

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MARCH 18, 2010 MEETING**

Draft

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, March 18, 2010, at 7:30 p.m. at the Ada Township Offices, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, Michigan.

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Korth, Commissioners Butterfield, Easter, Gutierrez, Lowry, Paul and Treasurer Rhoades. Also present: Planning Director Ferro.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Butterfield, second by Easter, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 18, 2010 MEETING

Motion by Lowry, second by Rhoades, to approve the February 18, 2010 meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS - None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Site Plan Review, 473 Square Foot Addition to Existing Building, 7267 Thornapple River Dr., Parcel No. 41-15-34-101-010, Dixon Architecture, for Conservation Properties, LLC

Korth recused himself from this agenda item because he is the owner of Conservation Properties. Vice Chair Gutierrez took over the meeting for this item. Ken Dixon of Dixon Architecture presented the site plan on behalf of Conservation Properties. He stated that they are looking at two additions to an existing building at 7267 Thornapple River Drive. Dixon referenced information contained in the application materials regarding the proposed project. Dixon went over some of the details of the plan, noting that the larger addition is towards Blimpies/Dominos Pizza. The total square footage proposed is 473 square feet. He believes with this plan they are improving the pedestrian environment by limiting the asphalt on the site and replacing it with pedestrian-type paving materials. They also will be adding some landscaping along with maintaining most of the existing landscaping. Regarding parking, they will utilize the existing adjacent public parking which is under an agreement between the Township and the church. The exterior lighting that exists on the building is lantern-type low wattage mounted on the door and they will keep with the same lighting style. As far as storm water management, they are converting 8% of the site back to lawn and this will deal with a lot of the storm water runoff. They also will create a small storm water depression area in the rear yard just to ensure there are no problems. The fire hydrant that is located toward the front of the building is going to be moved 15 feet to the west. Dixon also noted that the signage falls within the Ada Township guidelines.

Ferro then stated that in the C-1 zoning district there are zero setback requirements on side lot lines, so the proposed additions conform to that requirement. This property has PUD zoning and there is language that states that small building additions are exempt from having to submit through the PUD process – this is only subject to site plan review for a permitted use. Thus, no public hearing is required.

Ferro stated that one issue that bears some discussion is parking. There are off-street parking

requirements in the zoning ordinance. There is language in the parking rules that gives the Planning Commission discretion on how much parking to require. One goal in the Village is that there should be more emphasis on use of shared parking arrangements, rather than relying on individual, fragmented parking areas on individual sites, which are not efficiently used.. In this case, the site plan does not propose to add any parking, and it eliminates some existing parking on the site.

Ferro stated that one thing that should be considered is what happens if the Township and the church do not renew their parking agreement after its 3-year term. The applicant has been discussing with the church having his own agreement with them to allow for his use of the church parking lot, in the event that the Township agreement expires.

With regard to relocation of the fire hydrant, Ferro stated that he wished to correct a statement contained in his memo – the Fire Chief did not request that the hydrant be moved; he did request that the parking space in front of the fire hydrant be removed, so that a parked vehicle does not block access to the hydrant. The township supervisor is getting a price quote on the cost to re-locate the fire hydrant as an alternative, so that there is not loss of a public parking space.

In summary, Ferro stated that the building expansion and site improvements are directly in line with the recommendations from the Village Design Charrette, for new development that his compatible with the existing traditional character of the Village, and for greater reliance on shared parking.. Thus, Ferro recommends approval subject to there being an agreement with church to provide for the applicant's use of the church parking lot in the event the Township agreement for public use expires,, and subject to the applicant being responsible for restoring the lawn area where the fire hydrant is being relocated.

Lowry asked if they have taken into consideration the parking situation when the farmer's market is open.

Paul stated he does not support the condition to require the applicant to have an agreement with the church for parking. He stated he does not believe we should hinder improvements in the Village with parking requirements.

Gutierrez responded that he is worried that this might turn into a big issue – phone calls to the Township, etc. Gutierrez stated that this is public parking, which means first come, first serve, and it should be up to the applicant to negotiate with the church.

Butterfield asked about the paver area in the front between the parking and the sidewalk questioning how large the green space is there. Dixon noted that this area is more of a display area, with the goal of adding more life onto the streetscape.

Motion by Easter, second by Paul, to approve the site plan for a 473 square foot addition to the existing building at 7267 Thornapple River Dr., subject to the condition that the applicant will be responsible for restoring the lawn area where the fire hydrant is being relocated. Motion passed unanimously.

Korth rejoined the Commission.

2. Revised Final PUD Plan, Increase Size of Unit 7 Allowable Building Envelope by 4,461 Square Feet, Montreux PUD, Colonial Builders, LLC

The applicant was not present and thus, Ferro recommended postponing this item.

Motion by Gutierrez, second by Rhoades to postpone this agenda item to the April meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Review and Adoption of 2010-2016 Capital Improvements Plan

Ferro stated that the Planning Commission held a public hearing on this plan in November and he believes there were no public comments. Following the hearing, it was decided to take some other steps to get input and thus, the Township hired a consultant to hold focus group discussions. The focus group report was completed and reviewed. Ferro pointed out some of the significant aspects of the plan:

1. The future revenue projections have been adjusted downward slightly.
2. There have not been a lot of changes in the projects, but there are a couple changes in how certain township expenditure categories are accounted for.

Korth stated that the Capital Improvements Plan is a statutory plan intended to be a useful tool to the Township and the Township Board for their budget making. The Planning Commission's role is to make a recommendation to the Board.

Easter stated she believes that the proposed Plan is not responsive to the input we received from the focus groups, in that it does not reflect the cautious approach to spending down the general fund reserve that was suggested, and the importance of focusing on basic necessities rather than optional amenity projects.

Paul stated he believed that the Plan as proposed should be approved, and the Township Board could make changes if it wished.

Motion by Paul, second by Butterfield, to approve recommendation to the Board of the 2010-2016 Capital Improvements Plan as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS/STAFF

1. Wind Energy Regulations

The subcommittee consists of Gutierrez, Lowry and Butterfield. Gutierrez gave a subcommittee update. He stated that the subcommittee has reviewed several ordinances from surrounding communities. They looked at residential and commercial applications and it seems that Ada Township is not the most viable location for wind energy. The subcommittee, along with Ferro, came up with a draft that is close to being ready to present to the Commission. A draft will be submitted for Commission review at the April Planning Commission meeting.

2. Village Form-Based Zoning Regulations

Ferro stated that he has no report or material available on this yet.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Gutierrez, second by Rhoades, to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Burton, Township Clerk