

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2020 MEETING**

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, January 16, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Ada Township Offices, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, MI.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Burton, Butterfield (arrived at 7:03 p.m.), Carter, Easter, Heglund, Jacobs, Leisman
Absent: None
Staff Present: Ferro, Bajdek, Winczewski
Public Present: 24 Members

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Leisman recommended hearing the Unfinished Business first.
Moved by Jacobs, supported by Carter, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 19, 2019 WORK SESSION & REGULAR MEETINGS

Moved by Carter, supported by Easter, to approve the minutes of the Dec. 19, 2019 work session and regular meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Request for Rezoning from the Medium Density Single-Family Residential (R-3) District to the Village Residential (V-R) District, Parcel No. 41-15-34-402-008, 7699 Fase Street SE, Chuck Hoyt, on behalf of TPR 7699 Fase Street, LLC

This request was previously tabled at the Public Hearing meeting on December 19, 2019.

Ferro briefed the Planning Commissioners on his findings since the December 19, 2019 meeting, stating that he has learned there is stormwater connection available on the applicant's property but he does not know of its condition. He has modified his staff report accordingly.

Ferro stated the applicant has provided a current concept plan of the property with a lot layout for 16 homes which would satisfy the lot width and area requirements of the VR District.

Chair Leisman invited the applicant to speak.

Chuck Hoyt of Thornapple Pines Redevelopment, presented concepts of potential layouts under the current R-3 zoning and the requested V-R zoning. Mr. Hoyt stated that he believes the concerns from the last meeting regarding the proximity to the closest neighbors in Ada Moorings have been addressed and are not noted in the most recent Planning Director's report.

Mr. Hoyt stated this property is bound by the intent and the objectives of the Township Master Plan, specifically, "compact residential development in and near the Ada Village neighborhood."

Mr. Hoyt presented a concept layout under the R-3 zoning, showing the potential for 8 lots, each with a lot width of 108 feet. This layout would potentially add about 80 vehicle trips per day. Mr. Hoyt presented conceptual architectural home designs which could be built by-right on R-3 lots, noting that the homes could look a lot like homes that are in the Ada Moorings neighborhood.

Mr. Hoyt presented his proposed plan, under V-R zoning, showing (16), 50 ft. wide-lots in a U configuration with a central median. The median could also act as a stormwater detention if necessary. Mr. Hoyt presented concept architecture for potential homes under V-R zoning, noting that the homes could potentially look similar in scale to homes built in the Riverpoint development.

Mr. Hoyt addressed traffic concerns, stating that per the Planning Director's report, 1,000 trips per day are allowed for local streets and there are currently 320 trips per day calculated on Fase St. If you develop the property under R-3 zoning, that adds another 80 trips per day. If the property is developed under V-R zoning, that adds another 93 trips per day. Mr. Hoyt stated that either way, he does not feel that the traffic will pose any significant burden.

Mr. Hoyt stated he is supportive of traffic-calming measures that were proposed in the 'Friends of Fase Street' community input letter. He is supportive of the intersection at Fase St. and Thornapple River Dr. He is supportive of improved curb-cut at intersections, sidewalks throughout the neighborhood, and any other traffic-control measures.

Mr. Hoyt commented on the Planning Director's reasons for recommending denial:

1. *The subject property can be developed as currently zoned or with a PUD zoning district overlay.*

Mr. Hoyt stated that that is true, but it doesn't seem to be in the best interest of what the Fase St. residents really want. They want smaller compact homes that are sensitive to the homes already on Fase St.

2. *Because the subject property is in a transitional area between neighborhoods of differing character, development design considerations exist that are not addressed in the conventional VR district standards and that are best addressed through either a PUD zoning district overlay or a conditional rezoning of the subject property.*

Mr. Hoyt stated that he and the applicant feel this property is actually a part of Fase St. There is no connectivity to Ada Moorings. They do not feel like this property is a transitional area but strictly a part of Fase St.

3. *The VR district standards do not provide the means to ensure turn around radius at the end of Fase St.*

Mr. Hoyt stated that the same is true under the current R3 zoning. By-right, there is not a guarantee that there will be a turnaround. Mr. Hoyt stated that the Road Commission has been shown their concept plan and they have shown no objections so far. Mr. Hoyt stated that he would not object to conditional approval to ensure there is a full-turn radius on site.

