

Bridgewater Township Work Session
County of Rice, State of Minnesota
Meeting Location – Keepsake Cidery
May 6, 2020
Official Minutes

Roll Call: Gary Ebling, Glen Castore, Kathleen Kopseng, Frances Boehning, Jim Braun,
Guests: Nate Watter, Tracy Jonkman

- Roads at Keepsake Cidery
 - Nate Watters reviewed that work will begin in May to expand the driveway/road leading to Keepsake Cidery. The plan is to widen the road to 18 feet and provide perpendicular parking along the fence on the property.
 - Jim Braun noted that 100 parking spaces would be needed to accommodate 250 people.
 - Nate Watters presented the plan for where the parking spaces would be located. Currently the plan includes space for approximately 90 parking spaces with the possibility of more being added.
 - Gary Ebling mentioned that gravel could be purchased through the township at the township price.
 - Gary Ebling also mentioned that for a fee the township might be able to provide plowing service if a turn around area was available at the end of the road.
 - Strategies for crowd control were discussed.
 - Jim Braun reviewed and explained the two types of rural event centers; large venue and small venue.
 - Nate Watter presented the plans for future buildings and gave a verbal description of what they were and where they would be located.
 - Mr. Braun noted that requirement on the I.U.P regarding no more than 25% of retail from goods not produced on site. He also stated that other vendors were not allowed on site.
 - An additional requirement was that the Cidery hold no more than 6 events per year under the agricultural tourism ordinance.
 - Gary Ebling asked if anyone has asked Rice County about having other people sell items in a manner similar to a farmer's market?
 - Nate Watters asked for clarification of the 25% rule in the I.U.P. Tracy Jonkman mentioned that the recent farmer's market was not typical, but rather a reaction to current pandemic market restrictions.
 - Glen Castore asked Nate Watters to write up a summary detailing what they would like to have happen to make the business successful.
 - Gary Ebling will request the Planning Commission to look into adding farmer's markets to the ordinances.
 - Gary Ebling suggested to Nate Watters that they look into similar businesses in the area that they could model after. Mr. Watters mentioned that two similar businesses would be Milk & Honey and Next Chapter Winery.
 - Nate Watters reviewed some ideas that he has for the Keepsake Cidery
 - They wish to stay a small local cidery.
 - Apples are cheaper from out of state if homegrown apples are not available. They would like to have the option to purchase apples.
 - The option to sell locally made items on-site would be appreciated.
 - The current plan is to be open:
 - Feb, March, April – one day a week

- Possible occasional small private events
- May – early fall – three days a week
- Fall – extended hours for apple sales
- Nov and Dec – shorter hours
- Jim Braun asked about how many people attend a tasting? The answer was about 40-50 people. If a cookout is added, then about 150 people will attend over the course of an evening.
- Nate Watters mentioned that they would like to look at expanding into selling eating apples.
- Currently, Rice County will not allow the sale of beer with the cider under a liquor license.
- A hearing will be held for Keepsake Cidery on May 28th. Jim Braun asked if the Cidery is asking to move to a C.U.P. They responded yes.
- Jim Braun will also look into the possibility of Keepsake also being allowed as a recreation center.
- Planning & Zoning
 - Jim Braun reviewed the Norgaard property and communication from the attorneys and auction company.
 - A letter was received from Blumhoefer stating that lot splits and surveys were not needed. Peter Tiede will respond that they are needed and the sale can not proceed without.
 - Gary Ebling reviewed the history of the Norgaard property.
 - Access to the possible future lots would need to come from Hwy 19. There is also concern that one lot is on the south side of Heath Creek. It is not known if it is legal to ford the creek to access the other lot.
 - The Board of Supervisors gave approval for Peter Tiede to work to Blumhoefer to resolve the issues.
 - Jim Braun mentioned that the legislature is looking at doing away with flat fees for building permits.
- Misc.
 - Gary Ebling asked if the Township could get a subscription to the Northfield News to enable the Board to know what is happening locally.

Adjourn

Chair	
Clerk	