

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 21, 2021 MEETING**

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, January 21, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., via video/audio-conferencing, in conformance with Public Act 228 of 2020 concerning temporary authorization of remote participation in public meetings.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Burton, Butterfield, Carter, Heglund, Jacobs, Korth
Absent: 1, Easter
Staff Present: Bajdek, Buckley, Ferro, Moran, Suchy
Others Present: 15

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Heglund, supported by Carter, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ferro stated the Planning Commission By-Laws call for an election of Officers in October, however, there was no meeting held in October and there were only 6 members present in the November meeting so an election of Officers did not take place.

Moved by Heglund, supported by Carter, to elect Tom Korth as Chairman, elect Angela Butterfield as Vice-Chair and Sara Easter as Secretary. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE DECEMBER 17, 2020 MEETING

Moved by Carter, supported by Burton, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed by roll call vote 6-0, with 1 absent.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Request for Special Use Permit to Allow an Accessory Building of 7,758 Square Feet, with a 16 foot sidewall height, in Excess of the Maximum 4,000 Square Feet area and 14 foot sidewall height permitted by right, per Sec. 78-20(a)(5) and (6) of the Zoning Regulations, 1349 Sargent Avenue SE, Parcel No. 41-19-01-100-036, for Brandon Bissell

Applicant, Brandon Bissell, presented his request for Special Use Permit. Mr. Bissell stated there is an existing barn, 30' x 40', on the property and he is looking to expand the capacity of space for additional storage for equipment, animal feed, and miscellaneous items. Mr. Bissell explained the design of the proposed building and said it would be aesthetically pleasing and will not cause a detriment to anyone's view or enjoyment of the area, therefore, it meets the 4 characteristics that the zoning ordinance requires.

Bajdek summarized the request as provided in the staff memo. He stated the 10.1-acre site is zoned RP-1 Rural Preservation 1 and is located northwest of the E. Fulton Street and Sargent Avenue intersection. Access to the property is from a private road from Sargent Avenue. The proposed building is 7,758 sq. ft. with 16-foot sidewalls and is intended to be connected as an addition to an existing 1,200 sq. ft. building. A single-family dwelling, a farm building, as well as several small 3-walled farm shelters exist on the property, in addition to the 1,200 sq. ft. building.

Bajdek stated the accessory building is intended to be used for personal vehicle and yard/property maintenance equipment storage, as well as general storage for miscellaneous personal items. The building

has been designed to include some 'farm building' type architectural features that will complement the existing site improvements, as well as being compatible with the character of the surrounding area.

Bajdek stated zoning regulations limit the total combined ground level floor area of all detached accessory buildings to 4,000 sq. ft. with a maximum sidewall height of 14 feet for properties 3 acres or greater in all residential and rural districts. The total square footage of all accessory buildings on the property is proposed to be 8,958 sq. ft.

Bajdek stated the Planning Commission may authorize an increase in building floor areas and heights for accessory buildings greater than what is permitted by right, with approval of a special use permit, if the Commission determines that the size, height, placement, design, and appearance of the accessory building will be compatible with the character of the surrounding area.

Bajdek said there are other large buildings in the immediate/surrounding area, one of which received a special use permit approval in 2018 for building height; that property is located to the south of the subject property. It appears that the essential character of the area will not be altered with the approval of a special use permit, however, the building footprint will be more expansive than the other similar type buildings.

Bajdek concluded there are no characteristics of the proposed use that would conflict with the general special use permit standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

Before opening the public hearing, Jacobs pointed out that Warner, Norcross & Judd (the firm she works for) has represented Mr. Bissell in different matters and that Jacobs herself has not represented him personally and wanted the Board to know that. Butterfield asked the other Commissioners if they take cause with Jacobs statement; there were no objections and Butterfield thanked Jacobs for her disclosure.

The public hearing opened at 7:18 p.m. There was no public comment and the public hearing was closed.

Bajdek summarized staff recommendations and said if the Planning Commission determines that the size, height, placement, design, and appearance of the accessory building will be compatible with the character of the surrounding area, approval is recommended subject to the following conditions:

1. The use of the entire 8,958 sq. ft. of accessory building area on the property shall be restricted to private residential storage and recreational use; no commercial storage or activities shall be permitted within the accessory building.
2. Any exterior lighting on the building be of a non-glaring style, subject to approval by the Planning Department.

