

SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - GEORGETOWN, DELAWARE, JUNE 2, 2026

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sussex County Council was held on Tuesday, June 2, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., in Council Chambers, with the following present:

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Douglas B. Hudson | President |
| John L. Rieley | Vice President |
| Jane Gruenebaum | Councilwoman |
| Matt Lloyd | Councilman |
| Steve C. McCarron | Councilman |
| Todd F. Lawson | County Administrator |
| Gina Jennings | Finance Director |
| J. Everett Moore, Jr. | County Attorney |

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|--|--|
| Call to Order | The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were led by Mr. Hudson. Mr. Hudson called the meeting to order. |
| M 221 26 Approve Agenda | A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum, to approve the Agenda, as presented. Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea; Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea; Mr. Hudson, Yea |
| Minutes | The minutes from May 19, 2026, were approved by consensus. |
| Correspondence | Mr. Moore reported that correspondence was received from Delaware State Troopers Association thanking Council for their support. |
| Public Comments | Public comments were heard. Ms. Lisa Wright spoke about density and land value. |
| M 222 26 Approve Consent Agenda | A Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, to approve the following items under the Consent Agenda: Use of Existing Wastewater Infrastructure Agreement, IUA20-2025 The Centre at Love Creek (Building 5) Royal Farms Project, Angola North Area Use of Existing Wastewater Infrastructure Agreement Dockside Bar & Grill Project, Angola North Area |

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

Presentation A presentation was given by Ms. Patti Grimes, Executive Director, Joshua M. Freeman Foundation updating Council on their programs.

Presentation A presentation was given by Mr. Ring Lardner, Board Chair, Sussex County Land Trust updating Council on their work for land preservation.

**Adminis- Mr. Lawson read the following information in his Administrator's Report:
trator's
Report**

1. Projects Receiving Substantial Completion

Per the attached Engineering Department Fact Sheets, the following projects have received Substantial Completion: Convenience Store w/Gas- Wawa #0894, effective April 28th; Black Oak West (FKA Glenwood) - Phase 1 (Construction Record), May 4th; Village Center Cottages (AKA Lightkeeper's Village) – Phase 2 (Construction Record), effective May 22nd; and Village Center Cottages (AKA Lightkeeper's Village) – Phase 3 (Construction Record) effective May 27th.

2. Delaware State Police Activity Report

The Delaware State Police year-to-date activity report for April 2026 is attached listing the number of violent crime and property crime arrests, as well as total traffic charges and corresponding arrests. In addition, DUI and total vehicle crashes investigated are listed. In total, there were 195 troopers assigned to Sussex County for the month of April.

[Attachments to the Administrator's Report are not attached to the minutes.]

**Dewey Mike Harmer, County Engineer presented a recommendation to award for
Water Tank Dewey Water tank recoating for Council's consideration.**

**M 223 26 A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Mr. Lloyd that be it moved
Approve based upon the recommendation of the Sussex County Engineering
Dewey Department that contract G26-14, Dewey Beach tank recoating, be awarded
Water Tank to U.S. Tank Painting for their total bid price in the amount of
Recoating \$2,171,000.00.**

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

Business Park Water Tower Mark Parker, Assistant County Engineer, presented a recommendation to award for Business Park Water Tank for Council's consideration.

M 224 26 Approve Business Park Water Tower Project A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, be it moved based upon the recommendation of the Sussex County Engineering Department that contract A26-09, Business Park water storage tank modifications, be awarded to A-Del Construction, Inc. for their bid amount of \$634,000.00.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

Kings Highway CO No. 5 Mark Parker, Assistant County Engineer, presented change order no. 5 for Kings Highway from SR1 to Freeman Highway, DelDOT State contract for Council's consideration.

