

Town of Merton
Public Hearing

To Consider the Conditional Use Request of Edward & Daneen Meissner to Operate a Bed & Breakfast Facility that will Provide Travelers with Temporary Accommodations and Breakfast for a Fee on A Daily or Weekly Room Rental Basis as an Accessory Use in their Current Single-Family Residence at
W326N6611 Sylvian Drive
March 1st, 2023

Present: Chairman Klink, Commissioners Griffin, Jensen, Morris, & Good, Attorney Murn, Planner Haroldson, and Deputy Clerk Claas

Absent: Commissioners Siepmann & Queoff

Also Present: Todd & Daneen Meissner, Percy Chaby, Lou Ann & Craig Roble, Bob & Sally Sytsma, Jon Schoenheider, Bob & Jean Hazard, Bruce Schneider, John Muehl, Rich Winkelman, RJ Winkelman, Patti Winkelman, Rich Manning & Barb Wieland

This Public Hearing was Called to Order by Chairman Klink at 5:30 p.m.

Haroldson read the public hearing notice.

Daneen Meissner said she is a holistic health coach and she wants to align her passions with those of other small businesses in the area and open a bed and breakfast. She indicated other businesses nearby have similar passions dedicated to healthy living. She believes the location of her home is a great fit for a bed and breakfast and the home's unique design lends itself to be operated as a bed and breakfast. There are two bedrooms on the 3rd floor, the main floor serves as a gathering area with a bathroom, kitchen, an office with a murphy bed, a living room and a dining room. The lower level has three additional bedrooms, a bathroom, a breakfast nook, a fireplace and a walkout deck. Daneen Meissner said there will be no modifications to the landscaping or the exterior of the house. Three cars will be able to park directly in front of the garage and there are two additional stalls east of the house. The parking areas are paved and they have a double-wide driveway.

Daneen Meissner would like her bed and breakfast for women who want to come to the area to explore a healthy mindset. She plans to market on Wisconsin Bed & Breakfast Association's website, attend Midwest Health Expos, and list it on the other states travel and tourism websites. She expects the average stay will be two nights with just three bedrooms utilized with 75 to 100 visitors per year.

Ed Meissner said he is passionate about the community and he has been a resident of the Town of Merton for 50 years of his life. They have passion for the area and roots in the area. Their goal is to be good residents and good neighbors. This is their private residence and it will remain their private residence. They do not want to do anything that would blemish their track record as residents and neighbors in the Town of Merton. What Daneen's doing here she did for a brief period of time in Florida during covid and it was really well received, and he thinks she helped a lot of people.

Klink said parking is always a concern and there needs to be adequate parking. South of Sylvian Drive there is no parking on the one side. Meissner said they have a very large driveway. Good questioned the limit of guests. Meissner responded that 10 people is the maximum, but indicated that 6 guests would probably be the most as that was her average in Florida. Jensen thinks this is an interesting idea, but suggested the Plan Commission limit the number of vehicles and the number of guests that can be

there. Morris asked about remodeling the third floor to convert one bathroom into two bathrooms. Meissner responded that is a long-term goal. Murn asked about advertising. Meissner stated she would advertise on the Wisconsin Bed & Breakfast Association website and that would be the main way to get reservations. Murn asked if there was any other place they would be advertising. Meissner said she would have a booth at the Wellness Expo and possibly with Wisconsin tourism. Haroldson reminded the Plan Commission that per the Town's Zoning Code under conditional uses, bed & breakfast facilities are allowed as an accessory use in any existing structure designed for or occupied as a single-family residence in any district permitting single family residences. Griffin questioned if there would be a sign out at the road. Meissner said she has to have the home licensed by the State and the County and they have the sign size allowed. Ed Meissner said they just go through the Town's process review, and they would design the sign to the Town's specifications. Haroldson said the signage allowed for their use can be no larger than 15 sq. ft. with letters not less than 6 inches.

The public hearing was opened for public comments and concerns.

Bob Sytsma – W326N6501 Sylvian Drive – said they're about half way down the street and have been there. He thinks the merits of what they're proposing are great. As personal residents on that street, they're very concerned about the impact that this will have on the neighborhood. One of the reasons they moved here was because of the peacefulness and the quietness of the Lake Country area. It's on a dead-end street, so they don't see much traffic or anyone else walking up and down their streets. They are concerned they are going to lose some of that if a business is going to start operating on the property or on the street. He said they don't support doing this on their street. While the idea is a good one, but maybe at a different location.

