

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 16, 2007 MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, August 16, 2007, 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, and Lowry. Absent: Commissioner Sytsma. Also Present: Planning Director Ferro.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Hoeks, second by Gutierrez, to approve the July 19 and August 1, 2007 meeting minutes, with the correction to the July 19 minutes noting that Commissioner Butterfield was present at the meeting and Commissioner Burton was absent at the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Proposed Amendment to Zoning Regulations, to Revise Regulations Concerning Keeping of Animals, Proposed by Ada Township Planning Commission.

Ferro stated the current rules concerning keeping horses and other large animals in the rural zoning districts in the Township have only one standard which is that a building housing animals must be 150 feet from any property line. The proposed amendment creates an acreage-based standard and a relaxed setback standard in the Agricultural and RR zoning districts. Ferro handed out a revised version dated August 16, 2007 and summarized changes that were made. Butterfield and Hoeks asked for clarification on some parts of the language, i.e., residential structures and buildings. Ferro stated it could be changed to read "dwelling unit".

The public hearing was opened. There were no comments. The hearing was then closed.

Lowry stated he feels Ferro did a nice job with this. Lowry related comments and suggestions he heard from a representative from the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

Hoeks stated that rules along these lines are needed to protect those in residential neighborhoods.

Korth suggested that maybe there should be some sort of review criteria and process taking into consideration slopes, riparian features and other circumstances of each request. He also questioned whether those owning 10-20 acres in zoning districts other than AG and RR shouldn't be allowed to house a large animal. Ferro stated that is how the current ordinance is written. Different options were discussed, such as utilizing the special use permit process.

Motion by Lowry, second by Hoeks, to postpone Action on the proposed amendment, to allow Ferro to look into some of the items discussed at tonight's meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Request for Extension of Preliminary PUD Approval, 36,000 Square Foot Mixed Use Building, Parcel No. 41-15-34-126-009 and 010, 490 and 496 Ada Drive, Scott Gregory.

Ferro set forth some background information on this request. The Ada Center PUD preliminary approval was given in 2005. An extension request was submitted prior to the one year expiration and action was postponed at that time pending completion of the Ada Village Design Charrette process. The matter has been tabled almost a year now. Ferro pointed out guidelines which are relevant to the request, including conformance with current master planning and likelihood of the project moving forward.

Scott Gregory spoke regarding his request. He stated at this point this is at a standstill because he cannot take the building down with an existing tenant occupying it.

Korth asked about moving the tenant into the new building. Gregory stated from the tenant's perspective, they would not want to be right on the street with all of the parking in the rear.

Hoeks stated there is a lot of planning and expense into the building, but he has never felt comfortable with how the building was proposed to be constructed and feels possibly the Township should bear some of the burden also.

Burton stated she agrees with Hoeks and is not sure how to get around this situation. Gregory stated he feels that his hands are tied.

Gutierrez stated this plan was approved before the Charrette, and they have every right to build the building. At the time the PUD plan was proposed, it was clear that the Commissioners wanted it on Ada Drive, but it couldn't happen, for various reasons. The applicant came up with a pretty good design that we approved. The Charrette was after the fact. Gutierrez asked when the applicant could start the project.

Gregory stated if an extension was approved, he could go to the tenant with the plans and begin negotiations with them. He added that at this point in time he does not have the right to require the tenant to relocate. The current lease expires approximately the middle of September.

Korth believes no action should be taken tonight to see what transpires with the tenant and the new lease.

Hoeks stated a preliminary PUD plan was approved, not a final PUD plan. Submitting a Final PUD Plan lies within the applicant's purview.

Ferro stated the Commission could also approve the extension which would give the applicant a year and some comfort to know he has some time, instead of being vulnerable to having the extension turned down. Lowry asked if Grand River Grocery does not re-lease, would Gregory still go forward with building the new building. Gregory responded that he would not build a 36,000 square foot building without an anchor tenant.

Motion by Hoeks, second by Gutierrez, to postpone Scott Gregory's request for extension of preliminary PUD approval, in order to obtain further information. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Site Plan Review of Proposed Land Division, 9 Parcels on 70.5 Acres, Parcel Nos. 41-15-25-100-001 and 031, 8740 and 8908 Bailey Dr., Paul and Heidi Barron

Kevin Roosien, Rossien & Associates, spoke on behalf of Paul and Heidi Barron. He went over the site plan. He noted the plan is to split two adjacent parcels of 70.5 acres total into nine parcels. He went over the site characteristics, noting the site is wooded with a small pond/wetland area in the middle of the western half of the property. They are proposing two private road cul-de-sacs off Bailey Drive, with a private trail easement between the two.

Ferro stated that the property is mostly deciduous woods with several areas of pines. He noted that one of the parent parcels is in Forest Hills school district and the other in the Lowell school district. The lot layouts conform with AG district standards. An alternative to the cul-de-sacs would be to have one thru street. With the two school districts it may make more sense to keep the two separate cul-de-sacs so that each neighborhood is in the same school district. He noted that this also would require the re-location of the school district boundary, from its north-south orientation, to an east-west orientation, so that each cul-de-sac and its lots would lie within one district. Ferro also noted the road commission has reviewed the access locations and finds those acceptable. Ferro stated he recommends approval of the land division plan subject to the applicant acquiring additional land for the southerly private road access to Bailey Drive, and subject to Forest Hills and Lowell school districts approving the relocation of the school district boundary as shown on the drawing submitted by the applicant dated August 6, 2007.

