**Durham Township Planning Commission**

**Draft Meeting Minutes**

**September 9th, 2024**

**Held at the PRFR Riegelsville Fire Station**

Call to Order by: A. Mills Time 7:00pm

Pledge of Allegiance

**Attendance**: Matt Crouse, Angelo Quisito, Johanna Chehi, Anthony Mills, Wendy Badman, Charlie Orecchio. Cindy Skoriak (Alternate)

Danielle Cox – Administrator, Peter Nelson-Solicitor, Tyler Freed-Engineer

**Absent**: Jim Beerer

Public Attendees:

101 public attendees

**An Executive session** was held prior to the meeting to discuss meeting procedures.

**Approval** of the Minutes for July 2nd, 2024. **Motion** by C. Orecchio 2nd by Badman Vote 6-0

**New Business**

* **Durham Springs Sketch Plan Review:** Landmark Development Attorney Andrew Griffin, Engineer Scott McMackin and Architect Ralph Fay presented the current plans for the property formerly known as the Cascade Lodge. Andrew Griffin stressed that it is very early in the project, and they are hoping to use the comments from the public and Planning Commissions to incorporate into the project. They are aware that several variances will be needed. The site consists of 3 parcels and would contain the existing restaurant and event center, 5 current buildings that will be renovated into 2 caretaker’s units, 2 guest units and 1 log cabin and an addition of 44 micro cabins in 3 different styles that would be spread throughout the property in three different groups. Each cabin would contain 2 units, each consisting of one bedroom and 1 bathroom. The cabins would only be used to support the wedding venue, they are not open to the public. There will be a decrease in seating in the event center and restaurant from 330 to 210, 50 restaurant seats and 160 banquet seats, this will reduce parking spaces as well. Well and Septic will be overseen by the Bucks County BOH and they will comply with all state and local guidelines, those aspects have not been designed yet but will most likely consist of a well and a small package sewer treatment plant. The Stormwater Basin will comply with the Storm water ordinance. Engineer Scott McMackin stated the existing main building entrance will be improved, a 10 ft wide macadam path will be designed to transport guests in golf carts but will accommodate emergency services vehicles. Parking lot issues will be addressed due to impervious surface ratio issues. Engineer McMackin stressed that this was just step 1 in a very long process and all aspects have not yet been fully designed. Architect Ralph Fay displayed colored boards detailing the look and placement of the cabins. The 3 groupings of cabins are referred to as the pond, ridge and woods groupings. A loop road will be added to walk and valet parking will be added. The cabins will be made to look woody and natural while the existing buildings that will be renovated will keep the style of the original structure. Barn will remain on the property and used for activities. Horseshoe pit will be added. Tyler Freed, Durham Township engineer discussed his review letter adding that his review contained the same suggestion that Bucks County Planning Commissions review detailed. The hotel/motel use is not permitted in this zoning district and will require a variance, and they will need to comply with the farmland lot ordinance as well. Buffer yards need to be adjusted. There are concerns about parking lot calculations that need to be addressed. This should be addressed before variances are applied for. Spots for restaurant and event center should be identified. If shared parking is the intent the planning commission will need to review, and permission will need to be given by the BOS. Grass pavers are being used to reduce the impervious surface ratio and the Planning Commission will need to decide if that is acceptable. Several EPA standards information was missing from the plan, Tyler reminded them to add that information as they may need a variance there as well. A variance for impervious surface will be needed. A highway occupancy permit will be required if any work is done in the right of way of Lehnenberg road. NPDES permit will be needed. Traffic impact study will be required unless waived the BOS. All improvements that have been completed since the Knuth subdivision plan approval will need to be checked to see if proper permits were issued. Easement of water course will need to be given to the township. Lastly the outdoor illumination standards will need to be followed.

**DT Planning Commission Comments**:

Angelo Quisito: Why not use all pavers instead of mixing with asphalt.

Anthony Mills: Questioned parking calculations.

Johanna Chehi: How many people will occupy each cabin, other than the 1 bedroom will there

be a pull-out couch. Ralph Fay informed the panel that they are designed for 1 couple and possibly a small child.

Charlie Orecchio: What type of events will be held other than weddings and will it be during the

week? Owner Frank Cretella stated corporate events are expected as well

Wendy Badman: Have there been perk test performed, how will the Aquaphor sustain the

usage. Previous subdivision turned down due to well issues and the mines in

the area.

**Public Comments:**

Dibaliso: Butchering an iconic property, worried about unwanted guests, and dangerous events.

Maryland: Concerned about traffic, taxing existing services, water and sewage, home values.

Mike N: concerned about residence wells, sewage plant, increased traffic and accidents

Chris: We need to protect our quiet, residential area. Traffic, pollution and safety concerns.

Asked Solicitor Nelson to explain conforming and non-conforming uses.

Jason P: Concerned over Traffic, safety, lack of police and guests wandering onto neighborhood

Properties. To allow this to go through would be irresponsible and will be challenged

Legally.

C. Lehr: Time limit on the length of events, if approved for a hotel/motel for current owners can

The use be changed in the future to allow transient usage. Solicitor Nelson explained

Adding conditions to variances. IE: time limits, use conditions.

Linda S: Concerned about squatters if company closes, are the cabins removable. As well as

maintaining the proposed sewer plant.

Linda C: Cabins will make this look like the Poconos, would like restaurant/pub.

Toby I: Lack of Water and sewer plant is concerning.

Unknown: Concerned over unruly guest, safety of guest and residents. Pond safety.

Kathy H: Concerned over water for their 150 cattle with the amount of water cabins will need.

Would love to see the buildings utilized but no cabins.

Gary W: Light pollution concerns as well as noise pollution.

Unknown: Safety concerns for our pedestrians. Emergency response time. As well a well water

C.J: Traffic concerns and guests not realizing 611/Lehnenberg are highways.

3790 Lehnenberg Rd: Roadway concerns with increase delivery trucks and support staff.

Lisa N: Water, sewage concerns. Amount of guest allowed in cabins and traffic on roadway.

**Public Comments Cont.**

R. Powell: Use school buses to bus guest to other local hotels. Will the

restaurant be changed and why decrease the parking for it if that is the only thing

That residents can use.

Beatrice G: No local police how guests will conflict he handled.

J. Hammerstone (Riegelsville): Concerned for our volunteer first responders

Irvin: Will there still be local events held?

Johanna C: Nonprofit school operations at the location. Outdoor activities and noise pollution.

Events centered more toward away guests then residents

Bob P: Safety is the biggest concern, no local police, all volunteer fire company.

Unknown: concerned this is a full-time events operation.

Lee B: Local farms use these roads. We know change will happen, but this is not the place for

Something like this.

Ike Blair: Doesn’t want this to be a negative experience.

Wendy Badman: Tax collected for volunteer fire companies; will our taxes need to increase to

To keep up with the equipment demand from hotel guest who are not paying

that tax.

Unknown: Wildlife and disturbing their habitat.

CJ: Is work being done without permits?

Erik K: We should be telling them what we do want and bring jobs to the community

Blake T: Carbon Geology, Reigelsville Well protection. Using 2014 zoning map

**Old Business**

* **Zoning Ordinance Revisions:** No Update
* **SALDO Review:**  No Update. Will resume in October
* **Commercial Medical Marijuana:**  On hold till SALDO review complete.
* **Tiny Homes:** No Update from zoning officer.
* **EAC Update:**  No Update
* **EV Charging:** On Hold till SALDO Review Complete.

**Motion** to Close by W. Badman 2nd by A. Quisito, **motion** passed 7-0.