M 225 26 Approve CO No. 5/ Kings Highway A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Mr. McCarron, be it moved based upon the recommendation of the Sussex County Engineering Department that change order no. 5 for Christiana Excavating Company be approved in the not-to-exceed amount of \$63,518.00, subject to final DelDOT funding approval.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

CU2354 Ext Request Jamie Whitehouse, Planning & Zoning Director, presented a request for an extension for Conditional Use No. 2354 filed on behalf of Sussex CSG, LLC for Council's consideration.

M 226 26 Approve Time Ext Request A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum, be it moved that Sussex County Council approve the time extension request for Conditional Use No. 2354.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;**

Mr. Hudson, Yea

On-Call Planning Services **Jamie Whitehouse, Planning & Zoning Director, presented an update and request for approval for vendor contracts for on-call planning services for the Comprehensive Plan for Council’s consideration.**

M 227 26 Approve On-Call Services/ Comp Plan **A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, be it moved that Sussex County Council approves the award of contract to McCormick Taylor, Inc. for on-call planning services RFP.**

Motion Adopted: 4 Yeas, 1 Abstain

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Abstain; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

Old Business/ Ordinance No. 26-01 **Under Old Business, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Whitehouse presented a Proposed Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF SUSSEX COUNTY, CHAPTER 72, ARTICLE II, SECTION 72-24 AND CHAPTER 115, ARTICLE IV, V, VI, VII AND VIII SECTIONS 115-20, 115-29, 115-37, 115-45 AND 115-53 REGARDING AFFORDABLY PRICED RENTAL UNITS AND THE SUSSEX COUNTY RENTAL UNIT (SCRP) PROGRAM”.**

Mr. Lawson led a discussion related to the Proposed Ordinance. He reported that based on feedback, there have been requests made related to making the following changes:

- **Building Height – increase current limits**
- **Building Length Caps – remove building length caps**
- **Building Setbacks – adjust building setback distances according to neighboring property uses**
- **Building Separation Distance – reduce building separation distance**
- **SCRP Rents – adjust rent limits**

Old Business/ Ordinance No. 26-02 **Under Old Business, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Whitehouse presented a Proposed Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 99, ARTICLE II, SECTIONS 99-9, “PUBLIC HEARING ON PRELIMINARY PLAT APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL” AND CHAPTER 115, ARTICLE IV, §115-25 “HEIGHT, AREA AND BULK REQUIREMENTS” OF THE CODE OF SUSSEX COUNTY REGARDING DESIGN CRITERIA FOR ALL SUBDIVISIONS”.**

Mr. Lawson led a discussion related to the Proposed Ordinance. He reported that based on feedback, there have been requests made related to making the following changes:

- **Add references to applicable County Code**

- Clarify interconnectivity requirement so that language indicates it must be designed (as opposed to being fully built in certain cases)

**Grant
Requests**

Mrs. Jennings presented grant requests for Council's consideration.

**M 228 26
Town of
Greenwood**

A Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum to give \$2,000 (\$2,000 from Mr. McCarron's Councilmanic Grant Account) to Town of Greenwood for their National Night Out event.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**M 229 26
Sussex
County
Land Trust
Foundation**

A Motion was made by Ms. Gruenebaum, seconded by Mr. McCarron to give \$2,000 (1,000 from Ms. Gruenebaum's Councilmanic Grant Account and \$1,000 from Mr. McCarron's Councilmanic Grant Account) to Sussex County Land Trust Foundation Inc. for their Dogfish dash event.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**M 230 26
Friends of
Georgetown
Public
Library, Inc.**

A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Mr. Lloyd to give \$750 (\$500 from Mr. Rieley's Councilmanic Grant Account and \$250 from Mr. Lloyd's Councilmanic Grant Account) to Friends of the Georgetown Public Library Inc. for their annual 5K race.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**M 231 26
Town of
Georgetown**

A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Mr. Hudson to give \$2,000 (\$1,000 from Mr. Rieley's Councilmanic Grant Account and \$1,000 from Mr. Hudson's Councilmanic Grant Account) to the Town of Georgetown for Delaware 250 events.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

