

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2008 WORK SESSION MEETING**

A work session meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Monday, May 5, 2008, at the offices of Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, 1500 Arboretum Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI. The meeting was held jointly with the Cascade Township Planning Commission.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Chairpersons Korth (Ada Township) and McDonald (Cascade Township) at 5:00 p.m..

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Korth, Commissioners Burton, Butterfield, Gutierrez, Hoeks, Lowry and Sytsma. Also present: Planning Director Ferro. Also present were 5 members of the Cascade Township Planning Commission and Planning Director Steve Peterson

III. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS FOR HELIPORTS

Ferro presented background information regarding the inquiry to Ada Township that resulted in the Township considering the adoption of zoning rules pertaining to helicopter landing facilities in the Township, which are not currently addressed in the zoning rules. He presented information regarding the draft special use permit standards that have been developed, as well as the approach that is taken in other communities that have heliport regulations.

In discussion, there was general agreement that a special land use process was an appropriate means of regulating this activity, so that the merits of an individual site proposal could be evaluated and a judgment made on an application-specific basis. The possibility of placing a maximum cap on the number of sites that could be approved in the community was discussed, similar to the approach taken in the issuance of liquor licenses.

IV. DISCUSSION OF HALL ST IMPROVEMENTS.

Peterson provided background information regarding Cascade Township's discussions with the Kent County Road Commission of the need for improvements to Hall St., in light of recent development along the Hall St. corridor. He mentioned that the Township arranged for a center turn lane widening to be installed at the Central High School campus entrance by the Stoneshire developer, instead of placing it at the Stoneshire entrance, where there was less of a need for this improvement.

The possibility of using a similar arrangement for the Villas of Ada project in Ada Township was suggested, whereby the funds that would be used for center turn lane improvements at the Villas of Ada entrances would instead be used to install turn lanes at Alta Dale Ave. and Ada Drive or at Paradise Lake and Hall St.

It was pointed out that there are not many remaining large developable parcels on the north side of Hall St., since much of the land is owned by the school district.

In discussion, there was general agreement that the two Townships should develop a mutually-agreeable and coordinated plan for improving Hall St., and that consideration should be given to a road design similar to Thornapple River Dr. between Ada and Cascade. This could include wider shoulders, center turn lane where needed, storm sewer, as well as non-motorized trail.

It was pointed out that since Hall St. is a local road, cost sharing by the Townships of 55% of improvement costs with the County Road Commission would be required, unless the road's classification is changed to a "primary" road..

V. DISCUSSION OF LAND USE PLANNING FOR CASCADE RD/SPAULDING AVE. AREA

Steve Peterson reviewed current and planned future land use in the Cascade Rd./Spaulding Ave. area. He noted he has been contacted about a potential mixed use development application for the former Storm Hill Nursery property, along with the Lew Brown property on Spaulding Ave. The development would have access from Spaulding, and would include both high density residential and office components. The party making the inquiry has been told that the proposed development concept does not conform with the current Master Plan.

Ferro reviewed the pending rezoning application that has been submitted to Ada Township, requesting office zoning for the Forest Hills Baptist Church property. The property is narrow and deep, and adjoins low density residential development on the west, and an existing office park on the east. This request also does not conform with the current Master Plan, which provides for office development along the Cascade Road frontage of the property, with residential use on the rear portion of the property. It was noted that there is some wetland area on the rear portion of the property, and the Township is waiting for the applicant to complete a wetland determination.

It was suggested that it might be worthwhile for the two potential developers of these adjoining properties to be made aware of each other's activities. The view was also expressed that there did not appear to be a reason for either of the two Townships to change their Master Plans for this area.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC
Ada Township Clerk
rs:jf