Ferro presented an aerial photo of the property for all to see. There was Board discussion regarding the appearance and size of the proposed building. Carter shared his hesitation that he was not familiar with the surrounding area. Korth said the dimensions/size of the building seemed overwhelming and questioned if there could be a land split in the future. Heglund explained he has seen the area where the building would take place and said it is a beautiful farm and the new building would be compatible with the surrounding area.

Referring to the aerial photo, Mr. Bissell described details of the property. He pointed out the existing building and a riding ring. Mr. Bissell stated the riding ring is 25% larger than what the barn (proposed building) is going to be and the barn will not expand past what the horse barn is and will tuck within the horse barn and within the driveway setting; to give some perspective on the size, it falls within a smaller footprint than what the riding arena is.

There was Board discussion on similar permit approvals over the past several years and the need to review the ordinance guidelines for future requests.

Moved by Burton, supported by Heglund, to approve the Special Use Permit request subject to the following conditions:

1. The use of the entire 8,958 sq. ft. of accessory building area shall be restricted to private residential storage and recreational use; no commercial storage or activities shall be permitted within the accessory building.
2. Any exterior lighting on the building be of a non-glaring style, subject to approval by the Planning Department.

Roll Call:

Yes: Burton, Butterfield, Heglund, Jacobs

No: Carter, Korth

Absent: Easter

Motion passed by roll call vote 4-2, with 1 absent.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Preliminary PUD Plan, 16 Single-Family Homes on 4 acres in the Medium Density Single-Family (R3) Zoning District, 7699 Fase Street, Parcel No. 41-15-34-402-008, Fase Street Development, Chuck Hoyt, on behalf of TPR 7699 Fase Street LLC

Applicant, Chuck Hoyt, presented his request and a screen share view of the proposed site. Mr. Hoyt stated we are seeking a PUD Approval for the property on Fase for the reason that the current zoning requires a development that is not compatible with the rest of the character on Fast Street. Mr. Hoyt stated he previously applied for a zone change to the VR district but was denied. He said the intent for that zone change was to change the underlying zoning to match the zoning of the balance of Fase Street, VR.

Mr. Hoyt stated the intent of Thornapple Pines Development is to create modestly scaled, quality constructed, home site with appropriate density at the end of the distinctive and special neighborhood that is Fase Street. Mr. Hoyt said the need for housing continues to increase and the Planning Commission should encourage these types of dense developments. Mr. Hoyt showed screen shares of additional photos as character examples of both an R3 zoned home and a VR zoned home and went over details of the proposed homes.

Rich Pulaski, Civil Engineer at Nederveld, went over details regarding stormwater management, the materials used and how the system will work.

Mr. Hoyt went over the traffic analysis included in the packet.

In conclusion, Mr. Hoyt stated he would like to address the concerns noted in the Planning staff report specifically the undesirable visual relationship with the nearby home in Ada Moorings. He said in consideration for the neighbor's property they adjusted their site plan to include a greenspace at the far east end in order to alleviate the negative impact. He continued going over aerial photos and his explanation of

the greenspace plan.

Bajdek presented his summary as provided in the staff memo. Bajdek shared a brief history that the property was the former Kent County Road Commission garage site. There was a rezoning request from R3 to VR in early 2020 and the Planning Commission recommended denial of the rezoning following a public hearing. Since that time, the applicant decided to pursue a PUD rezoning for the property and a PUD Pre-Application Conference was held in May, 2020.

Bajdek stated the residential PUD development is planned to consist of 16 single-family residential homesites. The applicant is proposing to develop the property closely in-line with the VR Village Residential district regulations which would be consistent and compatible with the VR zoning along Fase Street. The VR district permits lots having a minimum lot area of 7,000 sq. ft. and a minimum lot width of 50 feet. The proposed plan deviates from the conventional R3 district standards, as depicted and noted on the attached plan. Lot sizes arrange from around 7,500 sq. ft. to 10,000 sq. ft., with most of the lots having a width of slightly over 54 feet.

Bajdek went over details of the overall design and site layout as outlined in the staff memo.

Bajdek stated the site is separated somewhat from the adjacent development to the north by evergreen trees in the Ada Moorings development along Ada Moorings Drive, and by a playground between Moorings Drive and the property boundary. To the east there is an adjoining single-family home on a triangular-shaped lot with the home located about 40 feet from the shared lot line. Homes located further east are progressively a greater distance from the site.

Bajdek said it was pointed out in the Pre-Application Conference there was a concern due to an undesirable distance between the home on Lot 9 and the adjacent home to the east. It was suggested at that time 1 of 4 recommended changes as included in the staff memo. Even though a greenspace was added, it doesn't appear the other changes were addressed.

