

Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Board was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Chairman Schwaiger. The Board saluted the flag. Roll call was as follows:

Present – Mr. Conte, Mr. Crane, Mayor DiLucia, Mr. J. Garbowski, Mr. R. Garbowski, Mr. Kozak, Mr. Laughlin, Mr. O’Brien, Mr. Scardino, Mr. Schwaiger. Absent – Mr. Hesel, (excused), Ms. Pellegrini, (excused), Mr. White, (excused). Also present – Mr. Boraske, Solicitor, Mrs. Farrell, Secretary, Mrs. Orbaczewski, Clerk Transcriber.

Proper notice of this meeting was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act in the Annual Notice of Meetings on January 14, 2020.

Chairman Schwaiger read the following statement: “Be advised, no new item of business will be started after 10:30 p.m. and the meeting shall terminate no later than 11:00 p.m.”.

Public Hearing:

1. #429-SP – M3 Hotel Developers, LLC – Amended Preliminary & Final Site Plan

Mr. Schwaiger announced that this hearing is continued to the next Planning Board meeting. Mrs. Farrell stated that the next meeting is March 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. and no new notice will be sent to the public for this application.

Site Plan Waiver:

1. #WSP-03-20 – Julian Salgado

Present – Julian Salgado, applicant.

The applicant is requesting a site plan waiver in order to be permitted to have outdoor seating in the alley way next to the existing Grindstone Restaurant. The second and third phases of his plans are to utilize the existing home next to the Grindstone for additional seating, another commercial business, and a residential use. The property in question is located at 344 S. Main Street, also known as Block 3205, Lot 8 in the RG-TC Zoning District.

Mr. Salgado stated that he and his wife opened the Grindstone Restaurant a few months ago. The weekends have been very busy and at times there is a two hour wait for people to be seated.

Site Plan Waiver: (continued)

1. #WSP-03-20 – Julian Salgado (continued)

He stated an opportunity opened up to purchase the property next door to the restaurant. They are moving forward with the purchase this month. They would like to put tables and chairs in the alleyway next to the restaurant which will mean closing off the alley. With regard to parking, their neighbor, Mr. Kaser, has agreed to allowing a cross access easement through his property in the rear so people can access the parking in the rear of the restaurant and house. Mr. Kaser provided a letter in the Board members packets which indicates he will file the easement with the County. Mr. Kaser is also aware that some trees and bushes will have to be removed to create the access way.

Mr. Salgado stated that the proposal will be done in phases with phase one being the tables and chairs in the alleyway, phase two will involve utilizing the building for extra seating, and then phase three will involve a new business where they will serve gelato, pastries, etc. The building he's purchasing is already split in two sections. They will also have seating out front which will give Main Street some further appeal. Mr. Crane asked when they plan to start to utilize the alleyway. Mr. Salgado replied they will start by the end of the month and would like to have that area open by April 15th. Mr. Crane also commented on the bathroom facilities. Mr. Salgado replied that the bathrooms in the Grindstone Restaurant are ADA accessible and that they can utilize the bathrooms in the other building as well if necessary.

Mr. Schwaiger inquired about the easement from Mr. Kaser's property. Mr. Salgado stated that they will remove a couple of trees and grade the area. There are approximately sixteen parking spaces in the back which will mainly be utilized for the tenants and the restaurant employees. There was discussion on where the patrons are parking and Mr. Salgado commented that the MMUA allows the patrons to utilize their parking lot since they are closed by the time his restaurant opens. Some Board members mentioned parking behind the bank as well as at the Pfeiffer Center. Mayor DiLucia stated that if patrons are going to utilize Township parking areas, Mr. Salgado will have to provide a rider on his insurance as well as an indemnification statement indicating that the Township is not liable if anyone falls and gets hurt in those parking lots. There was further discussion on the issue of parking, with Mayor DiLucia commenting that the Township required the brewery to provide the same documentation and insurance for their patrons using the Pfeiffer Center parking lot. Mr. Boraske commented that it will be a condition of approval and stated in the resolution. Mr. Salgado understood he had to provide these items to the Township. Mrs. Farrell also commented that the property Mr. Salgado is purchasing will also have a one residential rental unit, on the second floor, in addition to the commercial uses. She asked Mr. Salgado to provide a copy of the easement to the Board once it's filed with the County.

