

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hilltown Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman David Christ at 7:30 PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Also present were Planning Commission members Brooke Rush, Jon Apple, Eric Nogami, Frank Henofer, and Township Engineer, C. Robert Wynn.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Action on the minutes of the September 21, 2020 meeting – Motion was made by Mr. Apple, seconded by Mr. Nogami and carried unanimously to approve the September 21, 2020 meeting minutes as written. There was no public comment.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: None.

3. CONFIRMED APPOINTMENTS:

a) Trucksess Land Development Sketch Plan – Mr. Scott McMackin, P.E., Cowan Associates, was in attendance along with applicants, Jim and Kathy Trucksess, to present the proposed sketch plan to modify the existing car washing facility, located at 784 Route 113, to include two automatic wash bays, two existing self-service bays, and a new driveway access to connect to the external access driveway network within the shopping center at the rear of the site. A secondary access is proposed that will exit out the rear of the facility into the driveway of the shopping center. The site is located on .45 acres within the PC-1 Zoning District and is served by public water and sewage facilities provided by Telford Borough Authority. Additionally, the parcel is encumbered by various easements (PPL easement for overhead electric, sanitary sewer easement, and a storm sewer easement containing underground stormwater conveyance facilities). Mr. McMackin continued to state two variances will be requested; impervious surface and parking. Items discussed from C. Robert Wynn Associates, Inc. review letter dated October 2, 2020 included the following:

1. Variances that need to be requested have been acknowledged.
2. Mr. McMackin is aware that stormwater facilities need to be shown on the plan including an underground facility in the rear of the property.
3. Mr. Christ stated, in the Bucks County Planning Commission letter, they suggested closing off the entrance from Route 113 and just having the entrance from the shopping center. Mr. McMackin stated the majority of the business comes from Route 113 so they are not interested in closing off the Route 113 access.
4. Mr. Christ stated his concern with the back entrance is that it is right on the curve which is hard to see with the overgrown bushes and the cars going too fast around the corner.
5. Mr. McMackin agreed the bushes are definitely an issue, they will look at the sight line, and have a discussion with the shopping center owner about the care of the bushes or possibly removing six or seven of them.
6. Mr. McMackin stated the paved area on the side of the carwash will be converted back to lawn so it will not be a cut through to Route 113.

7. Mr. Rush questioned why it would work better to go around to the back instead of coming straight in to the car wash and then out the back.

8. Mr. Trucksess stated it would be a stacking issue if there were six cars inline. He continued the trees are unkept and trash in them.

The Planning Commission had no problem with keeping the entrance onto Route 113. Mr. Wynn stated, after the Zoning Hearing Board, the applicant could ask for a waiver of land development since there are no frontage improvements, a small amount of stormwater, E&S plan approval, and it will not have to have all of the extra plan sheets. Mr. McMackin stated there will be a small building addition consisting of 16 feet. Mr. Rush stated he is in favor of the waiver of land development but requested a sketch of the building be shown when they return to the Planning Commission after going to the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Nogami stated he is in favor of the waiver of land development and would like to see the circulation pattern of the back entrance and continued to state he is concerned with Wendy's egress and ingress.

The Planning Commission was in favor of the project and since the project is a sketch plan, no action was taken.

b) Knox Property Sketch Plan – Mr. Wayne Kiefer, P.E., Showalter & Associates, was in attendance, along with applicant Matthew Knox, to present a revised sketch plan proposed to be developed for Agricultural (A1) and Agricultural Retail (A7) uses on a 5.16-acre tract located along the north side of Upper Stump Road within the RR Zoning District. The site currently contains a single-family detached dwelling, driveway access along Upper Stump Road, and a raingarden BMP, which will remain. A detached barn and porch will be constructed for agricultural retail associated with a vineyard and building permits have already been submitted and should be approved by the time the land development is in. Ten off street parking spaces and sidewalk are proposed in the vicinity of the detached barn. The site is served by on-lot water and sewage disposal facilities. Mr. Kiefer stated he did not receive C. Robert Wynn Associates, Inc. engineering review letter dated September 22, 2020 and Mr. Wynn stated it was emailed to Mr. Showalter. Mr. Kiefer discussed the following:

1. A holding tank will be added to handle the additional bathroom in the building of the winery.
2. Documentation will be provided for the extra water usage.
3. There will be proposed buffer plantings on the next plan.
4. Stormwater will be handled by the existing raingarden by expanding it to the front of the property.
5. Waivers requested include: improvements to the existing road, widening of the driveway to the existing house, and the water study.
6. Mr. Christ asked if there is any provision for irrigation of the grape vines. Mr. Knox stated he has minimal use irrigation in the vineyard. It comes from the well but he mostly does dry farming. The well is used in extreme scenarios to keep the vines alive and the well is not metered. Mr. Knox continued to state it will be nothing like Bishop's. There will not be any events; it will be a small-scale intimate place to go for a tasting, see the production facility, and the wines. There

might be some light music in the barn but nothing beyond the capacity that the parking lot can handle. Mr. Kiefer stated the barn is 1,500 sq. ft. total; 900 sq. ft. to production and 600 sq. ft. to public seating. There will not be any availability for large events.

