



ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF THE MEETING APRIL 17, 2025, REGULAR MEETING

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., at the Ada Township Hall, 7330 Thornapple River Drive, Ada, Michigan.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair VanderVennen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Butterfield, Carter, Cooper-Surma, Ellixson-Andrews, Moyer, VanderVennen

Members Absent: Kluting

Staff Present: Bajdek, Buckley, Said

Others Present: 4 members of the public

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Carter, supported by Moyer, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 20, 2025, REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Moyer, supported by Carter, to approve the March 20, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

1. PVM District Development Plan Amendments with Departures; R-3 zoning district; Fase Street, Oxbow Lane, Riverlet Drive, Watermill Drive, and Watermill Circle (multiple parcels generally located at the northwest corner of Fase Street and Thornapple River Drive); Property Owner Brad Rottschafer/Oxbow Ada, LLC; (multiple parcel numbers)

Brad Rottschafer presented his request for different setbacks and lot coverage amendments for parcels in the Oxbow development. He explained reasons/details on revisions requested: increase lot area of lots 43 & 44 and provide a 10' rear setback, river lots 55-66 have no required rear yard setback, lots 55 & 56 no required side yard setback, lot 55 two 5' front yard setbacks, lot 56 only a 5' setback on the west side adjacent lot 57, and lots 55 & 56 shall be allowed a lot coverage of 80% which is more consistent with lots 45-54 & 57-66.

Planning Director Said summarized the staff report and explained that the applicant has indicated that as design refinements have been made to the project, there have been needs to make adjustments to the proposed lots and dimensions. He referred to the staff report for details on the requested departures and the previous departures already approved. He made note of lots 43 &

44 getting larger and remarked favorably on the size of the common open space/park. Said briefed on the Zoning Ordinance requirements and the process for modifications to an approved PVM Development Plan and made note that as the Oxbow project evolves, it is certainly possible for additional amendment requests to be necessary.

Said stated that Staff has no objections to the approval of these requests based on the applicable standards, including the unique circumstances associated with this project, and the adjacent open spaces associated with the proposed reduced setbacks. He said that the conditions of approval are noted in the staff report, and noted an added condition would be that a new site plan be submitted reflecting the lot numbers as well as condominium unit numbers.

VanderVennen opened the public hearing at 5:44 p.m.

Mel Cooke, 7556 & 7560 Fase Street, said he was unclear as to what types of changes are proposed specifically to the original lots on Fase Street (7563 & 7567) that are located across the street from him. Chair VanderVennen clarified that those lots are being shifted back 10 feet further from Fase Street.

There was no other public comment and the public hearing was closed at 5:50 p.m.

VanderVennen moved to Board discussion. Cooper-Surma and Ellixson-Andrews asked questions about the proposed retaining walls. Rottschäfer pointed out the two retaining walls and explained the locations and sloping/excavations involved. Moyer questioned the fire equipment access at the east end of Watermill Drive. Rottschäfer explained the fire accessibility as per discussion with Fire Chief Murray. There was additional Commissioner discussion regarding the departures requested and noting some conditions of approval.

Moved by Cooper-Surma, supported by Ellixson-Andrews, to approve the PVM amendments, along with the departures identified in the staff report (noted below), subject to the following conditions:

1. The Planning Commission hereby makes the following findings of fact:
 - a. The proposed development plans for Lots 43, 44, and 55 through 66, as modified by the conditions of approval listed below, requires the additional departures from the standards of the PVM District, including lot coverage for Lots 43, 44, 55, and 56; front yard setback for Lot 55; side yard setbacks for Lots 55 and 56; and rear yard setbacks for Lots 55 – 66, as noted in the Staff Report, which are all hereby approved.
 - b. The approved departures result in a plan that complies with the spirit and intent of the PVM District to a greater degree than would be possible without approval of the departures.
 - c. The project is consistent with the purpose and intent of the PVM District.
 - d. The project will not have a detrimental impact on adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood.
 - e. The project is necessary and appropriate to accommodate a superior design of the proposed development.

2. The proposed departures for these lots are hereby approved, and shall be completed substantially as identified within the following documents:
 - a. Site Plan Amendment Summary, dated March 12, 2025, prepared by Nederveld.
 - b. Oxbow Site Layout Plan (C-206), dated March 12, 2025 (most recent revision), prepared by Jack Barr/Nederveld.
 - c. Exhibit B Condo Plan (Coordinate Table); no date nor preparer identified.
3. A new site plan be provided to reflect both lot numbers and condominium numbers.