Leisman requested feedback from the Commissioners.

Carter asked how large a house could be under the current R-3 zoning, using his 8-lot rendering. Mr. Hoyt stated he could build a house that is 70 ft. wide by 90 ft. deep.

Mr. Hoyt stated homes would be 40 ft. wide by 70 ft. deep under V-R zoning, using his 16-lot rendering. Mr. Hoyt stated the scale of the homes would be almost identical to homes in Riverpoint of Ada.

Mr. Hoyt stated they would be marketing to first-time home buyers, downsizers and people who desire a home at a lower price point. They would build homes similar to homes in Riverpoint but with more affordable finishes thus reducing construction costs.

Leisman asked Mr. Hoyt why he objects to developing under a PUD. Mr. Hoyt stated that he doesn't understand the objection to zoning this property exactly like what everything else is on Fase St.

Ferro stated he agrees with everything Mr. Hoyt has stated in regards to what the Township's objectives should be in terms of replicating the character of homes found on Fase St. The only thing he and Mr. Hoyt disagree on is the procedure to get there. Ferro stated he prefers a PUD. Ferro noted that a new concern as stated in his memo is the need for a proper street layout to provide turn around space for the public, school buses and Road Commission trucks. Ferro stated the concept layout that was presented tonight shows a 25 ft. pavement width. It is unclear if this is meant to be a public or private road. If it is a private road, Road Commission trucks will likely not use it and that means there needs to be some other way for the Road Commission trucks to turn around. If it is a public road, that will require a 30 ft. pavement width.

Ferro responded to Mr. Hoyt's earlier comment, stating that the Planning Commission cannot lawfully put conditions on a rezoning.

Leisman stated the applicant could apply for a Conditional Rezoning and a new Public Notice would need to be sent.

Ferro stated that if this Rezoning request is denied, the Township should initiate a rezoning for this parcel to a PUD.

Heglund asked about lot sizes in the proposed V-R layout. Ferro stated the lots range from 7,500 to 7,700 sq. ft. with the two lots on the far east end being larger. The lots would be slightly over 55 ft. wide.

Easter stated that we have heard from the community and we know there's a lot of uncertainty and distrust. This boils down to what is the return on investment? We need to hold to the zoning standards that have been put in place so that we can provide oversight that the community has made very clear that they are depending on us to do.

Carter stated he favors a PUD. If the property is rezoned to V-R, these concepts presented today could be reconfigured. Too many things could happen under V-R which we wouldn't like.

Heglund agreed; a PUD would allow the Commissioners to work together with the developer.

Moved by Carter; Supported by Easter, to recommend to the Township Board to deny the request for rezoning from the R-3 district to the V-R district, based on the following findings:

- 1. The subject property can be developed and reasonably used as currently zoned, or with a PUD zoning district overlay.**
- 2. Because the subject property is in a transitional area between neighborhoods of differing character, development design considerations exist that are not addressed in the conventional VR district standards and that are best addressed through either a PUD zoning district overlay or a conditional rezoning of the subject property.**
- 3. The conventional VR district standards do not provide the Township with the means to ensure that the development design provides appropriate means for vehicles to turn around at the end of Fase St. Due to the fact that Fase St. is a dead-end street with no existing provisions for vehicular turn-around at the end of the street, either a PUD zoning district overlay or a conditional**

rezoning of the subject property are the appropriate procedure for review and approval of proposed redevelopment of the property.

Motion passed unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Request for Special Use Permit to allow the conversion of an existing 2,114 sq. ft. building, which contains a Caretaker Residential Unit, to a Preschool Building for Classroom Space that will increase Canterbury Creek Farm Preschool property occupancy by 36 students, Parcel No. 41-15-28-100-021, 6555 Grand River Dr. NE, Riley Turchetti, on behalf of CCFPS Holdings, LLC

Riley Turchetti stated he and his wife are the current owners of Canterbury Creek Farm Preschool. The Preschool has been in the Ada community for 44 years. It moved to the current location in 2012 by his parents who are the previous owners.

