

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2019 MEETING**

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, September 19, 2019, 7:00 p.m. at the Ada Township Offices, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, MI.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Butterfield, Carter, Heglund, Jacobs, Leisman
Absent: Burton, Easter
Staff Present: Ferro, Winczewski
Public Present: 10 Members

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Jacobs, supported by Carter, to approve the agenda as written. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE AUGUST 15, 2019 MEETING

Moved by Heglund, supported by Butterfield, to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2019 meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Informal Pre-Application Conference, 96 Multifamily Residential Units on 9.64 Acre Site, 7590 East Fulton St., Parcel No. 4115-34-127-003, Orion Real Estate Solutions

Planning Director, Ferro, provided copies of selected pages from the Ada Township Master Plan, highlighting the desired concepts for Residential Land Use, stating that the land use category is intended to support the full range of residential building types, including rowhouses, upper and lower level apartments and attached multi-family apartment homes, duplexes and detached single family “village houses”. The 2016 Master Plan amendment encourages the development of major remaining vacant commercially-zoned lands in the Village to incorporate a mix of commercial and residential use, to provide opportunities for new housing within the Village area, to encourage a compact development pattern within the community, and to encourage the maintenance of a Village residential population that supports and sustains Village businesses and services.

John Wheeler, Orion Real Estate Solutions, stated his team went back to the drawing board after their previous Planning Commission meeting. They have modified their plan to now include 4 buildings, 2 of them are 3-stories and 2 of them are 4-stories. They have kept it at less than 10 units per acre. They have added 2 court yards. They had a Parking Study and Market Study conducted and found that there is only a 2.2% vacancy rate in Ada Township. These buildings will be accessible to all age groups and have beautiful views.

Mr. Wheeler showed 2 aerial views with the proposed buildings photoshopped in to provide a sense of what the density would look like. Mr. Wheeler stated they would provide an easement to the Township for the non-motorized bike path. They are asking for feedback tonight on density, layout, and the change to 4 buildings. Architecture has not yet been decided; they will provide architectural concepts at the next meeting.

Chair Leisman asked Ferro for his feedback. Ferro stated the changes from 1 large building to 4 smaller buildings is a significant improvement. The current plan layout has a suburban character. Ferro questioned the need for 2 parking spaces per unit stating that a national parking survey report, also provided in the Commissioner's packets, shows a trend for fewer vehicles per household. The report also suggests designing development in a way that allows future excess parking to be converted to some other use in the future.

Ferro stated that there is a demand for around 500 additional housing units in the Village according to an Ada Township 2015 market study. The study indicated that 125 of those units should be attached housing units and around 30% be rental units.

Ferro stated a former Township resident, Bob Kullgren, wrote a letter of support for this project as he is looking into moving to the Village.

Ferro asked the applicant about bedroom mix. Mike Maier of Orion Real Estate Solutions stated, preliminarily, 25% of the apartments would be 1 bedroom, 20% would be 3 bedrooms, and the remainder would be 2 bedrooms. Mr. Maier also stated that it has been recommended to them to have 2 spaces of parking per unit. Mr. Maier stated that a new apartment complex near the Knapp's Corner Meijer has a parking problem. He understands what Mr. Ferro was stating regarding parking trends, but it is difficult to fix a parking problem. He does not want to increase parking problems next door by underestimating how much parking they need. He does support a change of use for parking if it is later seen as unnecessary.

Jacobs asked Ferro if there was any cost analysis done on the types of residences desired in the 2013 Master Plan Hamlet for the eastern section. Ferro stated there was not. Jacobs stated she has not seen all levels of affordability in any of the new developments. Jacobs appreciates the zero-barrier concept and density but this project doesn't excite her as presented.

Leisman suggested breaking up the 2, 3-story buildings so there is more variety, and to keep more of the density on the water. Mr. Wheeler stated the design will be developed in the architectural phase of the project and they are here now to get feedback on density and layout.

Carter asked the applicant about rental rates. Mr. Wheeler stated it would be \$1,200/month for 1 bedroom, and \$2,200/month for 3 bedrooms. Carter stated he likes the density and rental rates, and feels it's important to have residents living close in order to support the businesses.

Leisman stated density is not the primary issue but what the Commission would like to know is how the apartments will look and feel in the village.

Leisman suggested having 1 or 2 work sessions which would also be open to the public. Mr. Wheeler agreed. Ferro will schedule.

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER/STAFF REPORTS

1. Analysis of Re-Development Potential in the Village Residential (VR) Zoning District

Ferro summarized his analysis as provided in the Commissioner's packets. For the PVM district overall, a change in required lot width from 40 feet to 45 feet reduces potential buildout density by about 11%. Leisman and Heglund stated they like Ferro's analysis and agree with the recommendation.

Carter moved, Heglund supported, to prepare a zoning ordinance amendment changing the minimum lot

width standard from 40 feet to 45 feet for “Village House Lots” in the PVM district as recommended in Ferro’s memo dated September 11, 2019, and to set a public hearing for next month. Motion passed unanimously.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Noelle Divozzo, 7115 Bronson St., thanked Ferro for the density analysis and is pleased with the Commissioner’s decision to increase the minimum lot width in the PVM district. Ms. Divozzo stated she does not feel it is the residents’ responsibility to provide shoppers for the businesses moving into the Township. She also recommends increasing the number of trees between Fulton and the proposed apartments.

Ken Kandow, 624 Spaulding Ave., requested an ordinance amendment to allow the keeping of chickens in residential districts. Mr. Kandow stated the culture is changing and people are living in a more sustainable way. Keeping of chickens for eggs is more common. Mr. Kandow stated he lives on almost half an acre, mostly fenced in, and he would like to keep 4 chickens, no roosters. Ferro stated chickens are currently allowed in the Agricultural and Rural Residential districts. Commission members expressed interest in having staff prepare a draft of proposed regulations for commission review.

X. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Ada Township Clerk