

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 25, 2007 MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, October 25, 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, Lowry and Sytsma.  
Also Present: Planning Director Ferro.

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Hoeks, second by Sytsma, to approve the agenda as revised with the omission of Election of Officers (which will be on the November agenda). Motion passed unanimously.

**IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

(Item removed from agenda.)

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Hoeks, second by Gutierrez, to approve the September 20, 2007 meeting minutes, with the following changes: (1) on page 1, under V.I., change the word "nothing" to "noting" in the second line; (2) on page 3, in the second paragraph from the bottom, change "our hands are tied" to "the community's hands as a whole are tied"; and (3) on page 5, in the second paragraph from the top, change "fo" to "of". Motion passed unanimously.

**VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**1. Continuation of September 20 Public Hearing, Ada Township Master Plan Update, 2007**

Korth stated much of the time on this agenda item tonight would be devoted to public comments.

Ferro stated he gave a fairly long Power Point presentation and explanation at the September meeting and at a public information meeting sponsored by a citizens group. The Power Point presentation and entire draft is posted on the Township website. Ferro gave a brief overview noting the Master Plan is a policy document which provides the legal basis for zoning in the Township. It is intended to guide and direct future zoning decisions. Ferro stated that the heart of the plan is the future land use map, which identifies how the community desires to physically develop in the future, a description of community facility needs for the future, and a section which covers the steps necessary for implementing the plan. Ferro went over the significant changes between the old Plan and the new Plan. Ferro said that the timeline is that following the public hearing, the Commission will consider all input received and look at possible changes to the draft before taking any action. The Commission will make any necessary changes and then make a recommendation to the Township Board on adoption of the Plan.

The public hearing was opened and the following comments were made:

1. Richard Kohler (representative of Rollingbrook Estates Association), 145 Rollingbrook Dr., stated the Association objects to zoning the property off Fulton adjacent to their subdivision, due to high traffic and high growth patterns.

2. Nick Amato, 150 Rollingbrook Dr., NE, addressed a couple aspects of the Master Plan which relate to the vision of the Township. He spoke about population characteristics in the Township and in the Clements Mill development.
3. David Schermer, 351 Saddleback Dr. NE, stated he was at the last meeting and is surprised about all of the attention given to one particular area, the section north of Fulton. The section on other options for the property is very general and very non-committing, and he feels this is very safe language that encourages developers to find a viable solution for this piece of property.
4. Carla Allen-Hart, 200 Taos Ave. NE, stated she does not agree with Mr. Schermer's comments and believes this language is opening the door to change the entire shape of their neighborhood.
5. Don Shankin, 1021 Dogwood Meadows Dr., stated the present zoning for the agricultural area has prevented any development at all. He stated the proposed change to 1 unit per 10 acre density is excessive and unnecessary. He stated the idea of reducing density to 1 unit per 10 acres represents a taking of the property. He said he knows of only 1 family that farms their own land; the rest is leased. He also noted that he believes land to the north in Cannon Township is zoned for 1 lot per 2 acres.
6. Randy Walter, 186 Taos Ave. NE, stated he spoke at the September meeting objecting to the rezoning of the property north of Fulton. He presented two petitions with neighbor's signatures noting their objections to the density recommendation and the plans for extension of water and sewer on Taos Avenue. (Ferro noted that Mr. Walter submitted the updated Petitions to the Commissioners.)
7. Dennis Hart, 200 Taos Ave. NE, asked who "we" is that came up with the ideas for the Master Plan.
8. Matt Inman, 8381 3 Mile Rd. NE, asked what is meant by the "Vacant" designation of the Chase Lake Swamp on the existing land use map in the plan. He stated he would prefer it be shown as agricultural. He noted there was a rumor that a grant was being applied for to turn it into a park.
9. Colleen Walter, 186 Taos Ave. NE, stated she was at the meeting last week and noted the master plan provides legal support for the zoning that may be requested. By having this there the door is opened to development and they do not want that door opened.
10. Rose Myers, 3 Mile Road, asked how many more parks does the Township need? She stated she feels more parks are not needed.
11. Linda Cook, 5700 Michigan St. NE, stated that Ada Park is crammed with soccer games and suggested having a sports center park/sports complex. She believes no more regular parks are needed in the Township.
12. Rob Cumming, 5680 Grand River Dr. NE, thanked the Commission for their time. He spoke about the corridor of land on the north side of Fulton St., between Fulton St. and Grand River Dr. He recommends this area be zoned R-1 with possibly some R-2 zoning. He believes this area could be appropriately used with proper planning.
13. John McCabe, 8966 4 Mile Rd. NE, set forth two areas of concern regarding paved and unpaved roads. He stated he does not believe that paving a gravel road destroys rural character. He cited the paving of Giles in Cannon Township as an example. He noted that 4 Mile Rd. becomes impassable in the Spring. He spoke about the 10-acre parcel zoning in the rural area, noting it

