

ISABELLA COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

July 12, 2007

A Regular Meeting of the Isabella County Planning Commission was held on July 12, 2007 in Room 225 of the Isabella County Building, 200 North Main Street, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marilyn Fosburg, Craig Schripsema, Jerry Neyer, Gale Willoughby, Richard Recker, Christine Alwood, Vance Johnson, Dan Hess, Bob Thompson.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Tim Nieporte, Community Development Director
Michael Zalewski, Planner/Zoning Administrator
Brandy Freed, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Thompson at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the June 14, 2007 regular meeting were circulated to the Commission prior to the meeting for their review.

Ms. Alwood explained that arrival times should be placed next to member's names that arrived late.

Ms. Alwood forwarded changes of the June 14, 2007 meeting to staff.

A motion was made by Mr. Hess, supported by Ms. Alwood, to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2007 meeting as amended.

Yes: Johnson, Fosburg, Schripsema, Willoughby, Neyer, Recker, Alwood, Thompson, Hess.
No: None.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

TOWNSHIP CONCERNS

Ms. Jackie Curtis, Denver Township, asked if it was state law that you do not have to notify the owners if ten or more parcels are being rezoned.

Mr. Zalewski clarified that it has to be eleven or more adjacent parcels.

Ms. Curtis read a letter from Denver Township, which was submitted as part of the record (see attached).

LIASON REPORTS

ZBA – Mr. Schripsema reported that the June 20, 2007 Meeting was cancelled.

Parks & Recreation Commission – Mr. Willoughby reported that a special meeting was held in regards to Meridian Park. At this meeting it was decided that any County Park would require a daily or season sticker to be presented, with the exception of the Rails to Trails or Pere Marquette Park.

Board of Commissioners - Ms. Alwood reported that the County Board of Commissioners amended the motion of the Parks & Recreation Commission to state that a daily or seasonal pass is required for Meridian Park only. The Board of Commissioners is currently working on the budget; there will be a special retreat on July 23, 2007 at 5:00 p.m., which is open to the public, for the Board to do some goal setting in connection with the budget. The 2009 sesquicentennial celebration plans are moving ahead. The Board of Commissioners is moving forward with plans and site plan review for the Commission on Aging building. Ms. Alwood also stated that she agreed with Ms. Curtis and Denver Township on the notification process of rezoning.

SITE PLAN REVIEW #07-03

Mr. Thompson stated that the Commission received a site plan submitted by Patrick & Tonya Parks to establish a mini storage business in accordance with Article XIX of the Isabella County Zoning Ordinance. The property is located at 5247 W. Weidman Road in Section 19 of Nottawa Township and is zoned General Commercial (C-1). Parcel # 11-019-20-001-12

Mr. Parks explained that they are asking to construct one building which would consist of 21 storage units. They have tried to adhere to the Zoning Ordinance as much as possible; they did what they could, based on others that are in the County already.

Mr. Zalewski stated that it is recommended that the proposed landscaping be two rows of 3' trees 30' on center. The loading and unloading as it is stated on the site plan allows for no buffer area between Mr. Parks property and the adjoining property. It is recommended at minimum there be a 10' minimum area for buffer. The sign location is ok, but the size of the sign is not indicated, in speaking with Mr. Parks, it was indicated that the sign would be 4' x 4' x 6'. It is recommended that size and placement of the sign be approved.

Discussion was held about requirements for special land uses.

Mr. Hess asked whether patrons would be getting into their storage units at night as lights are not shown.

Mr. Parks stated that he had talked with the building inspector and it was indicated that lights were not required. They had considered solar powered lighting. He also stated that many times people try to move into these units and they do not want this to occur. About 25% of storage units in the area have security lighting. One storage unit complex at Lake Isabella has no exterior lighting.

Ms. Fosburg asked where the sign is located.

Mr. Parks stated that it is along Weidman Rd. close to the water well

Mr. Thompson stated that it is apparent that the adjacent property owner to the West uses Mr. Parks' driveway. He also asked if Mr. Parks had an agreement with this property owner.

Mr. Parks stated that he does not have any agreement with the property owner.

