

BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING BOARD

TOWNSHIP OF EAST LAMPETER

IN RE: :
 : No. 2021-20
APPLICATION OF SAMUEL :
IVAN STOLTZFUS :

DECISION

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Applicant is Samuel Ivan Stotlzfus, 11 Sylvan Lane, Gordonville, Pennsylvania 17529 ("Applicant").

2. The property which is the subject of the instant application is 11 Sylvan Lane, East Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (the "Property").

3. The Property is located in the Agricultural District as shown on the Official Zoning Map of East Lampeter Township.

4. Applicant is the owner of the Property.

5. Notice of the hearing on the within application was duly advertised and posted in accordance with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code ("MPC") and the East Lampeter Zoning Ordinance of 2016 (the "Zoning Ordinance").

6. Public hearings were held before the Zoning Hearing Board of East Lampeter Township ("Board") on this application on August 26, 2021, and September 9, 2021.

7. Testimony at the hearings was stenographically recorded.

8. Applicant appeared personally at the hearings.

9. Applicant has requested a special exception pursuant to Section 6020.C.14 of the Zoning Ordinance.

10. Section 3020.C.12 of the Zoning Ordinance states that tourist homes, as a principal or accessory use within a single family detached dwelling, are permitted in the Agricultural District by special exception, subject to the provisions set forth in Section 23110 of the Zoning Ordinance.

11. The Property contains approximately 2 acres and is improved with a single family detached dwelling and parking area.

12. The Property (and the dwelling located thereon) is served by on-site sewer and one-site well.

13. Applicant proposes to rent the dwelling as a tourist home.

14. Applicant testified that not more than ten guests would occupy the tourist home at any one time, as required by Section 23110.F.2 of the Zoning Ordinance.

15. Applicant testified that, with regard to the proposed tourist home, the length of stay for any guest will not exceed thirty (30) days, as required by Section 23110.F.5 of the Zoning Ordinance.

16. The dwelling contains four bedrooms, complete sanitary sewage disposal services, washing and bathing facilities, and a kitchen to accommodate the guests.

17. There is parking for a minimum of two vehicles located on the Property.

18. With conditions, the tourist home use complies with the requirements of Section 25070 of the Zoning Ordinance and, without limiting the foregoing, will not adversely affect the general character of the neighborhood or the general health, safety and welfare of residents or property owners within the general neighborhood.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. "The most important characteristic of a special exception is that it is a conditionally permitted use, legislatively allowed if the objective standards of the ordinance are met." *Abbey v. Zoning Hearing Board of the Borough of East Stroudsburg*, 126 Pa. Commonwealth Ct. 235, 559 A.2d 107, 109 (1989); *Bray v. Zoning*

Board of Adjustment of the City of Philadelphia, 48 Pa. Commonwealth Ct. 523, 410 A.2d 909 (1980).

2. "A special exception is a misnomer in that it is really not an exception at all; it is a legislatively granted entitlement contained in a zoning ordinance." *McGinty v. Zoning Board of Adjustment of the City of Pittsburgh*, 717 A.2d 34 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1998) (en banc).

3. "[T]o be entitled to a special exception, an applicant must bring the proposal within the specific requirements in the zoning ordinance." *Act I, Inc. v. Zoning Hearing Board of Bushkill Township*, 704 A.2d 732, 735 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1997).

4. An applicant for a special exception has the burden of persuasion as to the specific criteria and standards of the zoning ordinance. *Shamah v. Hellam Township Zoning Hearing Board*, 648 A.2d 1299 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1994); *Abbey v. Zoning Hearing Board of the Borough of East Stroudsburg*, 126 Pa. Commonwealth Ct. 235, 559 A.2d 107 (1989).

5. A special exception is a conditionally permitted use, allowed by the legislature if specifically listed standards are met. A special exception is thus not an "exception" to the zoning ordinance, but a use permitted conditionally, the application for which is to be granted or denied by the zoning hearing board

pursuant to express standards and criteria. Where a particular use is permitted in a zone by special exception, it is presumed that the local legislature has already considered that such use satisfies local concerns for the general health, safety, and welfare and that such use comports with the intent of the zoning ordinance. Thus, once the applicant for a special exception shows compliance with the specific requirements of the ordinance, it is presumed that the use is consistent with the promotion of health, safety, and general welfare. The burden then shifts to objectors to prove that the proposed use is not, in fact, consistent with the promotion of health, safety, and general welfare. *In re: Appeal of Brickstone Realty Corp.*, 789 A.2d 333, 340 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2001) (citations omitted).

6. Applicant has presented evidence to demonstrate that he has met the conditions for the issuance of a special exception under Section 3020.C.12, Section 23110, and Section 25070 of the Zoning Ordinance.

7. Conditions must be attached to the grant of the special exception to protect and preserve the surrounding neighborhood.

III. DECISION

Based upon the foregoing findings of fact and conclusions of law, the Zoning Hearing Board of the Township of East Lampeter

hereby grants the application of Samuel Ivan Stoltzfus for a special exception pursuant to Section 3020.C.12 and Section 23110 of the Zoning Ordinance to operate a tourist home on property known and numbered as 11 Sylvan Lane, Gordonville, Pennsylvania. The special exception granted herein shall be subject to the following conditions and safeguards which the Board deems necessary to implement the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance and the MPC:

1. Applicant shall obtain all approvals and permits required by applicable federal, state and Township laws and regulations.

2. Applicant shall at all times comply with and adhere to the information and representations submitted with and contained in his application and the evidence presented to the Board at the hearings held on August 26, 2021, and September 9, 2021.

3. Applicant shall provide proof to the Township that all plumbing, heating, electrical, sanitary sewage disposal, water supply, storm sewer and similar facilities associated with the Property and the dwelling comply with applicable code requirements.

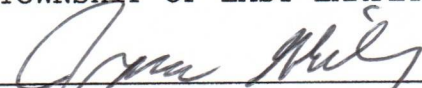
4. Applicant shall develop, and provide to the Township, an emergency management plan in the event of a catastrophic event resulting from flooding, fire, snow, ice, earthquake, utility outage, or other catastrophic event.

5. Any violation of the conditions contained in this Decision shall be considered a violation of the Zoning Ordinance and shall be subject to the penalties and remedies contained in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

6. The approval granted by this Decision shall expire in accordance with the terms of Section 25070 of the Zoning Ordinance.

7. The foregoing Decision shall be binding upon the Applicant and his heirs and assigns.

ZONING HEARING BOARD OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF EAST LAMPETER



James Glick, Chairman



J. Scott Enterline, Vice-Chairman

Jordan Good, Secretary

Dated and filed October 7, 2021, after hearing held
on August 26 + September 9, 2021.

The undersigned certifies that a copy of this Decision was served upon all parties on or prior to October 8, 2021.