner, Ron Wagner (by phone), Dan Alexander, Wes Bruckno

Others: Joe Devoy, Dana Paparo, Sheila O'Rourke of Gibbel Kraybill & Hess LLP, representing Joe Devoy and Dana Paparo

Call to Order: 7:00 pm

New Business:

Sickman's Mill:

Sheila O'Rourke, Joe Devoy and Dana Paparo presented a brief history of the Mill and the historic activities that occurred on the site as well as the more recent activities that Joe Devoy and Dana Paparo have offered, including tubing along the Pequea Creek and other entertainment activities. Future land uses such as a distillery, kayak rental, a bar on the Mill's second floor, a wedding venue, and a bingo brunch were also discussed.

Joe Devoy and Dana Paparo also discussed the hours of operation at the Mill, the number of employees (ranging from 8 to 30 depending on the event), parking on the site (up to 160 spaces including remote sites are available), how traffic and parking will be controlled, and how tubing activities will respect private property and limit nuisance activities such as illegal drug use, alcohol use, and littering.

Sheila, Joe and Dana and the Planning Commission then discussed the current status of the site and its activities regarding compliance with local regulations including the Township's Zoning Ordinance. Documents from the Township Zoning Officer were referenced which identified the areas of zoning relief that the Zoning Officer believed are necessary for the Mill's activities to continue as desired by Joe and Dana.

Specifically, Joe and Dana believe their activities at the Mill require a special exception approval pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 1229 for river-related recreational uses and a special exception approval pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 305 to substitute a non-conforming use with another, specifically referring to the proposed distillery.

The applicants presented a document prepared by Sheila O'Rourke of Gibbel Kraybill & Hess LLP, entered into the record as Exhibit A-7a P.C., titled "Plan to Control Impacts Pursuant to Section 1229 of the Conestoga Township Zoning Ordinance Sickman's Mill, 671 Sandhill Road, Conestoga Twp."

The Planning Commission considered recommending that the Zoning Hearing Board should grant the requested special exceptions, with the following specifications:

1. The Zoning Hearing Board’s approval should record and require adherence to all provisions identified in applicant’s **Exhibit A-7a P.C.**, titled **“Plan to Control Impacts Pursuant to Section 1229 of the Conestoga Township Zoning Ordinance Sickman’s Mill, 671 Sandhill Road, Conestoga Twp.”**
2. The applicant and the Zoning Hearing Board should discuss matters relating to safety and security at the site, and the applicant should also discuss these matters with the Township’s fire company and other emergency first responders such as LEMSA.
3. The applicant should consider measuring the yield at the water well to establish a base line volume.
4. The applicant should strive to meet the requirements of the American’s With Disabilities Act whenever possible.
5. The applicant should consider placing distance or location markers along the Pequea Creek to help first responders identify and locate persons who require assistance.
6. The use of aerial drones should be limited and the privacy of adjacent landowners should be respected.

Motion by Dan, second by Ron: The Planning Commission recommends that the Zoning Hearing Board approve the applicant’s requested special exceptions with the additional conditions identified in 1-6 above.

Discussion:

No further discussion.

Vote:

Motion approved 4-0-0

Motion to adjourn by Wes at 8 pm, Second by Scott; approved -0-0.