

MINUTES

COLLIER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MUNICIPAL BUILDING

April 8, 2025 5:00 P.M.

Regular Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Abbott called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

BOARD

Mike Ahwesh, Present
Dave Abbott, Present
Gary Adams, Absent
Kevin Vaughn, Present
Mary Ann Cupples, Present

STAFF

Bob Caun, Present
Janet Wank, Present

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Vaughn, second by Mr. Ahwesh, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2025 meeting.

III. PUBLIC

No public comment.

IV. BUSINESS

Conditional Use application of the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josephat

Steven Victor of Victor Wetzel Associates represented the UCDSJ and their conditional use request to expand the cemetery facilities they currently have into the Planned Economic Development District (PEDD). The property is currently zoned both R-1 and PEDD. Cemeteries are permitted in the R-1 and as a conditional use in the PEDD. The current cemetery is in the R-1 District and has access to Ridge Road at the 5-points intersection.

The master plan that Mr. Victor displayed shows a new entrance access to the north, a cemetery chapel and mausoleum in the PEDD and expansion to the cemetery in the southern portion. The new road access will come off Ridge Road onto the northern end of the property and will connect to the present cemetery. The chapel and mausoleum will primarily be for funeral services.

Mr. Victor said that the chapel will be built in the style of a traditional Carpatho-Rusyn mountain church. He displayed a picture of Saint Nicholas church in Beaver County to give the planning commission a better idea of the style of architecture they hope to build. Mr. Victor said that the proposed chapel will serve as a place for prayer, reflection and remembrance within the cemetery grounds. The building will not exceed 50' in height with a

cross and dome extending an additional 15' bringing the total maximum height to 65'. The chapel and mausoleum will have approximately 5,000 square feet of area which is less than the Township's minimum of 10,000 square feet in the PED District. The proposed chapel will function primarily as a sacred place for funeral services and occasional memorial services with frequency dependent upon the needs of the families to give thanks for the gift of life and offer prayers for the deceased. The bell tower, an integral part of the chapel, will operate within the Collier Township decibel limits and will serve to call individuals to prayer and reflection. The bell will ring daily at 3:00 PM and preceding and concluding any funeral or memorial services and will ring for a 3-minute duration.

Mr. Abbott stated that at the previous meeting Mr. Victor said that the chapel would be 3,000 square feet, to which Mr. Victor stated that he previously was not counting the underground mausoleum square footage in his calculation, but Mr. Caun informed him that the square footage of both the chapel and mausoleum are used when calculating the total square feet.

Ms. Cupples asked what was considered a memorial service to which Father Charron said that a memorial service is not a funeral but a service in memory of the deceased, and that it could be a mass. It's like a requiem mass that is held on Memorial Day for the fallen.

There was lengthy discussion on the bells and how loud the bells will be and if it will impact the nearby residents. Father Charron stated that they will be amenable to lessening the decibels if residents complain.

Ms. Cupples stated that the planning commission has heard back from the police department and fire department, and the police do not have any issues with this application. The fire department is requesting additional fire hydrants in the area. Mr. Victor stated that would not be a problem.

There was discussion about the trails and whether they would be ADA accessible. Father Charron said that the trail would be ADA accessible.

Mr. Caun stated that the public hearing is scheduled for Monday, April 14, 2025, at 4:30 PM.

Motion by Mr. Vaughn, second by Ms. Cupples, to recommend approval of the conditional use application of the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of St. Josephat with the following conditions:

- 1. that the size of the chapel be less than or equal to 5,000 square feet and*
- 2. that fire hydrants be installed as per the recommendation of the township fire official.*

All in favor. Motion carried

V. ADJOURN

Motion by Mr. Vaughn, second by Mr. Ahwesh, to adjourn the meeting at 5:44 pm. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

H. David Abbott, Chairman

Mike Ahwesh, Vice-Chairman