

MINUTES
MECOSTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Mecosta County Services Building
December 7, 2023

I. Roll Call

Chair, Ethan Ray called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Present for roll call were; Bill Stanek, Richard Hatkowski, Lorie Behrens, Gary Lambrix, Bill Routley, Annette Coles, Zoning Administrator, & Kim Straley, Recording Secretary. Marilyn Bradstrom was not present.

II. Matters Pertaining to the Public (3-minute limit per speaker)

1. Chair Ray then asked if there was anyone who wished to be on the next agenda. There was no response.

III. Public Hearings on the agenda retaining to the Public

1. Special Use Petition #PPC23-042 – 4 Ayriss LLC/Daryl Ayriss, 21163 30th Ave, Barryton, Fork Township; Parcel #04 016 031 000. Property is zoned R-1. Request to allow a home-based business, Air BnB, on the property.

The Chair read the request into the record. The applicant, Daryl Ayriss (LLC member), was present to speak in favor of the application.

- The property was purchased 1 month ago.
- The previous owner has run as an Air BnB since 2018.
- There will be house rules in place, no parties allowed, noise levels will be monitored. Setting is secluded.
- Unit has 1 bed, including loft area – sleeps 7 individuals.

There were no additional members present who were in favor of the petition.

Those present to speak against were none.

No one else to speak for or against the petition. Chair closed the public portion of the meeting and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

- Air BnB had no prior special-use approval but had prior history as such.
- Staff appreciates disclosure/honesty by applicant being forthcoming.
- No specific problems or negative impacts foreseen.
- The setting is secluded.
- Appears to have ample screening from neighboring properties.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Bill Stanek and supported by Lorie Behrens to approve special use request #PPC23-042, request to allow a home-based business. The property is located at 21163 30th Ave., Barryton, Fork Township, and zoned R-1; Parcel #04 016 031 000.

Roll Call Vote – 6 Yeas – 0 Nays, motion passed.

2. Special Use Petition #PPC23-043 – Norman Browning & David S. Moore, 8730 125th Ave., Stanwood, Austin Township; Parcel #10 024 004 004 & 10 024 004 003. Property is zoned LR. Request to allow Site Condominium Storage Units on property.

Chair Ray read the request into the record. The applicant, Norman Browning, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- Petitioner read use by-laws to the board.
- Will ensure the strict rules and regulations for proposed units are followed.
- Has obligations to the association to maintain a serene, private, and quality business.
- The petitioner has plans to add 5 structures and do stump removal on the land.
- Would rather see these units instead of a pole barn placed on lots, which is non-conforming to association's by-laws.

There were no additional members to speak in favor.

Those present to speak against were area residents; Scott & Kristen Malloy, Judy Watson, Joe McCormick, Randy & Jane Bayless, Steve Burman, Margie Cook, Jo & Jerry Boles, Carl Peterson, and Paul Szymkowicz, president of the Canadian Lakes Property Association.

- Storage units will not be visually pleasing.
- There will be little control over who rents the storage unit(s).
- Building is a conflict to community and the master plans (county and township).
- High traffic patterns will result from those who come and go to and from the units.
- 125th Avenue is already a gateway to the TransCanada property, existing horse traffic from neighboring ranch, and existing traffic from Summerhill & Castle.
- Additional lighting on units will affect the aesthetics of the area.
- There is potential for added noise pollution from the storage/rental unit business.
- Other existing community storage units are available in adequate numbers to meet demand.
- There are other storage units currently being built on M-20 and 90th Avenue area.
- Safety is a concern for area residents and those walking in the area.
- There is an increased potential for crime and squatters.
- Not against progress in development, but not an appropriate use for the specified area.
- Many expressed dissatisfactions with the proposal; did not anticipate commercial activity when they initially purchased their respective properties.

Additional letters received from Austin Township and Drain Commissioner were read by board members and placed on file.

No one else to speak for or against the petition. Chair closed the public portion of the meeting and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

- Must consider all impacts of any special use when making a decision.
- The aesthetics, and camouflaging would need to be extensive and not realistic to the petitioner.
- Believe this is not a proper setting for this type of business.
- Numerous other storage facilities exist in the area, so appears to not have a need.
- Good plan presented and nice structure proposed by petitioner, but not in conformance to area and location to neighboring properties.
- Believe this is an inappropriate fit for setting.
- Could be significant traffic impacts to area.
- There could be negative impacts from noise and lighting.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Gary Lambrix and supported by Bill Stanek to deny Petition #PPC23-043, a request to allow Site-Condominium Storage Units on property. Property is zoned LR and located at 8730 125th Ave., Stanwood, Fork Township; Parcel #10 024 004 004 & 10 24 004 003.

Roll Call Vote – (motion to deny) 6 Yeas – 0 Nays.

Petitioner was referred to consult with staff going forward.

