

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2008 MEETING**

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, February 21, 2008, at the Ada Township Offices, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, Michigan.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Korth at 7:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Korth, Commissioners Burton, Butterfield, Gutierrez, Hoeks, Lowry and Sytsma.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Sytsma, second by Hoeks, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES DECEMBER 20, 2007, JANUARY 17, 2008 AND
JANUARY 22, 2008 MEETINGS.**

Motion by Hoeks, second by Sytsma, to approve the December 20, 2007 meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Hoeks, second by Gutierrez, to approve the January 17, 2008 meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Sytsma, second by Burton, to table the January 22, 2008 meeting minutes for further clarification on Commissioner Hoeks' comment on page two: "The economy of our Township should not be the prime consideration". Motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Proposed Amendment to C-1 Zoning District Regulations, to Allow Sale of Motor Scooters of 150 cc Displacement or Less as a Permitted Use in the C-1 District.

Korth recused himself from this agenda item because the amendment addresses the C-1 district in which he is a property owner. Commissioner Gutierrez chaired this agenda item.

Jim Ippel, owner of Ada Bike Shop, stated that they applied for a zoning variance to have the opportunity to sell motorized scooters of 150 cc displacement or less, which the C-1 zoning regulations do not allow. Gutierrez read Ferro's staff memo into the record, noting that Ferro recommends approval.

The public hearing was opened, with the following comment:

Corky Paul, 1268 Pettis, stated that over the last week or so he noticed the new vacancies in the Village. It would be worth the effort of the Township to support retailers in the Village to keep up the activity and life of the Village. He supports the request.

The public hearing was then closed.

Hoeks and Burton stated they are in support of this request. Butterfield also stated she is in favor of the request and asked what safety precautions will be taken when someone purchases a motorized scooter. Ippel responded that they will provide safety preparation, going over operation and laws of the scooters, use of helmet, etc. Lowry and Sytsma also stated they are totally in favor of this request. Gutierrez next read the proposed amendment prepared by Ferro.

Motion by Sytsma, second by Lowry, to approve the proposed Amendment to C-1 Zoning District Regulations, to allow sale of motor scooters of 150 cc displacement or less as a permitted use in the C-1 District. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Request for Amendment to Zoning Regulations, to Add Provisions for Heliports, Paradigm Design.

Korth summarized the past events of this request. There was a public hearing on January 17, 2008 and then a work session meeting to fine-tune the draft amendment. Korth stated they have received several items of correspondence pertaining to this request which all basically suggest that heliports should be allowed as a special use, but the Commission should carefully consider the ordinance language to provide benefit to those who have the type of property that could handle something like this. Korth stated he agrees and spoke about tabling this to have another joint work session with Cascade Township. Sytsma stated this should technically be postponed instead of tabled in order to be able to continue discussions on the request. Lowry stated he agrees – he believes Ada will learn a lot from Cascade since they have had experience with aircraft from the airport. Butterfield stated that on the staff memorandum dated 2/15, there is one typographical error under item 2 where the minimum lot area requirement is reduced from 20 acres to 5 acres.

Motion by Sytsma, second by Burton, to postpone action on Paradigm Design's request for amendment to zoning regulations to add provisions for Heliports, in order to set up a joint meeting with Cascade Township to discuss the matter and continue to review the draft. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Recommendation on Repaving and Lane Re-Configuration of Thornapple River Dr.

Korth stated this was given to the Commission by the Charette Task Force for review and comment to the Board of Trustees. The request is that as Thornapple River Drive winds through the Village it be reconfigured to a three lane configuration. The initial meetings held with the Road Commission were rough because the Road Commission basically wants to leave it as wide as possible to be able to pave and plow. Lowry stated that having the parking lane would be the best thing they could do – there is quite often a lack of parking. This will contribute to business for the store owners. Hoeks asked if the parking would have any restrictions due to some of it being in front of residential homes. Korth stated this would be something to discuss. Hoeks also asked if this will have the same traffic calming effects as a boulevard would. Korth said the Road Commission has taken a negative stance on the idea of a boulevard. Sytsma added the thought of how this might impact property value. Gutierrez also brought up challenging the Road Commission as to why that area of road continues to fall apart. Korth stated he participated in a meeting last year and the Road Commission has been surprised how it has fallen apart and noted it could be due to the base not being compacted correctly. Korth stated because this is a primary road, the Road Commission is responsible, but the Township is willing to contribute half the cost of the work and thus, if the Township is going to be paying for it, they should be able to get what they want. Butterfield stated it should be noted that the primary purpose of the bump-outs and roundabouts is for calming traffic. This should be a priority. Burton stated the other primary reason for this is that the road is so bad.

Public comments were taken as follows:

Jim Ippel, 597 Ada Drive (member of Charette Task Force), spoke about the on street parking calming traffic. He also suggested to color and texture the parking lane. He talked about curb bump-outs with on-street parking.

Corky Paul, 1268 Pettis Ave., spoke about Breton Ave. in East Grand Rapids and the curb bump-outs there. He stated he believes this is a lot safer also. He thought it might be a good idea to get from East Grand Rapids information on how it is to plow those streets with the bump-outs.

Motion by Sytsma, second by Hoeks, to recommend that the re-paving project be pursued, with the following recommendations:

1. The goals of traffic calming and speed reduction should be the primary objective in the design of the project.
2. The re-paving project on Bronson and Thornapple River Dr., from Fulton St. to Buttrick Ave., should be undertaken this year, with cost sharing between the Road Commission and the Township.
3. The scope of the project should include correction of the cause of the pavement deterioration.
4. Inclusion of on-street parking on the south (west) side of the street, either parallel or angled.
5. Coordination with the Postal Service to accommodate mail delivery on the street.
6. Color treatment of the parking lane and Thornapple River Dr./Ada Dr. intersection, either in the asphalt mix or surface-applied.
7. Inclusion of a striped crosswalk across Thornapple River Dr. between Fase St. and Leonard Field Park.
8. Reduction of the cross-slope (superelevation) of the road on the curve around the softball field, to "calm" traffic speeds.
9. Accommodating in the engineering of the project the future implementation of curb-bumpouts and roundabout, as called for in the Charrette initiatives.

Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS/STAFF

1. Correspondence from Fusion Properties Regarding Industrial District Use Regulations.

Correspondence from Doug Gulker of Fusion Properties regarding review and modification of the use regulations for the Industrial district along the south side of Fulton St. was reviewed. Gulker was not present. Korth cited the Master Plan recommendation which calls for modifying the zoning rules for this area so that the rules provide a more cohesive and usable framework given the peculiar lot sizes found in this district. Lowry asked how this would benefit Fusion Properties. Korth responded he probably recognizes there are businesses that want to be in that area. Many variances have been approved in this area because of the peculiarity of the lots. Hoeks believes the Township should first wait to see if funding is approved for this review before moving forward. Sytsma stated she agrees this should be postponed. Korth stated that once there is a sense of what the funding is, a good approach would be to sit down with an entire laundry list and see what can be accomplished with the set budget.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Doug Landman, stated he is disappointed in the decision made tonight on the heliport agenda item. The Planning or Zoning Commission had an opportunity to proactively take steps to preserve rural areas in Ada.

Korth responded that the only thing decided tonight was the desire to allow special use permits to be a deciding factor on a case-by-case basis. Hoeks added that having a joint approach with Cascade is very beneficial.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Hoeks, second by Gutierrez, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC
Ada Township Clerk
rs:lm