

**WEST DEER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 (Live and Via Zoom)**

The Meeting was called to order with the following members in attendance:
John Butala, Patrick Stark, Robert Bechtold, Kathy Rojik, and Mark Schmidt.

Absent Members: Alan Banks, Suzanne Garlena.

Other Attendees: William Payne (Code Enforcement Officer)
Scott Shoup (Shoup Engineering)
Dorothy Moyta (Zoning & Planning Administrator)

Applicant Presenters: Pittsburgh Buddhist Center: Mr. Bhante Pematana,
Mr. Damitha Karunaratne

Outline and Order of Meeting

1. Approval of August Minutes
2. Pittsburgh Buddhist Center – Conditional Use – 58 QSI Lane
3. Zoning Ordinance Audit Worksheet
4. Public Discussion

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The August Minutes were unanimously approved.

Pittsburgh Buddhist Center – Conditional Use – 58 QSI Lane

Mr. Bhante Pematana presented the Pittsburgh Buddhist Center. Mr. Pematana is a monk with the Pittsburgh Buddhist Center. A Conditional use application along with 26 pages of information on Pittsburgh Buddhist Center was presented. Comments were as follows:

1. Mr. Shoup stated that a traffic study was required. Although the applicant requests a waiver from the traffic study, Mr. Shoup feels that it would be helpful to have one when this conditional use gets in front of the Supervisors.
2. Mr. Payne read comments from the Township Solicitor, Gavin Robb.
3. Mr. Payne said that the important information for the traffic study would be the sightlines for the entrance, peak hours involved in use, and the existing conditions and any new development planned.
4. Mr. Schmidt said that we could help get the contact information that is needed to do the traffic study. Mr. Payne said that he will get hold of Wooster tomorrow.

5. Mr. Butala visited the site today. He said that there is a very limited sightline when pulling out to turn left. He thought that there could be a convex mirror installed.
6. Mr. Payne said that this is a state road and that the state does not give approval for mirrors. He said that the traffic study looks at sightlines and perhaps some vegetation could be taken out. The traffic study will determine if any problems exist.
7. Mr. Pematana said that they have a learning practice on meditation at the Buddhist Center. 3 people are involved in the meditation practice and 8 people will be living there in total. They work in conjunction with other institutions. Wednesday will be used for meditation classes which accommodate a group of about 15-20 people and sometime 25 people on a monthly basis. They go out to libraries, jails, and interfaith organizations to teach with travel as far as Cleveland, OH and Morgantown, WV.
8. Mr. Schmidt confirmed that their biggest crowd would be 25-30 people.
9. Mr. Payne said that the application was not complete until a traffic study was done.
10. Ms. Payne asked whether the Buddhist center would be expanding into the other house on the site.
11. Mr. Damitha Karunaratne said that the woman who bought the house will be giving the house to the Buddhists when she needs to go into an assisted living facility but the occupancy will still be under 50 visitors.
12. Mr. Payne asked about parking at the site. Mr. Karunaratne said that there are approximately 32 parking spaces available.
13. Mr. Payne asked if there is any other parking available. Mr. Karunaratne said that there is more space available at the warehouse on Saturday and Sundays when nobody is working there.
14. Mr. Payne asked when events are being held at the Center. Mr. Karunaratne said that events are only held on weekends at 7 PM
15. Mr. Payne asked about noise produced at the Center. Mr. Karunaratne said that chanting would be the only noise.
16. Mr. Payne asked about whether any proposed alterations would be to the existing building. Mr. Karunaratne said that might be possible in the future but for right now they are leaving it as is.
17. Mr. Karunaratne said that they may be hosting a food festival which would take place between 11 and 4 on Saturdays or Sundays, or 7 to 9 in the evening. As would any other events.
18. Mr. Payne said that the Planning Commission would look at the Traffic Study in the October meeting and then the Public Hearing could be scheduled for the November Board of Supervisors meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Butala and seconded by Mr. Stark to continue the Pittsburgh Buddhist Center Conditional Use to the October meeting.

Zoning Ordinance Audit Worksheet

Mr. Payne presented the Zoning ordinance Audit Worksheet and read from the sheet. Comments and discussion points were as follows:

1. Mr. Payne read the Agricultural section regarding CAO's and CAFO's. Mr. Schmidt asked if anything in West deer Township meets this definition. Mr. Payne said that nobody falls under this definition – not even Misch farms.
2. Mr. Schmidt felt that they did not have enough information on the definition to address the agriculture section.
3. Mr. Stark felt that they should change 2000 lbs. to 4000 lbs. on the CAO.
4. Mr. Payne asked about AEU – Animal Equivalent Unit. Mr. Schmidt wanted to know what the definition of an AEU.
5. Mr. Butala asked about EPDES what is that and is it related to the EPA.

Mr. Payne felt that in order to facilitate the Zoning Ordinance audit suggestions an EPD Zoning consultant will need to attend to advise on some of the Audit Worksheet suggestion. This person will attend the October meeting to help with this. A motion was made by Mr. Butala and seconded by Mr. Stark to continue the Zoning Ordinance Audit Worksheet discussion to the October meeting.

Workshop discussion:

There was no Workshop discussion.

The October meeting will be on October 28, 2021. It will be conducted both in person and via Zoom. The meeting link will be posted on the web site.