

# PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI 49686  
[www.peninsulatownship.com](http://www.peninsulatownship.com)

## Township Board Special Meeting January 6, 2022, 9:00 a.m. Township Hall MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** by Manigold at 9:00 a.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Present: Wunsch, Achorn, Chown, Manigold, Bickle, Sanger  
Absent: Wahl  
Also present: Township attorney Meihn
4. **Brief Citizen Comments (for agenda items only)**

**Nancy Heller, 3091 Blue Water Road:** I realize you are dealing with a commercial district, which is not often dealt with in Peninsula Township. Do all the conditions have to be met before an application is approved? How does a citizen know when a change is being made to the original application after the initial approval?

**Manigold:** they cannot begin operation until all of the requirements of the special use permit are met. It can take up to six months for approval. Today we are approving this one item to move the project forward.

**Monnie Peters, 1425 Neahtawanta Road:** there should be no parking on Seven Hills Road. If they are going to be a successful tasting room, they do not appear to have enough room for 30-40 parking spaces along with the other two businesses located on the same property. The 55 mile-per-hour speed limit coming down the hill at Seven Hills Road is too fast for a car wanting to make that first left turn. There is not enough time for those behind to slow for a car making that turn. There needs to be more than enough parking for the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizenry.

**Jordan Valdmanis, 16330 Peninsula Drive:** let me address those two questions. We have been approved for a restaurant/tavern through the township and the liquor license through the state of Michigan. In terms of adequate parking, we are working with the township engineer, our engineer, and the road commission for safety. I also live in this area, so safety is a major concern.

**Brit Eaton, 1465 Neahtawanta Road:** how many cars can you observe in the parking lot right now, eight to ten at the most? When you look at the corresponding parking at Mari or Chateau Chantal, during the peak season, the parking lots are overflowing. The parking for Seven Hills is too limited. The parking situation needs to be rectified before they ever open the doors.

**Julie Alexander, 4856 Forest Avenue:** I have looked over the minutes from March and am not clear if this is a restaurant/tavern or a coffee shop/restaurant and a tasting room. If both are happening, there is concern for the hours of operation. Is there something happening there from 6:00 a.m. until midnight? This is how it reads

in the SUP from back in March. Even though the property is commercially zoned, it is surrounded by residents, and this needs to be taken into account.

**5. Approve Agenda**

**Bickle moved to approve the agenda with a second by Sanger. passed unan**

**6. Conflict of Interest: none**

**7. Consent Agenda: none**

**8. Business:**

1. Tasting room permit for Seven Hills Development

**Sanger moved that the tasting room permit for the Seven Hills development be removed from the table with a second by Bickle.**

**Roll call: Yes-Sanger, Bickle, Manigold, Chown, Achorn, Wunsch passed unan**

**Manigold:** Sanger had this item tabled because there was a box checked for “outdoor” and there was no outdoor area approved in the special use permit.

**Jennifer Hodges, Gourdie-Fraser:** went back and researched the findings of fact and the special permit; even legal provided an opinion of “structure” used for the SUP. The portion of the building that is proposed to be used for a restaurant/tavern includes an enclosed patio. This appears to be consistent with recently issued legal opinions regarding uses being conducted in a permanent enclosed building. “Enclosed” is defined legally as a roof supported by walls and it may have doors, windows, and other openings as determined to be appropriate and consistent by the township board. The land use permit cannot be approved until the construction plans, architectural plans, and appropriate permits are completed, and they are working on these now. The applicants will not be able to obtain a land use permit until all of these other tasks are completed. The liquor commission considers it a patio. It is not an outdoor patio based on our definition.

**Bickle:** so you, zoning, and planning will be monitoring this project every step of the way? This is a new process for the applicant and we want to help them move through this as efficiently as possible.

**Hodges:** yes, this is to be a collaborative and team approach to this project.

**Achorn [addressing the applicant]:** what do you envision regarding this outdoor service?

**Valdmanis:** outdoor service is about a 1,200 square foot surface, and I want to be careful to use the correct terminology here, “enclosed patio.” The state calls it outdoor patio and the township calls it an enclosed patio. In working with our engineers, we needed more room for septic and we have reduced the size of the buildings and added green space.