Motion carried.

2. Request for Amendments to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for a commercial warehouse/storage facility, in the I-Industrial zoning district, The Caves LLC, Tom Reed, 4900 and 4920 Fulton Street East, Parcel Nos. 41-15-30-300-019 and 41-15-30-300-020

Tom Reed presented his request for amendments to the PUD. He shared a brief overview of The Caves project and said it was a storage/small business facility with 23 units now hoping to expand to 31 units. He noted that they recently acquired the Anderson building thus needing to make some changes to their original plans.

Mr. Reed explained reasons/details on the revisions requested: front yard setback changes to building 24 & 25, side yard setbacks for building 24 & 12, rear yard setback for building 12, blending/unify the Anderson building (zoned Industrial) with the Caves PUD zoning, added proposed uses and some exclusions/limitations, and identified the location of the outside trailer parking.

Planning Director Said summarized the staff report and stated the request is for an amendment to the existing PUD, which does incorporate the Anderson site, includes additional buildings, revisions to previously approved, and related site changes. He briefly explained the process to unify the Anderson building into the PUD zoning. Said stated, as Mr. Reed mentioned, the proposal does not meet zoning ordinance requirements for a few setback areas, however, Staff does not have any objections to those.

Said referred to the staff report/staff commentary section identifying a few items for review by the Planning Commission: confirm whether the outdoor trailer parking area should be paved, whether additional landscaping be provided along east property line, and review the layout and landscaping along front edge of the site.

Said noted that Staff has no objections to the approval of this request based on the applicable standards. Staff recommends that if the Planning Commission moves to recommend approval of this PUD, it be based on findings of fact that the request is consistent with the applicable PUD Standards, and based on the conditions of approval identified in the staff report.

There was extended Commissioner discussion regarding the conditions noted about the details on uses permitted (staff report page 5, section 2.), 'uses permitted in the PUD shall be limited to uses permitted by right in the Industrial (I) district with additional restrictions/limitations' -- the Commissioners shared concerns with what enforcement mechanism being used to maintain the restrictions/limitation (trailer

storage, manufacturing/fabrication, automotive restrictions). Planner/Zoning Administrator Bajdek recapped the Zoning Ordinance regulations for the Industrial (I) district regarding permitted uses.

Ellixson-Andrews shared concern about whether the Township is empowered to enforce the ordinance regulations in the event that a tenant at the Caves is in violation of the restrictions. Said confirmed the process of the administrative steps the Township would take if a violation takes place.

There was additional Commissioner discussion/comments about combining the two lots into PUD zoning, location of the trailer parking area and the lot sizes, attractive landscape be preserved along the Fulton Street corridor, zoning requirements for Light Industrial (LI) vs. Industrial (I), and they concurred with the idea of paving the trailer parking area.

Ellixson-Andrews shared thoughts and said he felt the request is an extreme departure from its original intent. Butterfield shared a few concerns about adding the Anderson building into the PUD, noted that the landscaping along the Fulton corridor is very important, and pointed out that there is no signage for the Caves/Anderson building. Carter said he had no problem with the request and that he thinks Ada should have other options available for other types of businesses. Moyer questioned conditions noted in the staff report about the combination of the two lots and the water/sewer hookup with 155 Spaulding. Director Said informed that the lot combination would need to be submitted and approved before issuance of any permits, and confirmed that if water/sewer is provided to 155 Spaulding, the applicant would be required to connect the subject site to the services. Applicant Reed explained the current water/sewer agreement in place between himself and the adjacent property owners.

VanderVennen opened the public hearing at 6:41 p.m. There was no public comment and the public hearing was closed.