Ms. Alwood asked if the operating hours should be referenced in the motion. She also asked if the storage units in Lake Isabella were operated 24 hours per day without lighting, because that seems like a safety hazard.

Mr. Parks stated that the Lake Isabella storage units are in operation 24 hours per day. He also stated that the building inspector had stated that fencing is not required.

Mr. Nieporte stated that it should definitely be stated in the motion, if that is what the board chooses, that the storage units will be operated 24 hrs per day 7 day a week. As far as light, that is to be decided by Mr. Parks.

Mr. Recker stated that he currently has 2 mini storages located near his home, only one has lighting. He also stated he has not heard of any incidents at either.

Mr. Thompson stated that a motion should contain the 6 conditions that were discussed earlier as well as any further requirements.

Mr. Hess asked if there should be dumpster screening proposed.

Mr. Nieporte explained that Mr. Parks is not proposing to have a dumpster. If one is added down the road they would have to come before the Planning Commission again.

Mr. Neyer asked if the proposed setback was what they were using.

Mr. Zalewski stated that the setback that staff was concerned with was the loading and unloading area. It is recommended that they require at minimum of 10' green landscaping buffer.

Mr. Nieporte stated that landscaping is being referred to as a green buffer or grassy area.

Ms. Fosburg stated that the pine trees 30' on center could be a safety hazard because you cannot

see through them. Instead a fence that can be seen through would be better.

Mr. Thompson stated that this would be a security issue and is the concern of the property owner. A green belt is much more pleasing along the road, rather than a fence.

Mr. Neyer stated that the attempt with a green belt is to hide the storage units.

Mr. Zalewski stated that the Zoning Ordinance requires screening along the front of the property and it has been required of all other applicants.

Discussion was held on type of screening along the front property line.

Mr. Schripsema explained that his thought was that the applicant should alternate between species of tree because one may be killed off by a bug, if they were all killed off all the landscaping would be lost.

Mr. Thompson stated that if the trees die out the applicant is required to maintain the trees.

A motion was made by Mr. Hess to approve Special Use Permit #07-03 because it meets the 6 requirements for special use, with the following stipulations:

- Operating hours 24 hours per day 7 days a week
- Double row of trees in accordance with the ordinance
- 10' buffer requirement along side and rear property lines
- Sign 4' x 4' no more than 6' high
- Lighting

Motion died for lack of support

Ms. Fosburg asked if the ordinance required electrical lighting.

Mr. Nieporte stated that lighting is not required by the ordinance.

A motion was made by Mr. Hess, supported by Mr. Recker, to approve Special Use Permit #07-03 because it meets the 6 requirements for special use, with the following stipulations:

- Operating hours 24 hours per day 7 days a week
- Double row of trees in accordance with the ordinance
- 10' buffer requirement along side and rear property lines
- Sign 4' x 4' no more than 6' high

Yes: Johnson, Fosburg, Schripsema, Willoughby, Neyer, Recker, Alwood, Hess, Thompson.

No: None.

Motion carried.

Mr. Nieporte explained to Mr. Parks that there is a 21 day appeal period before the permit can be

issued.

ZONING AMENDMENT #07-07

Mr. Thompson stated that the Commission will conduct a public hearing on the proposed amendment to the Isabella County Zoning Ordinance. The amendment will remove all references to Public Act 183 of the Public Acts of 1943 and replace with Public Act 110 of the Public Acts of 2006. The proposed amendment will also amend Section 19.02(7) of the ordinance to include the language 'statement of findings and conclusions'.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 7:44 p.m.

Hearing no comments the public hearing was closed at 7:44 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. Fosburg, supported by Mr. Hess, to recommend the Zoning Amendment #07-07 to the Isabella County Board of Commissioners because it is the new law.

Mr. Neyer inquired as to what the replacement will do.

Mr. Nieporte stated that the public act portion just refers to the new public act and removes the old act. Findings and conclusions is a part of the ordinance that will insure that facts are included with the statements included in the motions.

Yes: Johnson, Fosburg, Schripsema, Willoughby, Neyer, Recker, Alwood, Hess, Thompson.
No: None.

