

Royalton Township Working Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
6052 Royalton Road, Braham, MN 55006
Email: royalton@royaltontownship.com -- Website: www.royaltontownship.com
20 April 2021
Approved

6:30 p.m., 20 April 2021, Chair Leslie Orvis convened the Royalton Township working planning commission meeting with members Jeff Schlaeger, Priscilla Schneider, Gary Valvoda and Duane Swanson present. Zoning Administrator John Kemen and Supervisor Wayne Olson also attended. Social distancing was observed and masks were worn.

Dale Heidelbergger was present to inform the board on his proposal to construct a café and meat counter on property he owns south of Highway 70 opposite his auction complex. The proposed building would be 40' x 102', situated on approximately 3-4 acres of a 19-acre parcel on the northeast corner of the former Jerry Effertz property. The remainder of Mr. Heidelbergger's acreage would remain in field. Mr. Heidelbergger has been in contact with the state regarding restaurant rules and with Septic Inspector Amy Thompson regarding septic requirements. Much of the equipment would be moved from his present restaurant in Rock Creek city, the building and land which he intends to sell. His proposed business would be a family-style café, parallel to the road, with a parking lot (probably eventually paved) in front. The only access would be from State Highway 70 (access to be worked out with the state Department of Transportation). There would be no access off Apple Road, even though the property extends to it. Mr. Heidelbergger's current restaurant employs 16 people, which is the anticipated complement of the new establishment. The proposed hours are 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; no alcohol would be served, although certain staples (bread, milk, eggs, etc.) could be sold over the counter. The building would likely be green and white. He would wish a 4' x 8' lighted sign.

Chair Orvis commented that such an establishment would require a conditional use permit, that the process of issuing one is a long one requiring a public hearing and notification of landowners within a mile of the proposed location, and that most immediately the location should be tested to verify that it has the capability to handle the required septic system. Mr. Heidelbergger was given copies of the Royalton ordinance regarding conditional use permits. The commission expressed support for continuing discussions about this project, while emphasizing that more details would need to be developed as the process continues.

Mr. Daniel Berkness, realtor for William Saumer, and potential buyer Brady Pribula were present to seek approval for a land split of PID 290244001, setting off the northerly 10.04 acres from a 40-acre parcel. Mr. Berkness submitted a survey completed by Hancock Surveying showing the dimensions of the proposed parcel and noted that builder Bob Jones had two perc tests done on the property but he did not have copies of the results for the commission. Chair Orvis and commission members reviewed the history of the attempted sale of this property, none of which had borne positive results. Upon review of the certificate of survey, the commission noted that the road frontage of 329.49' did not meet the township minimum requirement of 330'. Zoning Administrator Kemen commented that the regulations were clear that a 330' minimum must be maintained. Mr. Berkness said that would be corrected and resubmitted before the next commission meeting. Commission members asked about access to the remaining portions of the existing parcel. Mr. Pribula noted that he would not want a shared driveway; the commission also assured him that it does not approve of shared driveways and that, once purchased, his parcel would not be subject to one without his consent. Messrs. Berkness, Pribula, and Heidelbergger left the meeting at this point.

Clerk Swanson distributed a draft of a proposed driveway and culvert policy. Members did a cursory

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review and requested that two clauses be added: one noting that permit prices would be set at the annual reorganizational meeting of the board of supervisors and would appear on the permit application and a second noting that the application and process would be coordinated through the town's zoning administrator. A revised draft will be available at the next commission meeting.

Clerk Swanson distributed a draft of an amendment to the Royalton Township Code of Ordinances requiring that all lots either front on or have an access easement of 66 feet, up from the 33 feet requirement in the existing ordinance. Members discussed the benefits and drawbacks of this policy, noting that, in certain instances, it may take a substantial portion of a landowner's lot. Since many easements turn into requests for public roads, the 66' minimum seems more realistic. The amendment will be revisited at the next commission meeting.

Clerk Swanson then distributed the draft of a proposed resolution accepting donations, noting that this would be the general format for authorizing acceptance of future donations. This resolution specifically approves a donation of \$800 from the Rock Creek Lions for playground wood chips. The commission suggested no changes and will consider it at its next meeting.

Chair Orvis called for discussion about drafting a policy setting a deadline by which claims must be received in order to be processed for the regular board meeting. Receiving claims within the last several days of the meeting requires substantial costs to redo the meeting agenda and the claims forms. The commission recommended drafting a policy that requires all claims to be submitted by the Friday preceding the regular board meeting and that a notice to such effect be included with future payments.

Clerk Swanson next distributed the draft of a letter to Nessel Township regarding the condition of 540th Street, west of Greeley Road. Members approved the wording, noting the date of the last joint project requires correction.

Mark Karpe had submitted to Zoning Administrator Kemen at 6:15 p.m. this evening a proposal for an exotic animal farm on his property on Hummingbird Road. Copies were distributed to members for their review. The current ordinance prohibits ownership of most exotic animals. Mr. Karpe notes that ownership is possible with United States Department of Agriculture and Minnesota Board of Animal Health rules. Chair Orvis directed commission members to review Mr. Karpe's letter and be ready to discuss it at the next commission meeting.

At 8:20 p.m., the meeting concluded.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk/Member

Leslie Orvis, Chair/Member

Jeff Schlaeger, Member

Priscilla Schneider, Member

Gary Valvoda, Member