- destroys the ability for residents to pass on or sell a portion of their property. He believes 3 to 5 acres would be more appropriate.
14. Carla Allen-Hart, 200 Taos Ave. NE, spoke about the plans for water and sewer on Taos and how this would destroy the trees along the side of the road and would require residents to pay the cost of bringing in the water and sewer. She also spoke about sewage passage and the destruction of the natural beauty of that region.
  15. Jim Soet, 360 Taos Ave. NE, stated the higher density proposed does nothing for his property value. He objects to the water and sewage due to the large investment and cost for residents. He questions whether they are trying to preserve the character of Ada or develop the characteristics of Wyoming.
  16. Diane Thomas, 8700 3 Mile Rd. NE, stated she appreciates the fact of preserving the character of the northeast area of the Township. She believes the gravel roads are fine. She also spoke about how the character of the area is changing, but would like to see things kept rural – there are a lot of bikers and joggers.
  17. Cheryl Molhoek, 5404 Hartfield Ct. SE, set forth her input noting this is progressive and smart growth and thrilled with the preservation of open space. She is in support of the overall goals of the Master Plan. She spoke about affordable housing and the opportunity for all people to live in this community. She feels the Master Plan is smart in dealing with community growth.
  18. Jose Vega, 188 Taos Ave. NE, objected to being told what he can and cannot do with his property, such as tree removal, having to put in city water and sewer, etc. Nothing should be forced upon the residents.
  19. Laura Vega, 188 Taos Ave. NE, spoke about the vision statement and how it includes preserving natural beauty roads and she questions how they will maintain this with zoning of 4 houses per acre.
  20. BrendaVredevoogd, 190 Taos Ave. NE, asked if water and sewer is brought in, do the residents have to connect if they already have wells and septic.

The public hearing was closed.

Ferro addressed some of the questions raised in public comments. He first spoke about water and sewer on Taos and noted the water and sewer master plan maps in the plan may be misleading. He said the Township is not encouraging or planning to extend water or sewer service down Taos. He stated that the maps in the master plan are intended to show how water and sewer lines could be laid out to serve all of the land within the legally-defined water and sewer service areas, if there were ever a need for those services. He noted that connection to public water is not mandatory. The Township has no plans to extend utilities through that area.

Ferro also spoke about the language in the draft plan suggesting higher density, up to 4 units per acre, along the Fulton Street corridor west of Carl Drive. He acknowledged that the language does not define what area this is being suggested for. What is intended is lands along a narrow corridor along the Fulton Street frontage – it is not the intent of the plan to open the entire area between Fulton and Michigan Street to higher density. The intent is stated in the plan to protect the rural character that does exist in that area, but because of the location of the land immediately along Fulton St., its proximity to the freeway system, the fact that it can be served by public water and sewer, some of that land is a candidate for some higher density of development.

Ferro next responded to comments on a park in the north part of the Township. He stated that the Township has no plans to submit any grant applications to acquire land around Chase Lake, and that this would never be done without the participation and agreement of property owners. He stated that the language in the plan does state there is a need for a small neighborhood park in the 5-10 acre size located further to the west somewhere in the vicinity of Knapp and Egypt Valley or Knapp and Pettis.

Ferro stated that with regard to Mr. Inman's question about showing the Chase Lake wetland area as "Vacant," that is intended to identify the current use of the land. The boundary between vacant and agricultural on the existing land use map was based on aerial photos showing the approximate edge between land that is actually farmed and land that is wetland.

Ferro pointed out that the proposal for 1 unit per 10 acres density in the far northeast part of the township goes along with a suggestion that small lots be permitted, so that lot splits are concentrated on a small portion of the land to prevent a large 40 or 80 acre parcel from being carved up entirely into 10 acre lots.

Korth stated that since the agenda is very full, he believes the Commission is not ready to make a motion on the Master Plan at tonight's meeting. Hoeks stated scheduling a work session in the next week or so to go over comments would be a good idea. Burton agrees that this should not be voted on tonight. Gutierrez agrees and believes all opinions and comments are very vital. A work session meeting was scheduled for Monday, October 29th at 3:00 p.m.

