

**EMPIRE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

July 18, 2024

The Empire Township Planning Commission held a special meeting on Thursday, July 18, 2024. The meeting was held at the Empire Township Hall.

CALL TO ORDER: Duane Shugart, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Duane Shugart, Dale DeJager, Micah Deegan, Larry Krawczak, Tom Petersen

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Dana Boomer, Recording Secretary; Tim Cypher, Zoning Administrator

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The PC briefly discussed the agenda. **Motion by Deegan, second by Krawczak to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor, motion carried.**

ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST – None

COMMUNICATIONS: Cypher received communications regarding the Manor, which will be attached and addressed during the pertinent agenda section.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS

- **Glen Lake Manor Application** – Cypher summarized the updates that were made to the draft Findings of Fact. There has been additional discussion with the township attorney, MDOT, and others pertaining to the application and draft findings.

The PC began the discussion of the draft findings with a discussion of the need for a traffic study or other traffic calming measures on M-22. Cypher spoke with MDOT, who stated that a petition for no parking on that segment of M-22 would need to come from a resolution from the Township Board. The PC extensively discussed parking on the property and where additional parking would be when the existing 54 parking spaces were full. Shugart is very concerned about making sure that there is no parking on the road. The PC and applicant discussed whether there is available space to place overflow parking in a grassy area on the property. With 137 people, 2 people per car would be 69 spaces, and 2.5 people per car would be 55 spaces. The PC discussed adding two parking spaces in front of each cabin, for a total of 60 parking spaces. There was consensus to have 60 parking spaces required, including 2 spaces in front of each cottage. The PC determined that there was no need for a traffic impact study.

The PC briefly discussed dockage and mooring of boats – this will be only for the owners and private, non-paying guests. Dockage includes the berthing of watercraft at the dock – the use of the dock for walking or swimming by paying guests will be allowed.

The PC then moved to a discussion of the use of the lake shore portion of the property. The PC discussed both the number of people allowed on the lake shore overall and the use of the lake front for events. The PC determined that up to 32 customers on the lake shore would be

acceptable, and no events would be allowed to take place on the lake shore. The PC accepted the proposal for hours of operation for outside events, which will be 10 p.m. for the summer season and 9 p.m. for all other seasons.

The PC discussed notification for special outside events. For outside events, Cypher requested notification of neighbors within 300' and notification of the ZA within two weeks or when known. The PC agreed to have this as a condition.

The PC discussed a performance guarantee. Cypher has worked with Bourgeois on a performance guarantee. The overall estimated project cost at the moment is \$3,931,200, although they have not yet gone out for bids on the majority of the project line items. Cypher recommends \$1.155 million for a performance guarantee, based on work that is required for health and safety. The PC discussed the performance guarantee amount and when it will be required. Sections of the performance guarantee would be released as various sections of the project are completed, and if bids come in higher or lower than projected the amount could change. Cypher will continue to work with the attorney on language regarding a performance guarantee.

The PC then moved to a discussion of Section 6.17.A, which surrounds the "The use shall be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that it will not change the essential character of the land use district in which it is proposed." The PC determined that this was not applicable to the application of the Manor, as it is already a non-conforming use in the district. Section 6.18 – Conditions and safeguards have been set through the preceding conditions. Section 7.1 – This is also not-applicable, given that this is already a non-conforming use in the district. Section 13.1.C – The approval of the expansion of the non-conforming use for the elevator, stairways, and a change to the deck on one cottage is an integral part of the project and is for health, safety, accessibility and to ensure that building code is met.

The attorney has stated that the current liquor license for the Manor is only for on-premise sale, not package sale. For any change to package sales, a new license would need to be applied for that would need approval from the township. The PC then discussed the market. The name of this was changed to a gift shop, versus market, at the request of the applicant. The sandwiches and beverages that would be sold would be an expansion of the restaurant.

A special meeting will need to be set to review the final site plan and findings of fact. If the site plan and findings of fact receive approval at that meeting, the minutes can be approved at the regular meeting in September and permits can begin to be issued after that. A tentative meeting was set for August 22 at 6 p.m., likely at the Township Hall.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

BOARD COMMENT: The PC thanked the applicants for their patience and work throughout this process.

ADJOURNMENT: **Motion** by Krawczak to adjourn at 7:38 pm, Deegan seconded. With no objection, Petersen adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Boomer
Recording Secretary

From: Chris Touhey ctouhey@gmail.com
Date: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 2:30 PM
To: Tim tim@allpermits.com
Subject: Glen Lake Manor

Hi Tim,

I am writing in regards to the recent proposal for the Special LUP being requested at the Glen Lake Manor.

I realize this may be too late for consideration given the meetings have already taken place. I was not aware of the original meeting and I tried to attend last night at 7 pm at the Townhall but it seems the meeting was rescheduled.

Do you have any updates you are able to share?

As a year-round resident on Glenmere Road within .3 miles of the Glen Lake Manor I have some real safety concerns about what they are proposing. I own two properties, one to the east and one to the west. Both within a 1/2 mile. So I feel I have a unique perspective given the location.

In general, I would love to see the Manor restored and improved. As I understand it, they have some existing zoning uses/permissions that would already allow for some of what is being requested. But I think that some of the "expanded" uses being requested by the owners will create safety hazards and unwanted issues for not only the adjacent property owners, but also for other pedestrians and cars. Traffic speeds, potential parking on the side of the road that will take an already dangerous stretch of road and make it worse.

To me it does not seem logical, with a property that is attempting to "revive" a historical commercial context by adding permissions that are certainly not historical by any means.

If there is a way for them to improve and renovate the property and stay within the permitted uses then that seems reasonable.

Even if the current owners have good intentions for development, which I believe they do, I think it's important to consider how a future owner could take advantage of what is being proposed. A hotel, wedding event site, restaurant, bar, retail store?

It also seems like there is a lot of grey area in what's being proposed. I think there needs to be more clarity in the details if this is to be considered further.

Ultimately, I trust that the PC board will evaluate all the critical information and make a well-informed decision w safety and potential unforeseen impacts discussed.

Thank you,

CHRISTOPHER TOUHEY, RA, LEED AP

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