The Preschool runs two sessions that are 2 days per week, and two sessions that are 3 days per week, morning and afternoon. Each session has 36 students. They also have a Young 5's program which runs Monday through Thursday, morning and afternoon, with 12 students enrolled in each of those sessions. They have 5 teachers at all times plus a director.

Mr. Turchetti stated they would like to move their current operations into the Caretaker residence which was built in 2014. They have a maximum occupancy of 48 students on the property. This expansion would allow an additional 4 classes, bringing the total occupancy of the property to 84 students.

Mr. Turchetti stated the residence will need to have interior renovations; the footprint will likely not change. The plans have not been finalized but they have started working with Dixon Architecture. They have approval from the Kent County Health Department verifying the current septic system is compatible with the proposed increase in occupancy.

Regarding traffic concerns, Mr. Turchetti stated they will be extending the existing bypass lane all the way through their property to the exit on Grand River Dr. They plan to pave the rest of the driveway from the school to the exit, and they plan to add additional parking for staff and visitors.

Mr. Turchetti stated they plan to stagger the start and end times between the two schools so there will not be a traffic backup. Mr. Turchetti stated that since they moved to this location in 2012, there have not been any traffic complaints.

Mr. Turchetti commented on the recommendation made in the staff memo which states "...the 2 classroom buildings shall have start and stop times staggered by 30 minutes..." Mr. Turchetti requested that the time frame be removed or decreased. Currently, drop-off lines clear out in 10 minutes. He feels 30 minutes is a bit excessive.

Butterfield asked how many vehicles can be lined up, end to end, in their driveway. Mr. Turchetti stated he has not done those measurements but current traffic lines up from the current school to the barn.

Leisman asked if they host events in which all students with their families are in attendance and inquired about parking in those situations. Mr. Turchetti stated yes, they occasionally have events where all 36 students and their families are in attendance. They typically have the parents park on the side of their long driveway and the overflow parks on the grassy area in front of the buildings.

Public Hearing was opened at 7:55 p.m. There were no comments.

Bajdek summarized his staff memo, stating Preschools fall within the Zoning Ordinance definition of “daycare centers,” and are licensed by the State of Michigan as daycare centers. The I Industrial zoning district permits daycare centers with approval of a special use permit by the Planning Commission. This property is located in the Industrial zoning district.

The Planning Commission initially granted Special Use Permit approval for the existing Canterbury Creek Farm Preschool operation on January 19, 2012, subject to seven (7) conditions of approval, which included a condition that stated: “The maximum permitted licensed capacity of the facility shall be limited to 48 students.”

Bajdek stated the ‘new’ school building will operate very similar to and during the same hours as the existing school; however, program start and stop times of the two buildings will be staggered to avoid onsite traffic congestion, as well as to minimize the traffic impact on the surrounding area.

Buildings on the site were designed with a rural/agricultural style to compliment the rural character of the surrounding area; no exterior modifications to the building are planned.

Bajdek stated a one-way access drive through the site exists. The entry drive is located at the top of the rise on Grand River Drive, which provides adequate sight distance in both directions. The exit drive is located at the east end of the property, also providing adequate sight distance. Drop-off and bypass lanes are provided in front of the existing classroom building. Seven existing head-in parking spaces for employee use are located in close proximity to the existing classroom building. The paved surface area of the site is currently limited to the portion of the drive primarily south/southwest of the classroom building and the existing parking spaces.

The proposed project includes the widening and paving of the existing drive eastward from where the pavement currently ceases to its exit at Grand River Drive to allow for the extension of drop-off and bypass lanes. Five additional paved head-in parking spaces are planned south of the ‘new’ classroom building. A total of 12 parking spaces is sufficient for the everyday needs of the site.

Bajdek confirmed that the Kent County Health Department granted approval for the onsite waste disposal system.

Bajdek stated there are four standards for approval for a Special Use related to daycare centers which were outlined in the staff memo:

- a. Adequate fencing exists for the safety of the children in care.
- b. Identifying signs on the property comply with regulations of article XXVI of this chapter.
- c. Off-street parking for all employees of the facility and off-street pickup and drop off areas shall be provided.
- d. All state requirements governing the licensing of the facility are met.

