

Baroda Township Planning Commission

June 13th, 2022

On June 13th, 2022 the Baroda Township Planning Commission met in the Municipal Buildings Meeting Room at 9091 First Street., Baroda. Present were, Christina Price, Tom Lippert, Dean Schmaltz, Tom Shafer, Barbara Sukys, Peter Van Vooren filling in as Chair and Sara Senica the Townships Attorney. Absent was David Schultz. There were 16 audience members.

Peter Can Vooren called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The minutes of the May 9th, 2022 meeting was reviewed. Dean Schmaltz moved, seconded by Pete Van Vooren to approve the minutes. Vote – all Yes. Motion Carried.

The Building and Zoning Report for May 2022 was not presented.

Public Hearing – Rezone Application for Parcel # 11-02-0013-0005-00-9

Public Hearing was opened at 6:31pm

Bill Schopf – The Owner of Dablon Vineyards spoke first and expressed his opinion of support and how the land in the requested area is suitable for growing wine grapes. He also mentioned that the area of request is the only area in the Township for growing those types of grapes. Bill Schopf turned in a letter of support at the end of the meeting.

There was a letter from Michigan Wine Collaborative turned in as well to explain the support of Michigan grape and wine industries.

Kelly DePumpo – A letter from Kelly DePumpo was turned as she was not able to make the meeting. Copies were on the table for the public and the passed out to the Commissioners. Kelly is opposed to the Rezone Application and the possibility of a winery on this parcel.

Jeff Lemon – The Owner of Lemon Creek Winery shared his support to the Rezone Application and if it were to be approved the potential of a winery on this parcel.

Mike Shirley – Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery on this parcel. Mike is in support of growing grapes on the parcel only.

Tom Nelson - Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery on this parcel. Tom is in support of growing grapes on the parcel only.

Sheldon Light – Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery and stated he walks by this property every morning.

Ed Pinkowski – Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery and stated issues about Dablon Winery. He also mentioned the Townships master plan and if it was a part of it.

Gail Shirley – Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery and stated she feels as if they always have to fight for their privacy around their neighborhood.

Mark Gardner – Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery at that parcel.

Peg Pinkowski – Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery at that parcel, she also stated her concern for the noise as she mentioned sound travels in that area.

Bob Pinkowski – Is opposed to the Rezone as it could possibly promote a Winery and state his concerns for the road as it was done refinished.

Kristen and Greg Ranft – Have lived at their home for 18 years and would be worried about the noise and traffic. They are both opposed to the Rezoine as it could possibly promote a Winery at the parcel.

During the Public comments the Applicants Attorney Kevin Warren spoke reassuring that they would work with the neighbors to make sure that everyone's concerns would be looked into and that they are flexible.

Barbra Sukys asked both Dablon and Lemon Creek Winery how much land both wineries have for their wineries. They both have 50 acres.

Public Hearing was closed at 7:31pm

Deliberation and Action by the Planning Commissioners

Tom Shafer - presented his concern about spot zoning as it is currently R2 and all the properties around are zoned R2. The Townships Attorney mentioned that Spot Zoning is frowned upon and within good reason it can be done.

Christina Price - mentioned that this area should all be agriculture and that the Planning Commissioners should look into this as they start to review the Townships Master Plan and update the Zoning Maps.

Dean Schmaltz – mentioned that spot zoning is not something that always done but it can be done for a good reason such as this area.

As the Deliberation and Action by the Planning Commissioners continued on in reference to Section 20.05 of the Zoning Ordinance, Pete Van Vooren made a motion to approve the Rezone Application presented, seconded by Tom Lippert: By Roll Call Vote: Voting Yes, Dean Schmaltz, Peter Van Vooren & Christina Price. Voting No: Tom Lippert, Barbra Sukys, Tom Shafer. Tie vote. No recommendation can be presented from the Planning Commissioners to the Township Board. Documents will be sent to the Berrien County Planning Commissioners for review and opinion. They will have 30 days to review and reply to the Township Board. Once also information is gathered it will be presented to the Township Board for the final vote.

Unfinished Business – None

New Business –

- A Possible Bud and Breakfast on Miller Rd – It was reported into the Township that a Bud and Breakfast has been operating on Miller Rd and is posted on the website. The Zoning Administrator and Township Supervisor will address this situation.
- 9296 Cleveland Request – The Zoning Administrator reported a request that was denied from the owners of 9296 Cleveland as they wanted to fulfill their dates already booked for July. It was also reported that they are selling the home.
- SLUP for Russell Rd – Is not fully inspected and approved.
- Audience Comments –
Dennis Krotzer mentioned the difference in acres mentioned on Beacon and the Deed are different.

The meeting was adjourned by 8:32 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 11th, 2022.

Christina Price
Baroda Township Planning Commission Secretary