

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission
Russell Town Hall
September 21, 2009

Present: Richard E. Snyder, Chairman
Bruce Murphy
Donna Weiss Carson
Wendy Bruzas
Ben Kotowski
Diana Steffen, Secretary

Also in attendance: Ric Machnics, Zoning Inspector.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

MINUTES OF AUGUST 17, 2009 – *Mr. Kotowski made the motion to accept the minutes as presented, Mr. Murphy seconded and the motion passed unanimously by 4-0. Mr. Snyder abstained due to his absence from that meeting.*

FOOD SERVICE/PERMITTED USES IN C-S ZONE – Mr. Murphy handed out a revised draft for restaurants and food service operations. He listed the changes he had made: minor changes in the purpose section to note restaurants only allowed at the S.R. 306/87 C-S zone; clarified outside activities only permitted as an ancillary use; revised the buffer zone adjacent to residentially-zoned property to be appropriate for restaurants/food service.

Mr. Kotowski handed out a revised draft for specialty food service operations, and said he took items from Mr. Murphy's previous draft for restaurants to insert in this draft. He had then made a few additions and deletions, notably deleting the requirement for a traffic study, which he felt would be unnecessary for specialty food shops that would not be expected to have a big impact on traffic. Later in the meeting he explained that his rationale for not requiring a traffic study was that specialty food shops could be treated like any other retail business, and without drive-thru windows the large franchises would probably not be interested. After discussion he said he will change the wording to say that a trip generation and traffic study may be required.

In the specialty foods draft Mr. Kotowski had added a sentence to prohibit grease deep fryers and frying of food, which he noticed is done by some municipalities. He felt the rationale might be based on odor, but it would also limit the type of specialty to categories of food that would not include fast food restaurants. He also added definitions for specialty food shop and exterior dining, which he took from other communities. Only food that could be purchased for later use would be permitted, which is the reason to prohibit fryers and grills that prepare food to be consumed immediately. Circle K would be able to continue its coffee and sandwich sales as an accessory use to its primary use.

Ms. Bruzas said she would like to see existing businesses such as Circle K and the Shell Station be allowed to do limited food preparation within the existing zoning, if the Commission decides not to initiate an amendment until someone else asks for food service. Circle K already does this, and the Shell owner has asked to do so. There is demand for it.