3. Map Amendment #PPC23-044 – Nelson M. & Ruth Miller, 8987 20 Mile Rd., Rodney, Chippewa Township; Parcel # 03 027 006 100, Property is zoned AF. Request to allow a Home-Based Industry Business for making siding, roofing, and trim, sheet metal shop on the property.

The Chair read the request into the record. The applicant, Nelson Miller, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- The property is in the process of being transferred to Marvin & Anna Yoder and their son, Jacob Yoder.
- Parents are retiring, and family can support through business.
- Very community oriented, church oriented and safety conscious.

Additional members present were new purchasers, Marvin & Anna Yoder, & their son Jacob Yoder.

- This type of business will be a beneficial asset to the community.
- Are available to answer any questions the board may have.
- The structure will be oversized to allow room for inside storage or product.

Chippewa Township Board member, Julie Austin made comment that the township board was in favor and sees no foreseeable negative impacts to the area.

There was no one present to speak in opposition to the petition.

No one else to speak for or against the petition. Chair closed the public portion of the meeting and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

- Business is a good fit and location for the area.
- Driveway concerns were noted during site visits: improvement needed for visibility to enter and exit site.
- Could have some issues with road traffic and speed of vehicles, possibly need a study by the Mecosta County Road Commission.
- The petitioner was asked a question on getting a driveway permit and location of driveway?
 - The petitioner stated has applied for Mecosta County Road Commission permit day of meeting.
 - The petitioner is able to change grade and wants drive slightly inclined to building site when completed.
 - Will be clearing out some area around face of driveway to allow for line of sight to enter and exit property.
- Runoff (swamp/pond side) concerns noted for building site plan. These will be addressed by soil erosion in Drain Commissioners office.
- Clarification asked of staff for home-based industrial business and the number of non-family members.
 - Staff clarified that they may employ up to 10 non-family members.
- Staff members were asked if there is a restriction for 50% use of home for home-based business?
 - Clarification by staff that there is not a limit under Home-Based Industry.
- Has adequate room for delivery truck turn around on site and no backing in off street.
- Believe that all noise will be limited to the area of business and not affect local residents.
- The hours of operation will be reasonable times for any small industry business as proposed on this site.
- No foreseeable negative impacts to the area.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Richard Hatkowski and seconded by Lorie Behrens to recommend approval of special use petition #PPC23-044, request to allow a Home-Based Industry Business for making siding, roofing, and trim, sheet metal shop on property. Property is zoned AF and located at 8987 20 Mile Rd., Rodney, Chippewa Township; Parcel #03 027 006 100.

Roll Call Vote – 6 Yeas – 0 Nays

IV. Public Comment (3-minute limit per speaker)

The chair asked if there was anyone who wished to address the board on any subject.

There were area residents, Mandy Strohkirch, John Strohkirch, Theresa Ventocilla, and Norman Browning who spoke.

- Terri Strohkirch and John Strohkirch discussed previous zoning applications and what they entailed. Questioned zoning regulations at that time.
- Theresa Ventocilla spoke on possible violations in the community and rezoning requests.
- Norman Browning rebutted crowd feedback during his Special Use Petition #PPC23-043.

V. Business Session

Old Business

1. Camping zoning amendment proposal

- Wording for the possible amendment was discussed.
- The board wants to make sure changes will not place any burdens onto area townships or sewer districts.
- If wording is applicable and what board wishes, staff will need to do a public notice, vote to bring to next meeting, and present to BOC for amendment implementation.
- Formal camping permits are already required by the Building & Zoning Dept. that require District Health Dept. #10 approvals, & license plate number, ensuring compliance with ordinance. This is hard to enforce.
- Staff would like to revamp the camping application form and add space for other area clearances from sewer districts when applicable.
- Board would like to see the wording changed to “where applicable”
- Staff will add sign-off section on Building & Zoning Camping Permit. Sign-off prior to issuance will be required before staff will issue permits once the change is amended.
- Enforcement will be problematic without an enforcement officer.
- Will revisit at February 2024 meeting. Will do as separate item to BOC’s.
- BOC needs to approve any ordinance changes before any form changes can be made.

New Business

- Will discuss manufactured housing & Air BnB ordinances at February PC Meeting.
- Staff made a comment on a newspaper article in the Pioneer referring to the property owner Joe Strohkirch. Mr. Strohkirch is not in violation by definition of a farm as stated in the zoning ordinance. He will be receiving a letter informing him of the error in violation and dismissing any complaints made by neighboring property owners.
- Board member notified staff of a complaint he received regarding sign blight in Morley. Staff will inspect and address any violations there may be.

Approval of Minutes

Gary Lambrix motioned to approve the November 2, 2023, minutes, supported by Lorie Behrens and passed unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Straley / Recording Secretary

_____, Chair
Ethan Ray
Mecosta County Planning Commission

Date Approved