

**West Mead Township Planning Commission**  
**Minutes – June 27, 2024**

The June 27, 2024 meeting of the West Mead Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Building. Present: John Hilson, Aaron Hunsinger, John Kerr, Jim Bucci, Chris Learn, Natasha Learn, Maggie Wisniewski, John Swick, Alan Shaddinger and Jill Dunlap.

Chris and Natasha Learn were present to discuss an application submitted for an Amendment to the Conditional Use originally approved for The Harper Event Venue located at 13636 Dickson Road. This facility consists of a barn type wedding and social event hall structure, a pond and two current gravel driveways located on 21 acres of property. The property is located in both the LDR, Low Density Residential Zoning District as well as the RR, Rural Residential Zoning District. John Swick provided background information. Natasha Learn and Maggie Wisniewski presented a handout as they now want to obtain a liquor license for the establishment to further help grow their business and to be more in control of the use of liquor at all events. Currently, renters purchase and supply their own alcohol and use certified bartenders which is not an ideal situation. John Swick stated they are investigating a retail license to sell liquor although Jill Dunlap understood it to be a restaurant/tavern license. She noted she views this to potentially be a significant change in the Conditional Use that was originally approved and recommended they come before the Planning Commission and Supervisors to consider amending the original decision. John Hilson discussed his concerns over the differences in what was originally approved in 2020 and what actually happens on site currently. Jim Bucci indicated he wants to look out for people who reside in the area but also indicated they have a lot of good reviews posted online. Aaron Hunsinger viewed the in house sale of liquor a better option as it can be more controlled and noted the number of people this venue brings into the area. Chris Learn noted this would place the risk on them as owners and they would also have greater oversight during events with employees on site. John Swick and Jill Dunlap discussed the need for a PLCB hearing to be held before the Township Supervisors as any liquor license purchase would be coming from outside the Township and there are requirements that must be met. Jim Bucci and John Hilson expressed their concerns for neighboring residents over the event venue turning into a bar or restaurant type operation that may include serving to the general public, expanded days and hours of operations and additional noise and traffic concerns. Discussion was had on the hearings to be held, conditions and limitations that could be put in place as well as time frames to secure a license and advertisements necessary to keep everything moving along.

Jim Bucci moved, John Hilson seconded to recommend the West Mead Township Supervisors consider the request of Chris and Natasha Learn of the Harper Event Venue as an Amendment to the existing Conditional Use Decision considering the spirit of the use has changed from the original plan of not serving alcohol and to have a clarification in the hours of operation. Vote – All Approved.

The final draft of the updated West Mead Township Zoning Ordinance Amendment specific to the inclusion of Route 77 property owned by Dennis Haylett be included in Light Industrial Zoning District as well as allow Vehicle Repair Shops to be considered as Conditional Uses in those districts was presented and reviewed. As the Planning Commission members had already recommended the Supervisors consider approval of the Light Industrial Zoning District change and Map Ordinance Amendment, there was no additional recommendations made at this time and all agreed for the process to continue moving forward.

The members reviewed the updated West Mead Township Zoning Ordinance Amendment for Solar Development. Alan Shaddinger discussed the proposed draft as he had provided additional comments as shown in both yellow and blue highlighter in the version he handed out this evening. The members can review the document and provide any additional comments or concerns to Jill Dunlap. As the Planning Commission members had already recommended the Supervisors consider approval of a Solar Development Ordinance Amendment, there was no additional recommendations made at this time and all agreed for the process to continue moving forward.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill M. Dunlap  
Recording Secretary