

**Buchanan Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 24, 2015**

CALL TO ORDER

The regular June 24, 2015 meeting of the Buchanan Township Planning Commission was called to order by Secretary William Braun 7:04 p.m.

Members Present: Gerald DiPietro, Scott Albright, John Pitz, Janet Dehring, and William Braun (Secretary).

Members Absent: Dennis Wentworth (Chairman), Kimberly Scarpone (Vice Chair).

Others Present: Nathan Mehmed, Williams & Works; Buchanan Township Ordinance Enforcement Officer Joseph Kring; Buchanan Township Building Inspector Chris Fuchs; Frances (Fran) Tuite and Brian Dougherty of Flatwater Farms; and four township residents.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited by those in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by DiPietro, second by Albright, to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2015 meeting as presented. Voice vote showed unanimous approval, motion carried (5-0).

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing – Flatwater Farms Rezoning Request

Frances (Fran) Tuite and Brian Dougherty of Flatwater Farms were present to request rezoning of their property (15475 Walton Road – 11-06-0025-0008-00-0) from R-1, Low Density (Rural) Residential District to AG, Agricultural District. The applicant has indicated that the purpose of rezoning the property is so that Flatwater Farms can apply for a Special Use Permit that would allow it to open an organic microbrewery.

Tuite noted that she has owned the home at 3232 E. Riverside Road since 2006 and in 2014 purchased the farm across the street. It was noted that of the land owned by Tuite, 75 acres is in Niles Charter Township, which is zoned Rural Preserve (agricultural), and the other 30 acres is in Buchanan Township. The farm currently grows barley, hops, alfalfa, and sorghum with plans

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NEW BUSINESS (continued)

Public Hearing – Flatwater Farms Rezoning Request (continued)

to plant a small orchard this fall. She hopes to have the farm certified to organic status by September, 2016. Dougherty presented a Power Point presentation showing pictures of the farm as it is presently and a virtual tour of their vision for the future. If their request is granted, the microbrewery would be built so that it would be accessed from Walton Road.

Dehring moved, supported by Albright, to open the public hearing at 7:38 p.m. Motion carried (5-0).

Dehring read a letter addressed to the Planning Commission received from Phillip Adkison who owns property at 4744 E. Riverside Road. The letter indicated that Adkison and his wife had no problem with the growing of crops on the property, but objected to the change in zoning that would also allow for the raising of livestock. The letter urged the Township to ask the property owners to consider a Conditional Rezoning Agreement that would allow the requested zoning change, but which would prohibit swine or feedlot operations.

Resident Kent Cooper (4792 E. Riverside) noted that he was concerned about the traffic created by a business on the property in question and was concerned about the appearance of the home of the farm's manager.

Donald Bryant (4712 E. Riverside) indicated that he was concerned about the future of the property if it was rezoned. He asked what protected the area residents from livestock, feed lots, and hog farms.

Cynthia Adkison (4744 E. Riverside) noted that she was concerned about what uses would be permitted outside of what Flatwater Farms plans to do and what subsequent owners would do in the future.

Tuite indicated that her intent was to keep the farm for a long time, but that one can never predict the future. She also commented that she too was concerned about property values and didn't plan on having pigs. She also explained that the farm might have a few sheep and chickens and will purchase manure to sustain the organic nature of the farm.

Dehring moved, supported by DiPietro, to close the public hearing at 7:58 p.m. Motion carried (5-0).

Nathan Mehmed of Williams & Works stated that the Planning Commission could not make stipulations on the applicant for conditional rezoning, but that Flatwater Farms could change their request to reflect any stipulations. Braun inquired as to the effect on the Master Plan

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NEW BUSINESS (continued)

Public Hearing – Flatwater Farms Rezoning Request (continued)

should any zoning changes be made and that he thought the Planning Commission should revisit the master plan before it ruled on the rezoning request.

Dehring moved, supported by Braun, that the rezoning request from Flatwater Farms be tabled until the Planning Commission received direction from Township legal counsel. Roll call vote carried (5-0).

Braun moved, supported by Albright, to revisit the Master Plan within a period of approximately 60 days. Roll call vote carried (5-0).

There was a short break beginning at 8:07 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 8:18 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Docks & Mooring Facilities

Mehmed provided further information regarding alternative standards for docks in Buchanan Township which are communal in use. Discussion followed regarding the requirements for the size of docks/piers with Albright inquiring about including square foot limitations. Building Inspector Chris Fuchs indicated that he would like the ordinance to address boat houses. There was also discussion regarding the number of boats including personal water craft that can be regularly moored at any community dock serving a single entity or organization. In response to a question by Dehring, Mehmed indicated that after speaking with his colleagues at Williams & Works it was his understanding that property lines do not extend into the water.

Albright moved, supported by Braun, to table discussion of this item until the next meeting. Voice vote showed all in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

William D. Braun
Secretary