Bajdek stated there also 4 general standards which must be satisfied for a Special Use Permit as outlined in the staff memo:

- (1) The special use shall be designed, constructed, operated and maintained in a manner harmonious with the character of adjacent property and the surrounding area.
- (2) The special use shall not change the essential character of the surrounding area.
- (3) The special use shall not be hazardous to adjacent property or involve uses, activities, materials or equipment which will be detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of persons or property through the excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes or glare.
- (4) The special use shall not place demands on public services and facilities in excess of capacity.

Bajdek stated that at the time of the initial special use permit approval for Canterbury Creek Farm Preschool, two key factors in evaluating compliance of the proposed use with the above standards were its relatively small size, and the rural/agrarian character of the buildings, which are still relevant with the current request.

The size and student capacity have an important bearing on compatibility with the rural character of the area, as well as the impact on traffic volumes on the public roads in the area. It is appropriate for a limit on the maximum capacity to continue to be imposed as a condition of approval. The site plan indicates the proposed 'new' classroom facility is designed for a maximum student capacity of 36. It is recommended that a limit of 84 students (*36 for the new classroom building and 48 for the existing classroom building*) be included as a condition of approval.

Bajdek stated that approval of the special use permit is recommended, based on a determination that the standards referenced earlier are met, and subject to the following conditions:

1. The maximum permitted licensed capacity of the facility shall be limited to 84 students.
2. The two (2) preschool classroom buildings shall have start and stop times staggered by 30 minutes to avoid onsite traffic congestion, as well as to minimize the traffic impact on the surrounding area.

The Commissioners discussed the 30 minutes for staggering and concluded a specific time was not necessary; the applicants can decide a staggering time between classes that work best for them.

It was moved by Easter, supported by Burton to approve the Special Use Permit and Site Plan, based on a determination that the standards referenced earlier are met, and subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The maximum permitted licensed capacity of the facility shall be limited to 84 students.**
- 2. The (2) preschool classroom buildings shall have start and stop times staggered to avoid onsite & offsite traffic congestion, as well as to minimize the traffic impact on the surrounding area.**

Motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER/STAFF REPORTS

1. Review and Approval of Planning Commission meeting calendar for FY 2020/21

It was moved by Easter, supported by Heglund, to approve the Planning Commission meeting calendar for FY 2020/21 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Ferro reminded the Commissioners of optional training sessions, hosted by the Michigan Association of Planning, in March.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ken Kandow, 624 Spaulding Ave. SE, requested a status update for the ordinance amendment he requested in September, 2019. He would like the keeping of chickens to be permitted in residential districts. Bajdek stated he has collected information from other municipalities but nothing has been drafted at this time.

The Planning Commissioners discussed options.

It was moved by Carter, supported by Easter, to have the Planning department draft an ordinance amendment for the keeping of chickens in residentially zoned districts and set a public hearing for February 20, 2020.

Motion passed unanimously.

Delvin Ratzsch, 7653 Fase St. SE, thanked the Planning Commissioners for their decision tonight and inquired if there will be another Public Hearing if Mr. Hoyt returns with a new proposal. Ferro stated that there will not be a Public Hearing if Mr. Hoyt develops it under current R-3 zoning as 8 single-family lots. If Mr. Hoyt submits a PUD application, it will require a Public Hearing. Mr. Ratzsch asked if their decision to deny the rezoning is final or was it a recommendation. Leisman stated it was a recommendation to the Township Board.

Betsy Ratzsch, 7653 Fase St. SE, thanked the Planning Commission for their decision tonight. Mrs. Ratzsch expressed gratitude for the special community on Fase St. but stated she is concerned by Mr. Hoyt's use of the term "by-right" and the possibility of large houses being built.

Carter suggested rezoning the property at the end of Fase St. to R-3 with a PUD overlay. Ferro stated he is first interested in knowing Mr. Hoyt's intentions following tonight's meeting; he may withdraw his application for rezoning.

X. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Ada Township Clerk

rs:aw