

SALEM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes, March 6, 2025

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance – 7 pm

Roll Call of Members – Present – Coupe, Pitsch, Oosterink (chair), Berens, Meyers, Wagner. Absent with notice – Striegle

Recognition of Visitors – none.

Approval of the Minutes from the last Meeting -

Comments from the Public – none

Approval of the Agenda for the Meeting – Motion by Coupe, Second by Berens. Carried.

Inquiry of Conflict of Interest – none noted.

New Business

SUP Expansion – Coffey – Overview by Jason (PCI). In 2021 approved for 3 trucks to come to site and transport gas product now expanding to 5 trucks daily. Compressor proposed and some widening of site. Screening on last approval never installed due to the fact that farm also produces produce and health inspector objected to screening as drawing animals and insects to produce area. The production of gas from animal waste provides quite a bit of energy to the area.

Wagner – clarified screening issue.

Coupe – did site visit and took pictures, noting 3 houses on Sandy View Drive could see site but none on 34th could. Thought it a pretty clean operation.

Public comment – 7:14 -neighbor on 34th says that Coffey keeps site up and clean.

Coffey pointed out extreme security measures.

Public comment closed 7:15.

PC comments – Meyer – clean and well kept. Berens and Wagner agreed. Good thing to keep going. Coupe said no problem, clean op. Screening requirement should be eliminated.

Findings of Fact

- a. Complies – still farming
- b. Complies – no change
- c. Complies – no changes
- d. Complies – day only, noiseless compressor
- e. Complies – helpful
- f. Complies – still doing ag activities

Motion to approve with previous conditions but eliminating screening from previous approval by Meyer, Second by Wagner. Carried. 7:24 pm

Rezoning request by VanderKolk - Overview by Jason (PCI) – to rezone western most part of parcel with building on it – “Parcel” A. Master Plan calls for it to become General Commercial.

Public Comment – 7:26 – Gail Vander Kolk (owner) – said original request was for whole parcel of 11 acres to be rezoned. Scott VanderKolk who owns surrounding farm thought it was a small split for old Burnips Equipment store. Has heard I will become slaughterhouse and wants no part of game processing. Believes in property rights but not to the detriment of neighbors. Would rather buy it than have it go to slaughterhouse.

Person proposing meat processing said no animals will be outside and noted that use is not on table, only rezoning.

Scott VanderKolk – said that lots down the road do not affect him, just building area.

Gail VanderKolk – if it is not rezoned then something needs to be done about parking illegally of farm equipment.

Brian Naber – interested in rezoning of eastern part as his own business grows.

Person proposing meat processing noted that he remodeled Flooring building in Dorr and it is now a nice building.

Public comment closed at 7:42 pm

PC discussion – Wagner – only going to think about rezoning and future land use. Meyer agrees. Berens says township could use more commercial. Coupe – helped with Mater Plan and notes that this area was slated for rezoning to keep commercial closer to Burnips.

Scott VanderKolk – pointed out that parcel sits in the middle of his farm and he could lose access to his farm.

Gail VanderKolk – noted that there is deeded access to farm via shared driveway. If there is deeded access it would remain after rezoning.

Findings of Fact

Are considerations or opinions, not part of Ordinance and binding. Thought them confusing and not helpful. Need to be rewritten.

>False – It is in the future land map as commercial. Could also be interpreted as True if current clump of zoning is considered.

>False – was operating as a business for years. Actually correcting to use of it.

>False – previous business located there.

>False – would not conflict with Master Plan.

Motion to recommend entire parcel (11 acres) to Township Board for approval of rezoning, by Coupe. Second by Berens. Carried.

Old Business

Ordinance Review – did final read through of changes. Jason will present clean copy at next meeting for members to read and then set for public hearing.

Correspondence – none

Reports

Township Board

PCI – Harmsen issue – court appearance delayed, may be sold to parcel adjoining to the rear.

Other/Roundtable – none

Next Meeting – April 3, 2025

Adjournment – Motion by Pitsch, Second by Coupe (and all others). Carried. 9:10 pm