Bajdek continued to go over details on the density, traffic assessment, public utilities, stormwater management, site lighting and landscaping, as outlined in the staff memo.

Bajdek concluded a PUD rezoning provides the Township with discretion in ensuring appropriate buffers and design treatment along the shared boundary with Ada Moorings, and in ensuring the development design on the site is consistent and compatible with the character and density of the Fast Street neighborhood. The proposed PUD development would be consistent with the Master Plan policy encouraging "compact residential development in and near the Ada Village neighborhood."

Bajdek reminded Commissioners this was not a public hearing and a public hearing is required. Bajdek stated it is requested a public hearing be scheduled for the February 18, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, subject to the submittal of a revised Preliminary PUD Plan that addresses the undesirable visual and spatial relationship between a potential home on Lot/Unit 9 at the corner of the site and the adjacent home to the east in the Ada Moorings development through 1 or more of the following measures:

- Defining a more restricted allowable building envelope for the home on the subject lot/unit by:
 - Increasing the minimum front yard setback.
 - Increasing the minimum side yard setback from 7 feet to 10 feet (to match the R3 side yard setback requirement).
- Enlarging the greenspace south of the subject/lot unit.

Commissioners set forth their comments.

Butterfield shared a concern about car headlights from the proposed Lot 9 shining into the house adjacent

and suggested the addition of some evergreen trees for more privacy.

Jacobs asked if it was proposed for the current fencing to come down. Mr. Hoyt said no, not necessarily, but there were certain areas of fence that could be repaired and he is not opposed to other options.

Jacobs asked with the PUD does the Township have guidance it provides regarding buffers to delineate between the 2 neighborhoods. Bajdek stated a landscape plan has not been provided yet and is not required at this time.

There was Board discussion regarding landscape possibilities and when landscape plans will be required/provided; the greenspace and its function and other possibilities within the greenspace; and access/easement to and from the 2 neighborhoods (Fase St. and Ada Moorings).

Korth suggested the possibility of placing a pedestrian easement and path between homes on the north side of the street, to provide access to the Ada Moorings playground, if an agreement for access could be reached with Ada Moorings.

Mr. Hoyt addressed some of the comments from the Board discussion and communicated details on the grading of the greenspace and Rick Pulaski went over additional details of the stormwater drainage. Hoyt added that the greenspace to the east allows the opportunity for social/gathering space, benches and some playground equipment.

Carter said he liked the 4 units per acre, good density, and liked the traffic analysis and that will be important information for the public hearing.

Heglund agreed with other Commissioners and said he loved the density of it and definitely could use more properties in the downtown area. Heglund stated a PUD was the best way to work with the neighbors, work with the Planning Commission and work with the developers, and is happy to see that is the direction the plan is going. Burton also agreed and stated everything has been said and she likes it a lot.

Ferro referred to the screen share aerial view sketch and said his main concern was the visual relationship between the rear of the triangular lot home and the home on the proposed Lot 9. Ferro stated a good solution is to expand the open space and shift the building back so it is more in line with the building envelope further to the west.

In conclusion, Mr. Hoyt said they will consider all the comments from the Commission and from the Planning Director and take them seriously.

Moved by Carter, supported by Burton, to schedule a Public Hearing on February 18, 2021.
Motion passed by roll call vote 6-0, with 1 absent.

IX. APPROVAL OF MEETING DATES FOR FY2021-2022

Moved by Heglund, supported by Carter, to approved the schedule for meeting dates in 2021-2022 as presented.

X. COMMISSION MEMBER / STAFF REPORTS - none

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Del Ratzsch, 7635 Fase Street, shared concern with public comment about 2 things:

- 1.) Request the Township make a stronger effort to inform people on Fase Street when things like this come up. He said it looks like the Township has had the documents for the Fase Street project since December, but none of us found out about it until just a few hours ago.
- 2.) Concern with the traffic analysis on the project. Mr. Ratzsch gave an example of the numbers the builder gave for the number of trips under current zoning and Proposed PUD zoning and he said there is apparently a range depending on the demographics and a variety of other conditions and thinks the builder should look into what a plausible number would be, rather than simply take the lowest possible number under special conditions as definitive in this case.

There was no other public comment and the public comment was closed.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Carter, supported by Heglund, to adjourn meeting at 8:48 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Ada Township Clerk

rs:eb