Moved by Carter, supported by Moyer, to recommend to the Township Board, approval of the PUD amendments requested, based on findings of fact that the request is consistent with the applicable PUD standards, subject to the following conditions:

1. The approved PUD Plan shall be carried out in substantial conformance with the plans prepared by Callen Engineering, Inc., as follows:
 - Existing Conditions Plan; Site Plan; Grading, Drainage, and SESC Plan, all dated 03-13-25, by Bruce A. Callen/Callen Engineering, Inc.
 - Cross Sections, Notes, and Details Plan; dated 03-13-25, by Bruce A. Callen/Callen Engineering, Inc.
 - Landscape Plan, dated 3-13-25, by Bruce A. Callen/Callen Engineering, Inc. to be revised and approved by Staff prior to Township Board consideration.
2. That the uses permitted in the PUD shall be limited to uses permitted by right in the Industrial (I) district, with the following additional restrictions/limitations:
 - Light assembly, Light or small-scale fabrication with on-site staff/worker presence of no more than 3 people per unit. Light fabrication to be assembly/conversion/manufacture of already processed raw materials into products, where the operation aspects of these processes and the materials to be used will not cause impacts on surrounding areas or the community overall. Examples include, but not be limited to artisan/craft products, clothing and fabrics, furniture and fixtures, cabinetry, media production, printing/publishing and the like. This limitation shall not apply to the building at 4900 Fulton.

- Contractor offices/workshops, with on-site staff/worker presence of no more than 3 people per unit. This limitation shall not apply to the building at 4900 Fulton.
- Indoor storage and self-storage.
- Outdoor trailer storage in designated areas only as shown on approved site plan.
- Research and testing.
- Wholesale/Distribution type business with no retail

The following uses are specifically prohibited in this PUD:

- Production, sales, storage, or distribution of any food or beverage products.
- Engine/automotive/vehicular service, repair, of any kind.
- Manufacturing or anything beyond light or small-scale Fabrication, of any kind.
- Uses that require water usage as part of assembly activities.
- On-site retail sales of any kind.
- Outdoor storage of any materials, etc.
- Vehicle fleet storage, maintenance and fueling facilities.
- Churches.
- Day care centers.
- Public and private use heliports.
- Antenna towers and masts for cellular phone and other personal communications services.

The Township, through its Zoning Administrator, reserves the right to review and any proposed uses not specifically identified in the I District or in the categories noted herein, and either approve or deny such uses based on consistency with the PUD. The applicant, and/or the Zoning Administrator, may refer such proposals to the Planning Commission to approve or deny the request based on consistency with the PUD.

3. Prior to the issuance of any permit, the applicant shall obtain a stormwater permit from the Township, and shall obtain Township Engineer approval of the proposed stormwater plan.

4. Permits for on-site potable well and on-site waste disposal system shall be issued by the Kent County Health Department, prior to issuance of any building permits.
5. Building wall-mounted exterior lighting shall be limited to one fixture per unit service entry door, plus one additional fixture per building at a location determined by the applicant, with the exception that no fixtures shall be installed along the east wall of buildings along the east edge of the property. All fixtures, whether wall-mounted on buildings or freestanding, shall be full horizontal cutoff fixtures mounted in a vertical downward position. No light shall spill over onto adjacent properties.
6. Prior to the issuance of any permits, the applicant shall complete a lot combination request to merge 4900 and 4920 Fulton.
7. At such time that municipal water and sewer service is provided to the adjacent property to the east (155 Spaulding), the applicant shall be required to connect the subject site to these services within one year.
8. Final PUD plans shall include all submittals as specified in the Zoning Ordinance, including but not limited to:
 - Proposed site elevations.
 - Details for foundation walls for Buildings 24 and 25, and any retaining walls adjacent to these buildings.
 - Site Plan revision to indicate hard paving for all parking and trailer storage areas.
 - Proposed landscaping including species, sizes, and quantities of all plant materials to be installed, and irrigation system coverage.
 - Location, height and style of all proposed exterior lighting.
 - Elevation drawings including façade materials.
 - Stormwater drainage plan.
9. No signs are approved as part of this request.

Motion carried.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - none

VII. NEW BUSINESS - none

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER / STAFF REPORTS

Carter left the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Said informed that there are no new applicants or new projects to review at the May 15 meeting, however, he would like to update the Commissioners on the zoning ordinance rewrite process and review of the draft RFP for consultant hire. Moyer informed that he is unable to attend the May 15th meeting.

Said also noted that he has been thinking about doing a survey of the Planning Commission members about meetings, planning commission reports, and comments. He said he will keep them updated on this thought.

Said asked for any comments from the members that attended the workshop in March. VanderVennen and Cooper-Surma have the virtual copy to review but have not done so to report on yet.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

X. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ellixson-Andrews, supported by Moyer, to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo DeMarco, Ada Township Clerk

rs:eb