Mr. Habig called the official meeting of the Hamilton County Plan Commission to order at 7:06 p.m.

Members present: Diane Crim, Frank Habig III, Jim Galloway, Kent Ward, Mark Heirbrandt, Steve Schwartz, and Tom Clover. Absent: Amanda Baird and David Musselman. Also present: Charles Kiphart, Director; Aaron Culp, Legal Counsel; and Linda Burdett, Secretary.

Declaration of Quorum: Mr. Habig declared a quorum with seven out of nine board members present.

Guests: See sign-in sheet.

Communications/Reports: Nothing to present.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Habig asked for the approval of the minutes from the June 19, 2019 meeting.

Mr. Galloway moved to approve the minutes as presented.

Mr. Ward seconded.

With no comments or corrections… Mr. Habig called for the vote. 7 yes votes… 0 no votes.

Public Comments: Mr. Habig stated that he didn’t see anyone out there that wanted to talk about anything other than what was on the agenda for tonight and with that being said… Mr. Habig closed the public portion of the meeting.

Correspondence: Nothing to present.

President’s Report: Nothing to present.

Old Business: Nothing to present.

New Business: Mr. Habig identified NBZA-S.U.-0014-08-2019. This is a Special Use and we are passing on a recommendation to the North BZA concerning allowing the boarding of horses and a horse training facility. Location: 28146 Ditch Road, Sheridan, Indiana. If you would like to step up and…

Dave Coots, of 255 East Carmel Drive in Carmel. I’m here this evening representing the property owner who is Amanda Hale. She is seated on your left in the front row. With her is Dave Martin’s wife, Cassidy, who live immediately to the north of the site. Cassidy and Dave Martin also participate in the horse activity conducted in the meeting. The property is located on the northwest corner of Ditch and 281st Street. The property is zoned A-2 with floodplain designation.
Prairie Creek runs cattycorner across the property on the very northwest portion of the 20 acre site. The comprehensive plan addresses A-2 properties in this district as a farming use. It is also contemplated that there will be a diverse array of new homes and businesses that will be encouraged and strengthen Hamilton County’s tax base. The special use grant will modify that tax assessment in that it will be deemed as conducting a business and the business is the boarding of horses. The Martins and Ms. Hale presently house 10 horses in the east stable component of the barn and there are 10 stalls in the west portion of the barn separated by a large riding arena. The arena is used for training purposes and as part of Mr. Martin’s farming operation which is harvesting hay. The 20 acres is planted in hay. It is partially stored in this barn and the barn shown along Ditch Road.

The comprehensive plan goes on that there is to be a balance of residential, business, agricultural and recreational land uses which is desirable and supports a healthy economy and a health neighborhood. The concept of horse boarding and horse training is nothing new and we believe that certainly fits within the agricultural intent of what the comprehensive plan designates.

The barn is approximately 60,000 sq. ft. of arena and horse stables. It is serviced by an access off of 281st Street. You have a letter from Mr. Lucas commenting about the width of the entryway off of 281st Street. It is wider than a 24 ft. access. The current width is to accommodate farm machinery, semi tractor-trailers that are used for purposes of relocating or moving hay which is also a part of Mr. Martin’s business.

The northeast corner of 281st Street and Ditch is a winery that had the zoning modified to A-4. It’s use changes the neighborhood somewhat. It is not high intensity use but we believe in comparison our traffic being each horse owner coming to the facility once or perhaps twice a week to participate in the training activities. I don’t know what the capacity in the winery is for its wine tasting but I have an inclination that it is more than two or three cars at an occasion.

There is also a variance request. We wish to maintain the gravel parking area in front of the barn and eliminate paving and curbing. The area covers almost ¾ of an acre.

We received comments from Mr. Ward’s office and from Mrs. Davis’s office regarding the horse manure. The manure is accumulated in a manure spreader and spread on the fields for purposes of fertilizing the hay.

The creek does have built up brush and grass in the field itself. It effectively works as a bio-swale in that there are no row crops that would permit water to drain un-detained into the creek but instead the existing crop acts as its own filter and its own detention of stormwater coming off the property to the creek.

We do believe that we meet the intent and the requirements of the comprehensive plan and ask that you pass this along with a favorable recommendation. Thank you.

Mr. Habig asked for clarification that the barn has operated for the last two years with 10 horses inside it. (2) If the facility was working at its top capacity, how many horses are we talking about? (3) That would be 20 including the 10 that are already there?
Mr. Coots stated that the number varies. Miss Hale and Mr. Martin buy and sell horses as part of their family activity. (2) 20. (3) No. Ten in addition to the ten that they own.

Mr. Ward stated that he didn’t see pasture. Are all of the horse confined in the barn? (2) Where the cows used to be?

Mr. Coots stated that there is pasture to the east of the barn towards Ditch Road. There are at least two if not three fenced areas where the horses are permitted to be outside.

(2) Cassidy Martin stated her name for the record. We had cows years ago but that was on the property to the north behind our house; not where this horse barn is.

Mr. Heirbrandt stated that he appreciated the detailed information that they provided as well as the background information. It has been very helpful. The only question I have is restrooms. It says that this barn does not have any restrooms at all but you have three employees. Where do they go to the bathroom?

Mr. Coots answered, the house. Miss Hale’s house. Or the Martins live there as well.

Mr. Ward asked if that would include the guests and the owners of the horses. (2) When the manure is spread, how close to the ditch does that come?

Mr. Coots answered, correct.

Mr. Habig asked Mr. Ward if with 20 head of horses they would need to address manure management.

Mr. Ward stated that he would like to see something in writing.

Mr. Galloway agreed. That’s doubling the amount of animals.

Mr. Habig asked if they objected to addressing that concern of a manure management program for 20 horses.

Mr. Coots stated that they had an interest in preserving the cleanliness of the ground water, the creek water. I think we would be more than happy to submit it to Mr. Ward and Mrs. Davis.

Mr. Clover asked if the manure was spread as it was cleaned out of the barn. Is it stored any place?

Mr. Coots stated that it is cleaned out of the stalls – stalls are basically sawdust, straw occasionally and hay that spills over. That accumulation is removed from the stalls on a daily basis and then put into the manure spreader. It may take a number of days to fill the manure spreader. Then take it to the field and spread it. It is not mounded anywhere and then end-loaded moved to the manure spreader.
Mr. Ward asked for clarification that the maximum number of horses is 20.

Mr. Coots stated that they would commit to that. There are 10 stalls on each side of the barn and you do not double-stall horses. If we need to include a provision that that is the limit on the number of horses that we would ever board or train – we would do that. Whether they are owned or brought in by patrons.

With no further questions from the board… Mr. Schwartz moved for a positive recommendation contingent upon an acceptable manure management program.

Mr. Heirbrandt seconded.

With no further comments… Mr. Habig call for the vote. 7 yes votes… 0 no votes.

Director’s Report: Mr. Kiphart advised the board that we had three proposals for the comprehensive plan. I have met and discussed this with the three companies. (2) I think we said the plan commission would set up a small committee and that they would go over and review those.

Mr. Heirbrandt asked about the process to evaluate each one of the proposals.

Legal Counsel Report: Mr. Culp stated that if you do have a committee it cannot exceed four members of the plan commission or else it would constitute a public meeting notice.

The next plan commission meeting will be Wednesday, September 18, 2019 and there will be a meeting.

With nothing further to come before the board… Mr. Habig adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

______________________________
Frank Habig, III, President

_______________________
Date

______________________________
Linda Burdett, Secretary

_______________________
Date