7. Mr. Nogami questioned, because there may be live music, what is to say tons of cars come in just like the Bishop's. Mr. Knox stated, if he becomes very successful, there will be mechanisms put in place to control the capacity of the tasting room. They could do a reservation only system as opposed to being just open to the public.

8. Caleb Torrice, Board of Supervisor, stated noise will be governed under the LCB. They have strict rules as far as crossing the property line and Mr. Knox will have to abide by those rules.

9. Mr. Knox stated the winery would be done by 6:00 PM.

10. It was noted that Bishop's is an entertainment type of facility plus retail. Mr. Knox agreed that his facility will be a small quiet appreciation of the wine and the neighbors deserve to have their privacy respected.

11. Mr. Wynn stated Dave Taylor, Zoning Officer, provided a memo dated July 20, 2020 in regard to zoning. It was noted by Mr. Kiefer that he did not receive the memo from Dave Taylor. The memo was discussed with Mr. Knox stating they are not planning the first visit until Spring of 2025 and the winery is an agricultural enterprise and not a tavern use. Agricultural is allowed under Federal and State Law. Mr. Kiefer stated both agricultural and retail sales are allowed in the RR Zoning District.

12. In regard to the on-site well, Mr. Christ questioned the waiver of the ground water study since there will still be an impact. Mr. Kiefer stated they can provide the usage to the engineer as to avoid the full-blown study. Mr. Wynn suggested to provide information on the drip system. Mr. Kiefer stated he has a planning module exemption approved that deals with flows anticipated from the new facility as well as the existing dwelling.

13. Mr. Apple asked if the vines that are presently on the property, are all of the ones that are going to be there. Mr. Knox stated there is capacity in the back for 1,500 vines and there are almost 500 vines in the front of the property.

14. Mr. Henofer stated since there is nothing in the back of the property, once the vines are planted, it will help handle all of the water run-off.

15. Mr. Rush asked about the width of the driveway. Mr. Wynn stated the driveway entrance must be widened to 20' to that a car coming out does not have to wait for a car coming in.

16. Mr. Wynn stated no street improvements will be needed. A restricted covenant will be needed as to not expand to weddings, etc.

17. Mr. Apple stated it is a great thing to do, the Township can benefit from it, and he is in favor of it.

18. Mr. Knox stated Hilltown has a history of a long, rich, history of agricultural and this continues to celebrate it and maintain the tradition of farming. Mr. Knox stated he has five types of grapes and will get seven or eight different styles.

19. In regard to the 35-foot buffer requirement between residential and non-residential, Mr. Kiefer questioned if it is the Township interpretation that the actual agricultural area is a non-residential and requires buffer plantings around it. Mr. Wynn suggested supplementing the wood

line rather than installing a complete buffer. He continued to stated existing vegetation can be used to count toward the buffer.

The Planning Commission was generally in favor of the project and since it was a sketch plan, no action was taken.

5. PLANNING: None.

6. ORDINANCES: None.

7. OLD BUSINESS: None.

8. NEW BUSINESS: None.

9. PLANS TO ACCEPT FOR REVIEW ONLY:

a) Bucks County Auto Care, 232 Dublin Pike, Sketch Plan

10. PUBLIC COMMENT:

a) Craig Cirafesi, 173 Winterberry Lane, expressed his concerns in regard to the proposed winery. He is concerned about the scale, the magnitude, the vagueness of the ordinance, and the hours of operation. He continued to state he wants to be on board but he needs a better understanding. He shares many of the concerns that the Planning Commission has about the project. Mr. Cirafesi continued to state he is concerned about food prep, events, hours, and concern that it will be like Bishop's. He would like to know how the Township regulates this kind of thing; things evolve and get bigger.

11. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS: None.

12. PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

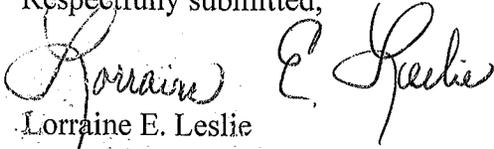
13. ADJOURNMENT: Upon motion by Mr. Rush, seconded by Mr. Henofer and carried unanimously, the October 19, 2020 Hilltown Township Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lorraine E. Leslie". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lorraine E. Leslie

Township Manager/Treasurer

(\*NOTE: These minutes were transcribed from notes and recordings and should not be considered official until approved by the Planning Commission at a public meeting).