Motion carried.

ZONING AMENDMENT #07-08

Mr. Thompson stated that the Commission will conduct a public hearing on the proposed rezoning in Section 3 of Vernon Township. The Commission will consider rezoning 15 parcels from Light Industrial (I-1) to General Agricultural (Ag-2). The 15 parcels make up the W ½ of the NE ¼ of Section 3 that is east of the Railroad.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 7:46 p.m.

Hearing no comments the public hearing was closed at 7:46 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Hess, supported by Mr. Neyer, to recommend approval of Zoning Amendment #07-08 rezoning 15 parcels from Light Industrial (I-1) to General Agricultural (Ag-2) to the Isabella County Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Fosburg asked if staff had heard anything from Vernon Township.

Mr. Zalewski stated that he spoke with Jeff Bean and he indicated that he had no concerns with the rezoning.

Mr. Nieporte stated that findings need to be stated when making motions.

Discussion was held on amending the motion

Ms. Alwood proposed an amendment to the motion to say the reason for recommending approval of the rezoning request is because it is consistent with the County Master Plan, it is compatible with the surrounding residential uses and the property is capable of handling any and all uses of the new zoning district.

Mr. Hess agreed to amend the motion

Mr. Neyer supported the amended motion

Mr. Willoughby asked if it was stated that it was in section 3 of Vernon Township

Mr. Thompson stated that Zoning Amendment #07-08 was stated and covers the section 3 of Vernon Township.

Mr. Recker asked if the word findings had to be included in the motion.

Mr. Nieporte stated no, only a description of why the motion is being made.

Yes: Johnson, Fosburg, Schripsema, Willoughby, Neyer, Recker, Alwood, Hess, Thompson.

No: None.

Motion carried.

ENFORCEMENT MECHANISM SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

A round table discussion will be held on Wednesday, September 26, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. in room 320. Mr. Schripsema stated that Steve Martineau and another attorney from his office will be present at this meeting to discuss the civil infraction/criminal misdemeanor processes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Zalewski provided copies of the updated Master Plan as well as new copies of the Zoning Maps to the Planning Commission. He stated that staff would be providing new copies of the Zoning Ordinance to the Planning Commission as soon as the recent text amendments are adopted and inserted into the document.

Mr. Nieporte presented the newly designed Community Development website.

Discussion was held on the GIS.

Mr. Nieporte stated that it is recommended that the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance be brought to each months meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

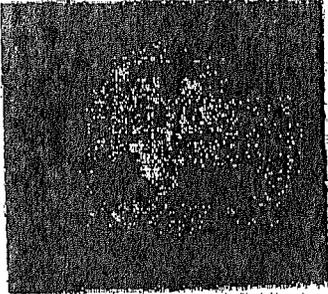
Mr. Schripsema stated that MDOT is trying to coordinate a region wide bike path meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by call of the Chair at 8:03 p.m.

Jerry Neyer, Secretary

Brandy Freed, Recording Secretary



**DENVER
TOWNSHIP**

**Isabella County
Michigan**

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July 4, 2007

Isabella County Planning Commission
200 N. Main St.
Mt, Pleasant, MI 48858

Dear Members of Commission:

It was brought to our attention at our Township board meeting the subject of notification to residents regarding any zoning changes that would impact a property owner. Discussion was held amongst the board members and we concluded the proper, fair thing to do would be to notify the residents in writing of any zoning changes that would impact them or their property. We invited our residents in attendance at this meeting for their input, which they were very much in agreement with our opinion.

We discussed several ways to possibly handle the situation, which we would like to share a couple with you.

1. Notify all the residents by post card of the zoning change.
2. Notify the township treasurer, asking that person to notify them.

However, it is our suggestion that all parties involved should be properly notified to avoid public relation problems, Our township feels there is enough distrust going on in government, and we are personally striving to correct that at our level. It was also suggested that the Planning Commission adopt a policy stating how they plan to handle such changes and make that policy known to all townships.

Thank you for listening, and we ask that you consider our suggestions.

Sincerely,

Tammy L. Prout Denver
Township Clerk