

**Upper Pittsgrove Township
Land Use Board Minutes
July 15, 2021**

TO: Township Committee
Land Use Board Members

Linda R. Stephens, Twp. Clerk
L. Andrew Hoglen, Zoning Officer

A regular meeting of the Upper Pittsgrove Township Land Use Board was held in the Township Hall on the above date. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Board Chairman reading the public announcement stating that adequate notice had been given provided under the “Open Public Meetings Act” and a flag salute.

Members present were: John Coombs, Thomas Buzby, Ralph Sickler, David Zeck. Jr., George Cassaday, Benjamin Wilson, Kevin Bishop and Linda Stephens.

Also present was: Adam Telsey, Solicitor, J. Michael Fralinger, Board Engineer, Katie Coleman, Esquire, Amanda Coombs, and Township Visitors.

Business to come before the Board:

1. Minutes from July 8, 2021
2. Resolution –
2021 Reexamination Report
3. Coombs Barnyard, LLC

1. Minutes –

A motion to approve the minutes from the July 8, 2021 meeting was made by Thomas Buzby. This motion was seconded by Benjamin Wilson and adopted unanimously.

2. Resolution –

Thomas Buzby made a motion to adopt the Resolution for the 2021 Reexamination Report for the Master Plan. This motion was seconded by Benjamin Wilson and adopted unanimously.

3. Coombs Barnyard, LLC

Board members John Coombs and Ralph Sickler recused themselves from acting on this application. The Board Secretary opened the hearing for Coombs Barnyard, LLC. Coombs Barnyard, LLC was represented by attorney Katie Coleman. Ms. Coleman explained that the applicant was seeking Use Variance approval to operate a farm market and agritourism-educational program within a building to be constructed. Acting Board Engineer, J. Michael Fralinger, commented on the review letter dated July 14, 2021. The waiver being requested was from providing Checklist "A"-Item 10 and Checklist "I"-Item 9-Letter of Interpretation. Thomas Buzby made a motion to grant the waiver and deem the application complete. This motion was seconded by George Cassaday and adopted upon a Call of the Roll. Ayes: Buzby, Cassaday, Zeck, Wilson, Bishop, and Stephens. Nays: None

Applicant Amanda Coombs explained the types of agritourism activities she currently conducted on the family farm. These included Potato Digs, Pumpkin and Sunflower picking, Corn Maze, Easter egg hunts, Tractor parade and other related activities. During the summer months she conducted a farm educational camp for young children. There was also a petting zoo located on the premises. Ms. Coleman stated that this site was particularly suited for the requested activities since it immersed visitors into a working 200 acre farm. It was a way to promote farming in the community. Neither the Township nor Ms. Coombs have received any complaints with regards to the current operation. Access to the proposed 74 ' x 114' building would be through an existing farm road of Route 77. The building would contain a 900 square foot market, two classrooms, a kitchen, bathroom and ice cream stand. Ms. Coombs stated that most of her employees were volunteers, senior citizens. Board member Thomas Buzby questioned whether the Board should have designated areas delineated out on the map. This was to clarify event locations. Ms. Coleman explained that due to the rotation of crops, the fields could vary from year to year. The petting zoo would remain in a fixed spot. Ms. Coombs explained that parking areas would only be at the proposed building. All visitors for the activities would be transported via tractor/wagon to specific locations. She was proposing that all activities would be during daylight hours primarily except for the flashlight corn maze in the fall.

In addition to the submit list of activities, Ms. Coombs was proposing to locate an ice cream stand, hand-dipped or soft-serve within the market, and to offer baked goods for sale. She was also proposing to hold small weddings in the off-season. Board member George Cassaday stated that these seemed like a lot of different activities for one building. When questioned regarding more specifics on the market and wedding venue, and how they would be incorporated with the other proposed uses, Ms. Coombs could not answer at this time. Based on this the Board felt the hearing should be continued until the August meeting to give Ms. Coombs more time to prepare answers. Board member George Cassaday made a motion to continue the hearing until the August 19th meeting. This motion was seconded by David Zeck and approved unanimously.

The Board Secretary noticed the public that the hearing would be continued until the August 19, 2021 meeting and no further notices would be sent.

Board member Thomas Buzby made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by George Cassaday and adopted unanimously.

There being no further comment and business before the Board, David Zeck, Jr. made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Thomas Buzby and adopted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Stephens, Secretary
Upper Pittsgrove Township
Land Use Board