**Sanger:** my understanding is the north building square footage will be reduced from approximately 3,600 down to 1,200 square feet. And then you are going to take the part of the building that is left and install some windows and door that could be opened up when the weather is nice. The footprint of the building will be smaller than what it is today.

**Valdmanis:** [the building is] going down from 12.7% lot coverage to 10% lot coverage.

**Wunsch:** I am familiar with the property, and one of the concerns is people wandering around the property with beverages.

**Chown:** Also, I know this business will be popular once it opens. I too am concerned about having sufficient parking and not having cars parked on the side of the road.

**Valdmanis:** we needed to rely on professionals to tell us how to handle the parking, and this has all been covered in the work prior to the approval of the SUP.

**Sanger:** it is my understanding that the road commission has yet to make a ruling regarding lowering the speed

limit from 55 miles per hour as cars move toward this location. In approving this SUP, the board stated there would be no parking along Seven Hills Road.

**Sanger moved that an outside tasting room permit at the Seven Hills project be approved by the Michigan MLCC contingent upon the use and activities of the permit holder being in compliance with Special Use Permit 35 as amended or sometimes known as SUP 139 with a second by Bickle.**

**Wunsch:** do we need to amend this application?

**Sanger:** this is a technicality and we cannot approve or deny the liquor license; we can only advise that we recommend approval.

**Bickle amended the motion to read "Special Use Permit 35."**

**Roll call: Yes-Sanger, Bickle, Manigold, Chown, Achorn, Wunsch** **passed unan**

2. Waiver request for Schroeder B&B

**Manigold:** after further investigation, there was a land division that makes the property all residential, making the waiver unnecessary.

3. Grant Walter Brys refund request

**Manigold:** Mr. Brys has asked for a refund of his \$5,000 in escrow. So far \$600 has been used, leaving a balance of \$4,000.

**Wunsch moved to issue a refund of \$4,000 to Mr. Brys, seconded by Sanger.**

**Roll call: Yes- Wunsch, Achorn, Chown, Manigold, Bickle, Sanger** **passed unan**

## 9. Citizen Comments

**Nancy Heller, 3091 Blue Water Road:** Jennifer Hodges of Gourdie-Fraser mentioned amending a special use permit. How is the public supposed to know when a significant change is made?

**Meihn:** the citizen would come to the township planner or zoning administrator and be guided by them.

**Heller:** I understand the process for the issuance of a special use permit; I want to know how citizens find out about amendments to the original approved permit, especially if there are significant changes. Who determined downsizing was a significant change?

## 10. Board Comments

**Wunsch:** have a growing concern that Wahl and I are having difficulty attending 9:00 a.m. meetings. I am under increasing pressure from my family and business partners to step down from the town board. I have agreed to serve on some short-term citizen committees and am spending up to 30 hours a week on township business. Would like the board to avoid special meetings going forward, especially in the morning.

**Chown:** would like to put some practices in place at the next staff meeting to be used even if they are inconvenient. This includes a transparent method of receiving and distributing information that goes into meeting packets. It is becoming increasingly difficult to manage the paper load. Timely submission of materials for packet inclusion needs to be enforced.

**Achorn:** We must have time to read and digest everything in a timely fashion; these instant meetings must stop.

**Mary Beth Milliken:** it is my understanding this meeting was necessary because something was left out of the packet from a prior meeting, which resulted in this action being tabled. I request the business owners be given a public apology by the board.

**Manigold:** we had a glitch and we are sorry.

**Wunsch:** let me state that I have no issue in coming in to clarify this issue.

Peninsula Township  
Township Board Special Meeting  
January 6, 2022, 9 a.m.  
Lola Jackson, Recording Secretary  
DRAFT MINUTES

**Chown:** the error did ultimately emanate from the clerk's office, and I am very sorry for the mishandling of the packet information.

**William Rudolph, 19096 Eastern Road:** the township board is under a lot of pressure right now; yes, they apologized for the error. However, they are representing many citizens on a number of important issues, and I want to thank them for all of their time and efforts.

**11. Adjournment: Sanger moved to adjourn with a second by Wunsch.**

**passed unan**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:37 a.m.**