Lou Ann Roble – W326N6591 Sylvian Drive – they are adjacent to the proposed bed & breakfast. They are concerned about the traffic. They are a dead-end street and she is concerned about turn arounds. Also, the ancillary traffic this might generate such as Grub Hub, Door Dash, Ubers, that kind of thing, RV's. That kind of parking would become an issue and as was mentioned, part of the street is no parking at any time. Also, with the parking, she is concerned about emergency vehicle access with the driveway full of cars. She doesn't know if that is something that can be addressed. Another concern she has is signage on the property that may or may not affect her ability to sell her house if she does choose to do that in the future. Having a bed & breakfast next door is also a concern because she doesn't know what would happen to her property value over the next couple of years. She would also like clarification on the statement of a daily versus a weekly rental basis. How does that differentiate between a bed & breakfast and a boarding house. Haroldson responded that is the way it's worded in the Zoning Code under the conditional use. Klink stated there would be a restriction of the amount of days. That would be part of the conditions. Haroldson stated in the code it says room rentals to families or individuals shall not exceed 14 consecutive days. Roble stated she doesn't want the integrity of the resident type environment that they have on their street compromised by additional traffic and pedestrian traffic. They moved out here for peace and quiet and she would like to see that continue, so she guesses she is against.

John Muehl – W315N7677 State Rd 83 – stated about 30 years ago they attended their first Stone Bank Parade, 4th of July, and at that time Dottie was there and she was tossing her cookies and they have been going back ever since. His family comes here every year and they go to the Stone Bank Parade. More recently they've discovered the Stone Bank Market, and they are supporting that, and they are attending their cooking classes and the programs that they have - sustainable farming and healthy

eating. What a wonderful asset to Stone Bank. Now there's someone proposing a bed & breakfast which is supporting a healthy mind, a healthy body, and a healthy soul. What a perfect fit for Stone Bank.

Craig Roble questioned if this is a bed & breakfast or is it a business, because they are two different things. Ed Meissner said it's a small business. He said there were some really good comments brought up and said if you look at the location of this property, it's highly unlikely that any guests would even go further than their driveway. They are on the corner of Highway K and Sylvian, so there should be no impact to the neighbors at all other than if they went for a walk down the street.

Murn said generally the bed & breakfast and the business distinction doesn't technically matter in this case because it's zoned residential and it's not zoned business. In the residential zoning, there are conditional accessory uses under the residential zoning. This is one of them. It does operate as a business but that's how zoning works. There are some accessory uses that the Town can allow under residential zoning. Murn stated the helpful thing about their comments is that it allows the board to recommend conditions on the use.

Jean Hazard questioned what would happen if they sell. She said they got a letter from Meissner saying she wanted to do this for ten years and then move back to Florida and then she questioned if this is a wellness retreat or is it just a bed & breakfast. Meissner is advertising it as a wellness retreat, more or less, so what happens if it's a bed & breakfast and they're not interested in the wellness. Klink stated the conditional use is not for the house, it's for the person who requested the use, so once they are gone or they say they are leaving, that doesn't automatically carry over to the next owner. Klink said new owners would have to come back to this same board and this same setting. Hazard asked if they could sell it as a bed & breakfast. Klink said no, they would have to go through this process. Hazard again questioned if this was a wellness retreat or a bed & breakfast. Meissner said she is promoting the services within the area. Ed Meissner stated in order to serve breakfast they had to get a state license for a bed & breakfast.

Craig Roble stated this is for women and asked if they can discriminate and say it's only for women. The attorney advised the Plan Commission not to respond.

Sally Sytsma asked how long is the duration for a conditional use permit or does it have to be renewed. Klink stated it's reviewed on a yearly basis. If there is a pushback or a lot of issues, either the Town would put more restrictions on it or they're going to have to do something different. Klink stated if there are a lot of complaints it will be reviewed every year. Sally Sytsma also asked if the owners would always be on site while they're renting it. Klink said that would be one of the conditions.

Bob Sytsma asked what the process is. Klink said the board will discuss conditions, the attorney will draft the conditions and bring it back to the next Plan Commission Meeting, the conditions will be reviewed and tweaked and then it will be recommended to the Town Board for approval.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly R Claas
Deputy Clerk

