

Dover Township
Zoning Hearing Board
October 21, 2020

Chairman Jane Ginter called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Members present: Steve Barkdoll, Phillip Brown, and Robert Wright. Absent with prior notice: Member Richard Pope. Also present: Zoning Officer John McLucas, Solicitor Mike Craley, Stenographer Tammy Rinehart, Recording Secretary, and three citizens.

I. Minutes

Motion by Wright, second by Brown, to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 15, 2020. All members voted aye; motion carried.

II. Zoning Case

A. ZHB 20-2, Beth Brech, request for Special Exception for Domiciliary Child Care in the R3 zone, at 2818 Anita Drive

The Zoning Officer and Matthew and Beth Brech were sworn in.

Mrs. Brech would like to start an in-home daycare facility. She is currently in the process of being certified to open a daycare facility, part of which is obtaining Zoning Hearing Board approval. She will receive a license from the Department of Human Services.

Included as part of the record is a building sketch showing the basement and first floor diagram. Most of the childcare activities will be held in the basement of the split-level home, in the area labeled "rec room" on the drawing. There is plenty of access/egress to the childcare area. The applicant will be permitted to care for up to six children in the home. There will be no children over the age of five years. No after-school daycare. The children will be there full time or part time, depending on the needs of the parents. Earliest drop off will be between 6:30 to 7 a.m., latest evening pickup at 6 p.m. Parents will enter through the front door and go down the steps to the basement. Parking in the driveway would require backing onto the street, however, there is also on-street parking. Mrs. Brech has been working in childcare or teaching since 1998. This is their principal residence. The Brechs have one son, age 14.

There is a chain-link fence around the backyard play area. The applicant will provide screening as required. There are a few options to provide screening. Outdoor play area will include a sandbox and other play equipment. There's also a deck off the back of the house where children can play if the ground is muddy. The length of time that the children will be outside depends on the weather. The plan is for outdoor play 30-60 minutes in the morning, 30 minutes in the afternoon.

She will be the only employee. If she is ill, no one else will step in to watch the children. Public water and public sewer. No sign.

How long is the certification process? Possibly up and running in December 2020.

Mr. Brech noted that Mrs. Brech was a bit modest in stating her qualifications, as she has been working with children for over 30 years, both in a classroom setting and in daycare settings. She has a lot of experience in this field.

There will be no waste accumulation or unsightly conditions in the yard as a result of this in-home occupation.

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Special Exception, with the condition that all smoke detectors be hard-wired. Mr. Craley noted that this is not a condition of the Zoning Ordinance, but Mrs. Brech noted that it is indeed a condition of her being granted a license. She is in compliance.

How about the screening? Mr. McLucas noted that the requirement would be for Level 2 screening, but to him this is no different than a regular play yard of a residence. The condition states that it must be in accordance with the SALDO. Is it mandatory? It was noted that the children are under five, so they likely won't be as rowdy and noisy as older children likely would be. The ZHB members feel that the fencing is enough, and further screening isn't necessary.

Hearing closed.

Motion by Barkdoll, second by Brown, to approve the request by Beth Brech for Special Exception for domiciliary child day care in the R3 zoning district, property at 2818 Anita Drive, conditioned on the applicant's receipt of her license and her providing a copy to the Zoning Officer prior to commencing operation, and noting that further screening is unnecessary. All members voted aye; motion carried.

Dover Township has the right to appeal this decision, but it is unlikely.

Well done on the application. Thanks to Mr. McLucas for his help.

III. Other Business

Nothing at this time.

Motion by Wright, second by Brown, to adjourn. All members voted aye; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie B. Maher,
Recording Secretary