- M 232 26**
Rehoboth
Summer
Children's
Theatre
- A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum to give \$1,625 (\$1,625 from Countywide Youth Grant Account) to Rehoboth summer children's theatre for their Jungle Book summer tour.**
- Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas**
- Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**
- Intro Ord**
- There were no Proposed Ordinance for Introductions.**
- CM**
Comments
- There were no Council Member comments.**
- M 233 26**
Go Into
Executive
Session
- At 11:56 a.m., a Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Rieley to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters relating to land acquisition and pending & potential litigation.**
- Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas**
- Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**
- Executive**
Session
- An Executive Session was held in the Basement Caucus Room to discuss matters relating to land acquisition & pending & potential litigation. The Executive Session ended at 1:28 p.m.**
- M 234 26**
Reconvene
- At 1:30 p.m., a Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Rieley to come out of Executive Session back into Regular Session.**
- Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas**
- Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**
- E/S Action**
- There was no action related to Executive Session matters.**
- Rules**
- Mr. Moore read the rules of procedure for zoning hearings.**
- Public**
Hearing/
CU2563
- A Public Hearing was held on Proposed Ordinance entitled "AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR MINI-STORAGE WITH BOAT AND RV STORAGE TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 13.48 ACRES, MORE OR LESS" (property is lying on the south side of Omar Road [S.C.R. 54], approximately 0.23 mile east of Dukes**

Public
Hearing/
CU2563

(continued)

Road [S.C.R. 354]) (911 Address: N/A) (Tax Map Parcel: 433-7.00-20.00) filed on behalf of George Herker.

Jamie Whitehouse, Planning & Zoning Director, presented the application.

The Planning & Zoning Commission held a Public Hearing on the application on April 15, 2026. At the meeting of May 6, 2026, the Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval of the application for the 6 reasons and subject to the 13 recommended conditions of approval as outlined.

The Council found that Mr. Richard Polk, Civil Engineer with Vista Design, Inc., spoke on behalf of the applicant, Mr. George Herker. Mr. Polk stated that as indicated, the Applicant was requesting Conditional Use for the development of a commercial mini storage facility to contain thirty-one (31) 40' x 60' storage buildings and sixty-two (62) storage spaces; that the property is comprised of 13.4 acres, and located on the south side of Omar Road, approximately 2,500 feet west of the Route 20 intersection, and approximately 2/3 mile east of the Town of Frankford; that the property is currently zoned AR-1 (Agricultural Residential); that the site is located within the Coastal Area per the 2019 Future Land Use Map; that the property is not located within a DelDOT Transportation Improvement District (TID); that the site was not located within a Wellhead Protection Area; that the site was located within an area of poor groundwater recharge potential; that the site was located within Investment Levels 2 and 3 per the Delaware State Strategies; that the property had 460 feet of frontage along Omar Road; that the site was currently a mixture of active agricultural fields on the northern half, and forested lands on the southern half; that most of the property's eastern and western property lines, along the existing agricultural fields are comprised of a single or double row of mature trees with various amounts of understory; that only the northernmost part of the site, being near Omar Road, did not have the forested buffer along the agricultural field; that the southern boundary of the property ran along Vines Creek, where areas of regulated wetlands had been identified; that portions of the southern area are also mapped within Flood Zone A per the FEMA Flood Maps; that topography on the site ranges from high of approximately 25 elevation along Omar Road, to a low of near 9 in Vines Creek; that the agricultural fields, and the first area of woods are relatively flat with most of the fall in the topography, occurring immediately adjacent to the Vines Creek; that the property is located within Tier 2 being the Sewer Planning Area by the Sussex County Engineering; that although no plans currently exist to extend service to the area; that the property is located almost directly across Omar Road, from the Applicant and the Owner's current property management facilities, where they have provided services for property owners throughout Sussex County for the last 15 years; that the proposed development program contains thirty-one (31) 40' x 60' single-story buildings and sixty-two (62) parking spaces; that a single point of ingress and egress from

