

Garrett County Planning Commission Minutes

February 7, 2024

- I. **Call to Order-** Chairman Tony Doerr called the regular meeting of the Garrett County Planning Commission to order at 1:30 pm on February 7, 2024, in the County Commissioners Meeting Room in the Garrett County Courthouse.
- II. **Attendance-** The following Commission members were present: Tony Doerr, Tim Schwinabart, Jeff Messenger, Liz Georg, Bruce Swift, Julie Friend and Larry Tichnell. Members of the public included Mike Ohm. Planning staff included Chad Fike, Bruce Metz, Siera Wigfield, Debbe Owston and Eli Helbig.
- III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes-** The minutes were approved as presented.
- IV. **Reports of Officers-**None.
- V. **Old Business-** None
- VI. **New Business –**
 - a) **Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Appeals Cases-** None
 - b) **Proposed Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Amendment regarding Farm Wineries.** Mike Ohm presented a proposed amendment to the Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Ordinance to allow farm wineries. The proposed language is included with these minutes as “Attachment One”. The Planning Commission was generally in favor of considering such an amendment but, due to the scope, decided to have a broader discussion about the proposal rather than vote directly on the amendment as written. Mr. Fike explained that this use has similarities to catering facilities and neighborhood convenience uses that are currently require a Special Exception in residential areas but also has similarities to uses like restaurants and taverns that are not permitted in those areas.

After discussion, the Planning Commission agreed with many aspects of the proposal such as requiring a minimum acreage of 20 acres and setbacks of 75’ from roads and 100’ from other lot lines. The Planning Commission decided that rather than permitting the use as an accessory use it would be better to make the use a Special Exception to allow the Board of Zoning to consider conditions like screening, hours, and lighting on a case-by-case basis. The Commission agreed that similar uses like Farm Breweries, Distilleries and Cideries could also be included in this use.

After discussion, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to direct the planning office staff to research the issue with the intent of developing amendment language for

review at future meetings. Language in other zoning ordinances should be considered. Issues that still need to be contemplated include what amount of product needs to be grown on the property and how to properly address food sales.

- c) **Major Subdivision: Cathedral Springs Final Plats-** 1000 Acres Golf Properties, LLC submitted Final Plats for Lot 10 & 16 of the Cathedral Springs Subdivision. The property (Map 67, Parcel 793) is located along Crows Point Road in the Lake Residential 1 zoning district. The Planning Commission approved the plats by a unanimous vote.
- d) **Major Subdivision: Beitzel Corporation Final Plat-** Beitzel Corporation submitted a Final Plats for a commercial lot on their property (Map 35, Parcel 128) located along Bittinger Road in the agricultural resource land classification. The Planning Commission approved the plat by a unanimous vote.
- e) **Transportation Priority Letter Update-** Siera Wigfield updated the Planning Commission on the Transportation Priority Letter that is annually sent to MDOT. Elements of the 2023 plan were reviewed including the 219 North Extension to the Pennsylvania State line; 219 safety improvements at Trader's Landing; the Garrett County Strategic Highway Safety Plan and the Oakland Bypass. Ms. Wigfield will prepare the updated 2024 Transportation Priority Letter for the Commission's review and approval at their next meeting.
- f) **Next Meeting** – March 6, 2024
- g) **Adjournment-** Chairman Tony Doerr adjourned the meeting at 2:27 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Chad Fike, Assistant Director

ATTACHMENT ONE

Farm Winery – Permitted as an accessory use

Definition: A farm that produces and sells wine on site.

1. Farm Winery is permitted as an accessory use to agricultural uses, provided that the use complies with the following criteria:
 - a. The use is located on a lot or parcel of at least 20 acres. This use is permitted on any such parcel, including parcels with agricultural preservation easements and preservation parcels.
 - b. All winery related structures and uses excluding cultivation areas shall be at least 75 feet from a public road right-of-way and 100 feet from all other lot lines.
 - c. For farm winery use, the planting of at least two acres of grapes or other fruit on the property shall be initiated upon approval and successfully established within two years of approval.
 - d. Appropriate screening of adjoining parcels shall be provided, which may include a solid fence, wall, landscaping, or a combination that presents an attractive and effective buffer.
 - e. The use shall be consistent with and support the farm and its production, shall not interfere with the implementation of soil conservation and water quality best management practices, and shall not impact floodplains, wetlands, stream buffers, steep slopes or other environmental features on the farm winery property.
 - f. A Farm Winery may produce, serve, and sell food to complement wine tasting in accordance with Article 2B of Maryland State Code.
 - g. Any accessory retail sales within the Farm Winery, other than the wine and similar fermented beverages produced at the Farm Winery, are limited to items promoting the same Farm Winery, such as glassware, clothing, and wine-related items such as wine openers. A Farm Winery may sell plants and/or produce grown on-site.