

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
TOWN HALL – FEBRUARY 5, 2009 – 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Chairperson Lois Cutler, Planning Commissioners Lee Busse, Lynne Murphy, Robert Ranalla, Richard Robbins and Troy Schifsky, Supervisors Matt Beane and David Johnson, Town Board Liaison Jim Hiniker and Planner Sherri Buss.

**PUBLIC HEARING – ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT –
CEREMONIAL FACILITIES – 7:00 P.M.**

Pursuant to notice in the Stillwater Gazette, a public hearing was held to consider a requested amendment to the Stillwater Township Zoning Ordinance to allow Ceremony Facilities as a use allowed with a Conditional Use Permit in the Transition Zone. Made a part of the record are the names and addresses of attendees (9) at the hearing.

Chairperson Lois Cutler opened the public hearing and read the public hearing notice. Kevin Shoeberg, attorney for the applicant, explained that they had been to the Joint Board to see if they had any problems with this application. This parcel sits next to the Stillwater public works department. They do not want to propose something that the neighbors would be opposed to. They recognize there needs to be controls that the Township would have on this type of use.

Planner Sherri Buss highlighted some issues from the Joint Board. There had been people at that meeting who spoke on both for and against this. One issue was the possibility of parking here for the ceremony, going elsewhere for the reception, and returning late at night to pick up cars. The Joint Board had suggested that all uses, including parking, be over one half hour after dusk. This would open up this use to the entire Transition Zone. Another addition made by the Joint Board is that this must be an accessory use to a homesteaded dwelling. The parking ratio should be made similar to other uses in the Township.

Joe Rivard, a neighbor of the Canons, said that he has never heard anything and never had a problem with this. He has no conflict with this use.

Rhonda Rivard, also a neighbor, said that there had been ceremonies when she was out in her garden and she never realized there was an event going on.

The public hearing was closed at 7:10 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT –
TRELIS WEDDINGS AND EVENTS, LLC.**

Pursuant to notice in the Stillwater Gazette and to surrounding property owners, a public hearing was held to consider a requested Conditional Use Permit to allow a Ceremony Facility located at 12525 80th Street in Stillwater Township. The applicant is Peter and

Sherri Canon, Trellis Weddings and Events, LLC. Made a part of the record are the names and addresses of attendees (6) at the hearing.

Chairperson Lois Cutler opened the public hearing and read the public hearing notice. Planner Sherri Buss gave a quick overview of what has changed since the Planning Commission last saw this. One issue is how many events they would have a year. There was a suggestion that we allow no more than two a day which would control the amount of traffic at the site. Brown's Creek has requested a watershed permit be obtained and also a permit for the parking lot. Washington County had concerns about the septic system and they are proposing a satellite facility. A condition was added about amplified sound. There is also the issue of what to do about someone who had done work without getting the appropriate permit.

There were the following questions and comments:

- Troy Schifsky – The hours and months of operation need to be firmed up. It says different things in different places.
- Kevin Shoeberg – They had presented the same information that the Planning Commission has received to the Joint Board. He also provided statements signed by individuals supporting the Trellis operation. They are not looking for receptions. With respect to hours, someone may want a ceremony at dusk. This neighborhood consists of the public works department and a ball field. He believes this is consistent with the neighborhood. This can stay a five acre parcel and they intend to continue to live here. They are proposing to play music and have some amplification during the ceremony only. He believes that the way the property has been set up as well as the screening that has been put into place would limit noise to the neighbors. Only one couple spoke against this at the Joint Board hearing and the rest were in favor. The one concern was about cars parked along Boutwell, but it turned out that the occasion that they were parked there, it was not from the Canon's ceremony facility. The Canons want to be a good neighbor. They have no problem with this not being used as a parking facility. He encourages the Planning Commission to approve this CUP.
- Lois Cutler – How many parking spaces are there now? Shoeberg – He believes there are 83, but they have no problem complying with what the Township requires.
- Lynne Murphy – How many events do you anticipate to make this profitable? Shoeberg – They do not want to give a number. The permit will deal with traffic, etc. They are comfortable with two events per day. It is difficult to judge how long each event will be. This is limited because of the dates allowed. Murphy – Is May though October all right? Shoeberg – They are comfortable with that.
- Murphy – Thinking long term, when this is annexed to the city and this becomes sewerred, this may not be a viable business. Shoeberg – They are living here and operating a business.
- Sherri Canon – They bought this parcel to raise their boys. Her niece had approached them to have her wedding there. Only her mother and herself are doing the work. They have not thought long term and do not have a business plan.

- Rhonda Rivard – We need this type of facility in the Stillwater area to bring people into the area and see what we have to offer. They see this unique city and may come back.
- Rick Robbins – He complimented the Canons and Mr. Shoeberg on doing a good job. They have addressed all of his concerns.

The public hearing was closed at 7:25 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING – 7:25 P.M.

1. AGENDA – M/S/P Robbins/Ranalla moved to adopt the agenda as written. (6 ayes)
2. MINUTES – M/S/P Busse/Murphy moved to approve the December 4, 2008 Stillwater Township Planning Commission Public Hearing and Regular Meeting minutes as written. (6 ayes)
3. ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – CEREMONIAL FACILITIES – The draft ordinance was discussed with the following changes suggested:
 - **SECTION 3.5(H)** Amplified sound should conclude by one half hour after sunset.
 - **SECTION 3.1(1)** – Remove the language referring to the rural agricultural character of Stillwater Township. Insert language such as this is “an interim land use within the Transition Zone.”
 - **SECTION 3.5(E)** – With respect to food and alcohol, how is this enforced? Sherri Buss explained that enforcement is difficult and usually by complaint. A guest could bring their own.

M/S/P Robbins/Busse moved to recommend approval of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment Regulating the Performance Standards to allow Ceremony Facilities with the changes to Section 3.5(H) and Section 3.1(1) as discussed above. (6 ayes)

4. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT – TRELIS WEDDINS AND EVENTS, LLC. – The staff recommendations in TKDA’s memorandum dated February 1, 2009 were reviewed with the following suggested changes:
 - The allowed dates should be May 1st through November 1st.
 - The number of events should be no more than three per day.
 - The hours of operation should be the same as those in the draft ordinance.
 - With respect to the letter of apology, the planning commission makes no recommendation, the Town Board can decide what to do.

M/S/P Busse/Schifsky moved to recommend the Town Board approve the Conditional Use Permit with the appropriate change of hours, the dates be changed to May 1st through November 1st and the number of events not to exceed three per day. (6 ayes)

5. WEBSITE/NEWSLETTER - Lynne Murphy discussed the Web Maintenance and Update log that had been discussed at the last Communication Committee meeting.
6. NEW BUSINESS – Planning Commission were invited to the next Town Board meeting where Representative Matt Dean will be present.
7. TOWN BOARD LIAISON REPORT – Jim Hiniker reported on recent Town Board activities.
8. ADJOURNMENT – M/S/P Busse/Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting. (6 ayes)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Kathy Schmoeckel
Planning Commission Clerk