**Public
Hearing/
CU2563
(continued)**

Omar Road is proposed; that DelDOT reviewed the application and responded that the proposed use would create a negligible traffic impact; that there will be no development nor disturbance within the regulated wetlands or the FEMA floodplain areas; that the development portions of the site is to be completely fenced; that the site's entrance will be key or card activated; that the entrance will also include a provision for turnarounds; that if someone were to pull off Omar Road for any reason, or were not authorized to get in, they will be able to perform a three-point-turn and pull back out onto Omar Road; that there will be no personnel intended to work on the property; that therefore, there are no well or septic facilities; that the signage will be located at the entrance; that should there be a problem, a telephone number for a 24-hour service line will be included, as well as direction to Herker Property Management Facility office, located across the street; that because no personnel are intended to work from the site, no well or septic facilities are proposed; that the site is to be lighted for security purposes; that lighting is to be fully shielded to prevent light from bleeding onto adjacent properties; that 30 foot forested buffers are proposed along both sides of the majority of the site's frontage, as well as along both sides of the property, and along the majority of the site's frontage; that the only place there will not be a 30 foot buffer will be at the site's primary means of ingress, egress and a small area set aside for the sign; that the majority of the development is proposed within the existing agricultural land; that the site preserves or reforests 80% of the existing on-site forest; that in summary, the proposed Herker mini-storage site proposes 31 single-story storage buildings, and 62 surface parking storage spaces; that the development had been designed to minimize impacts on surrounding properties and is proposed to retain or reforest over 80% of the existing on-site forested lands, equating to over 51% open post development; that access to the site had been designed to ensure safe ingress and egress to Omar Road; that while the property would not be staffed 24 hours a day, signage would be installed directing patrons to the existing Herker Property Management Facility, located immediately across Omar Road should any issue arise, and that the development would adhere to all Sussex County, DelDOT and the State of Delaware regulations.

There were no public comments.

The Public Hearing and public record were closed.

**M 235 26
Adopt
Ordinance
No. 4058/
CU2563**

A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum to Adopt Ordinance No. 4058 entitled "AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR MINI-STORAGE WITH BOAT AND RV STORAGE TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 13.48 ACRES, MORE OR LESS" for the reasons and conditions given by the Planning & Zoning Commission as follows:

**M 235 26
Adopt
Ordinance
No. 4058/
CU2563
(continued)**

- 1. The use as a storage facility is of a public or semi-public character and is desirable for the general convenience and welfare of the area.**
- 2. The use will be located along Omar Road, and it is in an area where several small businesses and commercial uses exist within one mile of the site, including the Applicant's property management business across the road. This is an appropriate location for this type of low-intensity use.**
- 3. The use will be a storage facility. No manufacturing, assembling, fabrication, or similar activities will be permitted on this site. The management of the use will occur from the Applicant's existing property management company on the opposite side of Omar Road.**
- 4. There was testimony in the record that there is a need for storage facilities in Sussex County. This type of use complements the residential development that is occurring in Sussex County and the newer residential developments that do not allow sheds or long-term parking of boats and RVs on lots.**
- 5. This type of storage facility generates a relatively minor amount of traffic when compared with other types of uses. It will not adversely affect traffic on area roadways. DelDOT has stated that the traffic impact will be negligible.**
- 6. The project, with the conditions and stipulations placed upon it, will not have an adverse impact on the neighboring properties or community.**
- 7. This recommendation for approval is subject to the following conditions and stipulations:**
 - a. The use shall be limited to 31 mini-storage buildings and the outside storage of boats and RVs. The buildings on the site shall be no larger than 40 feet by 60 feet in size and 20 feet in height. The buildings shall be separated by a minimum separation distance of 24 feet. None of the buildings shall have water or sewer connections.**
 - b. Security lighting shall be screened with downward illumination so that it does not shine on any neighboring properties or roadways.**
 - c. The perimeter of the storage area shall be fenced and gated with electronic access. The location and type of fencing shall be shown on the Final Site Plan. The entrance gate shall be located at least 40 feet from the Omar Road right-of-way so that waiting vehicles do not line up on that roadway.**
 - d. There shall not be any manufacturing, fabrication, or similar activities conducted on the site.**
 - e. There shall be only one lighted sign allowed on the site. It shall not be larger than 32 square feet per side.**
 - f. Stormwater management shall be maintained on site, using Best Management Practices.**
 - g. A 30-foot-wide perimeter landscape buffer shall be established along the perimeter of the site with the exception of the entrance and sign areas. This buffer shall include existing trees to the**