Site Plan Waiver: (continued)

1. #WSP-03-20 – Julian Salgado (continued)

Mr. Schwaiger commented that the indemnification agreement and insurance rider would only be needed if Mr. Salgado chooses for his customers to utilize the Township parking sites. He could utilize the parking behind his building and on-street parking. Mrs. Farrell commented that the issue with the brewery parking at the Pfeiffer Center is that the previous administration gave them a letter stating they could utilize that parking lot for their business. There was further discussion on the parking issue not only for this business but for other businesses along Main Street. Mayor DiLucia commented that because the Township required the brewery to provide a rider on their insurance and an indemnification statement, the Board must require Mr. Salgado to provide the same. Mr. Kozak commented that if the town wants Main Street to be built up with businesses; they are going to have to provide public parking no matter which business is being patronized.

Mayor DiLucia replied that the applicant stated the MMUA gave him permission to park in their lot and the Township will allow patrons to park at the Pfeiffer Center. That being said, both are Township entities and if someone gets hurt in one of the parking lots, they are going to sue the MMUA or the Township. Mr. Salgado understood that in order to use those parking areas he must provide the rider and indemnification. Mayor DiLucia stated at some point the Township will have the other property they acquired off of Main Street paved and lined for parking and that they do want to see Main Street prosper, but for right now to use those existing Township parking areas, the Township must be protected against lawsuits and they can't treat this business different than they treated the brewery.

Mr. Boraske summarized the site plan waiver provision for the Board. Motion by Mr. R. Garbowski, seconded by Mr. Kozak to approve the site plan waiver conditioned upon the applicant providing an insurance rider for the Township and the MMUA as well as a hold harmless indemnification statement, obtaining any outside agency approvals, Township permits, and maintenance of the escrow account. Roll call vote: Ayes – Mr. Crane, Mayor DiLucia, Mr. J. Garbowski, Mr. R. Garbowski, Mr. Kozak, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Scardino, Mr. Conte, Mr. Schwaiger. Nays – Zero. Abstentions – Zero.

Discussion for Board Action:

1. Chapter 175-89 – Accessory Structures – Proposed Changes to the Ordinance

Mrs. Farrell stated that the accessory building ordinance is basically staying the same; however on page two, section I, they are adding that an accessory structure may be larger than 900 square feet if not part of a subdivision (residential development) and with at least three acres for a maximum square footage of 50' x 50' and a maximum height of twenty-four feet from the first floor as long as the structure is not larger than the principal structure.

Discussion: (continued)

1. Chapter 175-89 (continued)

Mr. Garbowski stated that Council is proposing this change because there have been too many use variance applications for accessory structures. Mr. Kozak questioned the size as being 50' x 50' with regard to different configurations. The Board members agreed that someone might want a 60' x 40' configuration and so on. The ordinance should read the total square footage of 2500 square feet. Motion by Mr. Crane, seconded by Mr. Scardino to recommend the ordinance to Council with the proposed change to say a total floor ratio of no more than 2500 square feet rather than 50' x 50'. Roll call vote: Ayes – Mr. Crane, Mayor DiLucia, Mr. J. Garbowski, Mr. R. Garbowski, Mr. Kozak, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Scardino, Mr. Conte, Mr. Schwaiger. Nays – Zero. Abstentions – Zero.

Public Portion:

Motion passed to open the meeting to the public. There being none, motion passed to close the meeting to the public.

Reports:

1. Mr. Schwaiger stated that Mr. Boraske is now a married man. The Board congratulated Mr. Boraske. Mr. Schwaiger also asked the Board members to stay in touch with Mrs. Farrell regarding upcoming meetings due to the Coronavirus issues going on in the State and the world.

Approval of Minutes:

1. 2/27/2020 regular meeting.

Motion by Mr. Garbowski, seconded by Mr. Kozak to approve the minutes from the February 27, 2020 regular meeting. Voice vote; all ayes, motion passed.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

These minutes are an extract from the meeting that was held on the above date and are not a verbatim account or to be construed as an official transcript of the proceedings.

Respectfully submitted by: Ninette Orbaczewski, Clerk Transcriber.