Hoeks stated he believes the plan looks good and meets the standards, but he does have concern with the private road access in case emergency vehicles need to get in and locate a specific address. It was noted that each of the cul-de-sacs would have a separate address name. Lowry asked if the land has been perked. The applicant stated preliminary borings have been taken. Korth asked if the previous lots, the two in the front, could be completely reconfigured so they enter off a new private drive -- as east-west lots, instead of accessing directly off Bailey Dr? Korth also noted he would like a condition that they do not have traditional street lights and that there be green space islands in the middle of the cul-de-sacs.

Motion by Burton, second by Gutierrez, to approve Paul and Heidi Barron's site plan for land division of 9 parcels on 70.5 acres (Parcel Nos. 41-15-25-100-001 and 031) at 8740 and 8908 Bailey Dr., subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is contingent upon the applicant acquiring additional land for right-of-way for the southerly private road access to Bailey Drive;
2. Approval is contingent upon the Forest Hills and Lowell school districts approving the relocation of the school district boundary as shown on the drawing submitted by the applicant dated August 6, 2007.
3. The cul-de-sacs shall have green space islands;
4. There shall be no street lights; and
5. The two lots previously split shall be reconfigured as east-west lots, with both lots accessing from the private drive.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Preliminary PUD Plan, 78 Attached Condominium Units on 19.47 Acres, 5584 Ada Dr. and 5595 Hall St., Parcel Nos. 41-15-31-426-016 and 41-15-31-476-008, Covenant Developments, LLC

Peter Engles of Covenant Development, LLC, Jason VanderKodde, P.E., of Nederveld Associates, and Dick Jasinski of SJ Wisinski & Co. were present to present the PUD plan. Engles thanked the Commissioners for their efforts involved with this plan. He noted this is the third major revision to the plan which includes all recommended changes by staff. He spoke about township target demographics.

Jason VanderKodde next spoke about the comparison plans showing potential development under current zoning, specifics of the proposed PUD and buffering of neighboring properties. He spoke about the three different drainage sub-watersheds. He said that given the natural features of the site, they have modeled their plan to conserve natural features, aesthetically use the open space and provide a higher degree of township control.

He next addressed comparison plans to other R-2 district standards and storm water management control plans, specifying which lots drain into which basins. VanderKodde noted that a private street is being proposed which would connect between Ada Drive and Hall Street and wherein 20 of the 78 units will have driveways backing directly into the through street. Shared driveways are 18 feet wide. Final grading and buffering have yet to be determined. He then went over a couple major plan changes -- road is now running around the east side of the site, and have decreased from 16 to 14 units in a portion of the plan.

Korth noted that a special meeting would be recommended for the Commissioners to have a site visit.

Ferro set forth his comments. The property is zoned R-2, single family. He has made a comparison of the normal R-2 district standards and how the proposed PUD compares to this. The pavement setbacks vary from 12 to 30 feet from the perimeter property lines and the building setbacks vary from 27 to 60 feet. This is a much lower profile building than would typically be in a single-family scenario. Ferro noted that in a PUD procedure and process, the township has the authority to require specific buffering and screening features, which wouldn't be the case for a lot layout that meets the current zoning. The north and south parts of the site are two distinct parcels in character. He concluded that in the PUD review and approval process, there is no action tonight other than to make a decision on scheduling a public hearing.

Hoeks complimented the applicants on their thorough and complete presentation of the plan. He set forth concerns over the design of the southern portion of the plan. He believes there is a potential of a frontal appearance of a mini-community of garages in this portion of the development. He believes that the applicant has lost the benefits of its own unique design, at the south end of the property.

Engles stated that their approach at the south end of the property has been to orient the buildings most favorably toward the neighbors, as the highest priority.

Korth suggested placing the garages at the center of the two-family buildings, with the garages recessed. Korth added that having 6 two-unit buildings with garage doors being the most prominent feature facing the street is unacceptable to him. Korth added that there are a lot of good qualities to this plan. Korth requested the applicant have building stakes (center and corner) prior to them visiting the site. It was determined that the applicants will communicate directly with Ferro to schedule a special meeting/site visit.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS/STAFF

1. Proposed Amendment to Billboard Regulations

Ferro submitted a memo which summarizes the current billboard regulations, major areas where modifications can be considered, and possible restrictions of billboards in certain districts, etc. Ferro stated he believes that the background research he did, along with the master plan survey, collectively provide good legal support to uphold more stringent regulations.

Ferro reviewed two alternative amendments, one which establishes more strict billboard location requirements and standards, and a second which would prohibit any new billboards in the Township.

The Commission directed Ferro to schedule a public hearing for the September meeting, on the alternative that would prohibit additional billboards in the Township.

IX. DISCUSSION REGARDING PROPOSED MASTER PLAN UPDATE

1. Proposed Revisions to Draft Plan

Ferro referred to the revised Future Land Use map he had distributed to the Commissioners, based on the input from the joint work session with the Township Board. Korth noted that the changes made to the Plan were simple. At the recent joint meeting between the Board and the Commission, they concentrated on the Pettis Avenue corridor and lands adjacent to the Grand River. Korth stated they should be close to scheduling a public hearing on the Master Plan as a whole. Ferro spoke regarding the changes, referring to the August 9th draft, and noting this would be the draft presented at the public hearing. Korth noted that the settlement agreement with Reith-Riley is now completed.

2. Schedule Public Hearing

The public hearing will be held at the September 20, 2007 Planning Commission meeting.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Burton, second by Hoeks, to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC
Ada Township Clerk
rs:lm

Note: Deletions and additions approved by Planning Commission indicated by overstrike and underscore.