**M 235 26
Adopt
Ordinance
No. 4058/
CU2563
(continued)**

- greatest extent possible. The Final Site Plan shall include the details of this perimeter landscape buffer.
- h. Any trash receptacles associated with the use shall be screened from neighboring properties and roadways.
 - i. The Final Site Plan shall indicate all RV and boat storage spaces and parking and drive aisles. The location of the outdoor storage and parking spaces shall also be clearly marked on the site itself.
 - j. The use shall be subject to all DelDOT requirements regarding entrance and roadway improvements necessary to provide access to the site.
 - k. No sales or maintenance of boats or RVs shall occur from the site. No hazardous materials or fuel shall be stored on the site other than what may be in the tanks of boats and RVs on the site. No junked or unregistered boats, boat trailers, or RVs shall be stored on the site.
 - l. Any violations of the conditions of approval of this Conditional Use may result in the termination of this Conditional Use.
 - m. Th Final Site Plan shall be subject to approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**Public
Hearing/
CU2631**

A Public Hearing was held on a Proposed Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR STORAGE/WAREHOUSE/OFFICE BUILDINGS AND A CAR WASH (TO AMEND CONDITION “D” AND CONDITION “N” OF THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR CONDITIONAL USE NO. 2581 (ORDINANCE NO. 4009) TO ALLOW FOR OFFICE SPACES WITHIN THE WAREHOUSE UNITS AND TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT AN ON-SITE MANAGEMENT OFFICE BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION OF THE WAREHOUSE UNITS TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 29.55 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” (property is lying on the southwest side of Zion Church Road [Route 20], approximately 605 feet northwest of Deer Run Road [S.C.R. 388], and the north side of Deer Run Road [S.C.R. 388], approximately 159 feet southwest of Zion Church Road [Route 20]) (911 Address: 36054 Zion Church Road, Frankford) (Tax Map Parcel: 533-11.00-23.00) filed on behalf of Zion Church Ventures, LLC.

Jamie Whitehouse, Planning & Zoning Director, presented the application.

The Planning & Zoning Commission held a Public Hearing on the

**Public
Hearing/
CU2631
(continued)**

application on April 15, 2026. At the conclusion of the Public Hearing, the Commission deferred action on the application for further consideration, leaving the record open until April 22nd for receipt of any additional written comments. The item is scheduled to be considered under Old Business at the meeting scheduled for June 3, 2026.

It was found that nobody was in attendance to present the application.

**M 236 26
Allow
Continuous/
CU2631**

A Motion was made by Mr. Rieley, seconded by Mr. Lloyd to continue the hearing until after the next Public Hearing.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**Public
Hearing/
CU2551**

A Public Hearing was held on a Proposed Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR AN EVENTS VENUE TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 8.45 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” (property is lying on Morning Glory Farms Road on the northwest side of Portsville Road [S.C.R. 492], approximately 0.84 mile east of S. Shell Bridge Road [S.C.R 492A]) (911 Address: 8982 Morning Glory Farms Road, Laurel) (Tax Map Parcel: 432-3.00-41.06) filed on behalf of Sarah Peterson.

Jamie Whitehouse, Planning & Zoning Director, presented the application.

The Planning & Zoning Commission held a Public Hearing on the application on April 15, 2026. At the meeting of May 20, 2026, the Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval of the application for the 6 reasons and subject to the 10 recommended conditions of approval as outlined.

The Council found that Ms. Sarah Peterson spoke on behalf of her application along with her daughter, Sophia Peterson. Ms. Peterson stated that she was the owner of the property; that the property was originally a horse farm; that they turned the horse farm into a venue; that there is about 9 acres of property; that they want to do retreats, wedding and special occasions; that they are located on the water; that they are the only ones out there with no neighbors within a mile of the property; that they live on the property and they run the business together; that they use the barn for their events; that they maintain the property; that they have placed a new driveway, which is a mile long and in an area that is completely wooded; that establishing the new driveway was quite an undertaking; that they have a bridal suite, a man cave and they wanted

**Public
Hearing/
CU2551
(continued)**

access to everything there right on the property; that they wanted to be different than other venues; that their goal is to have one event a weekend; that they have contractors that help them with the events.

A discussion was held about the condition for the installation of a fence.

Public comments were heard.

Ms. Grace Peterson spoke in opposition to the application.

The Public Hearing and public record were closed.

**M 237 26
Delete
Condition
7G/
CU2551**

A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Mr. Rieley to delete Condition 7G which currently read “A solid wooden or vinyl fence at least six feet in height shall be installed along the eastern boundary of the site along lands of Grace S. Peterson. The type and location of this fencing shall be shown on the Final Site Plan”.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**M 238 26
Adopt
Ordinance
No. 4059/
CU2551**

A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Mr. McCarron to Adopt Ordinance No. 4059 entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR AN EVENTS VENUE TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 8.45 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” for the reasons and conditions given by Planning & Zoning as follows and as amended by this Council:

- 1. The site is an 8.45-acre parcel of land owned by the Applicant with direct access to Portsville Road.**
- 2. This use was previously the subject of Conditional Use #2373 for a similar event venue. That Conditional Use was denied for lack of a detailed site plan, improper access via a private easement and a property line dispute. All of those issues are now resolved, including a dedicated entrance drive to Portsville Road on land owned by the Applicant.**
- 3. The Applicant intends to hold events that include weddings, baby showers, birthday parties and similar events.**
- 4. The site will have an area available for at least 141 parking spaces based on the site plan that was submitted with the Application.**
- 5. With the conditions and limitations placed upon the Conditional Use, it will not adversely affect neighboring or adjacent properties or area roadways.**

**M 238 26
Adopt
Ordinance
No. 4059/
CU2551
(continued)**

- 6. This use promotes tourism and hospitality activities in Sussex County.**
- 7. This recommendation is subject to the following conditions:**
 - a. All events shall end no later than 11:00 p.m.**
 - b. Food and beverage service and music or similar entertainment is permitted.**
 - c. As stated by the Applicant, there shall be no more than 200 people at any event.**
 - d. All parking areas shall be generally shown on the Final Site Plan. No parking shall be permitted on any nearby County roads or adjacent properties.**
 - e. All access to the site for this use shall be via the Applicant's fee simple roadway connecting to Portsville Road. There shall not be any access for this use via the 10- foot-wide easement shown on the site plan.**
 - f. One unlighted sign shall be permitted on the Applicant's property at the entrance along Portsville Road. It shall not be larger than 32 square feet per side.**
 - g. All entrance locations shall be subject to the review and approval of DelDOT.**
 - h. Any violation of these conditions of approval may be grounds for the termination of this Conditional Use.**
 - i. The Final Site Plan shall be subject to the review and approval of the Sussex County Planning and Zoning Commission.**

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**Close Public
Hearing/
CU2631**

Mr. Whitehouse reported that his staff was not able to contact the applicant for Conditional Use No. 2631 filed on behalf of Zion Church Ventures, LLC. The Public Hearing was closed and there was no testimony taken today.

**M 239 26
Adjourn**

A Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Lloyd to adjourn at 2:26 p.m.

Motion Adopted: 5 Yeas

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Yea;
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

Respectfully submitted,

**Tracy N. Torbert
Clerk of the Council**

{An audio recording of this meeting is available on the County's website.}