**2. Preliminary PUD Plan, 82 Attached Condominium Units on 20.3 Acres, 5584 Ada Dr., 5575, 5595 and 5607 Hall St., Parcel No. 41-15-31-426-016 and 41-15-31-476-008, 009 and 010, Covenant Developments, LLC**

Korth stated he is invested 30% in a company that owns the home at 5580 Hall Street and approached the Commission to make a decision as to whether there is a conflict of interest for this agenda item. He read the applicable portion of the by-laws relating to conflict of interest. Korth stated he does not feel he has a conflict of interest, since he's not a majority owner of the property. Motion by Hoeks, second by Burton, to not regard Mr. Korth's ownership in the property across the street as a conflict of interest for this agenda item. Motion passed unanimously.

Peter Engles, of Covenant Development, and Jason VanderKodde, of Nederveld Associates, presented the plan. Engles stated they have met individually with neighbors and have had an informational meeting and site visit. He next went over the design of the proposed condominiums. VanderKodde then gave a quick review of the site and also went over the alternate plan. He stated the proposal has 22 buildings. He addressed issues regarding storm water management stating they will have 4 detention basins. He next presented the findings of their traffic assessment, noting that the Kent County Road Commission is requiring left turn lanes on Ada and Hall Streets. VanderKodde spoke about the plan having less driveways. As far as preservation and buffering, which was a large concern of the neighbors, there will be 55 feet of trees between the private road and Paradise Lake and 65 feet of trees between the buildings and the adjoining neighborhood. Also, trees are planted along the edge of some of the driveways to prevent headlight impact to the neighbors. VanderKodde concluded stating that their PUD plan will preserve natural features, provide recreational facilities, promote the master plan goals, and provide a higher degree of township control.

The public hearing was opened and the following comments were made:

1. Duane Nagel, 5619 Far Hill Dr., stated the reasons for opposing the change in zoning are the destruction of a valuable piece of open space, density of the proposed condos does not fit with the

- surrounding areas, impact to the environment by tree removal and creating an unnatural runoff, no public transportation, high traffic on Ada Drive and Hall Street presently exists, etc. (Mr. Nagel submitted a letter also.)
2. Anneke van der Westen, 5622 Far Hill Dr., spoke about the destruction of the natural environment and how she wishes not to be part of that. She stated the proposed building is not compatible with the surrounding area.
  3. Karen Wing, 5575 Hall St., stated she is in favor of this PUD.
  4. Jan Severance, 5610 Ada Dr., stated her concerns are over privacy and value of her property. She believes there is not a particular need for this type of housing in this area.
  5. Marlis Jacoby, 1000 Paradise Lake Dr., stated she is fond of technology and growth in general, but believes the issue is the best use of this particular piece of property and how it will affect the property value of homeowners. She asked if the public recreation would only be for the residents of the development.
  6. John Vesey, 5538 Hall St., stated his largest concern with this development is traffic.
  7. Natalie Spielmaker, 1089 Fernridge Dr., also stated her main concern is the traffic and the students' safety.
  8. Greg Farr, 5637 Far Hill Dr., commented he believes all Township residents are interested in the best use of the property. He stated he is also very concerned about the traffic and water runoff.
  9. Linda Cook, 5700 Michigan St., stated this development is nice for older people who want to stay in the area and she is in favor of it.
  10. Susan Rumford, 1150 Gros Ventre Dr., stated she heard that this land was considered in some type of park planning and this was absolutely ruled out. She stated she got a good feeling that the developers care and are listening to the residents. She stated she toured the product and believes it is phenomenal. She believe this is something that Ada needs.
  11. Rita Hefferan, Cascade Twp. resident, stated she is looking for housing like this and drove over to Grandville and toured the homes and believes this is perfectly suited for her needs.
  12. Susan Koop, 959 Autumn Dr., spoke about the closeness of the development. She would like to see more buffering and landscaping.
  13. Cornelius Smit, 5613 Far Hill Dr., would like to see the plan built on Grand River Drive where there is plenty of land left.
  14. Joel Soule, 5607 Far Hill Dr., stated the facility is gorgeous, but that is not the issue. He spoke about runoff on the long narrow strip of land. This just doesn't seem to fit in with the character and environment.
  15. Tom Yost, 5701 Ada Dr., set forth his concern of this development adding to the already existing traffic problems.
  16. Steve Beld, 5965 Ivanrest, Wyoming, spoke about Mr. Engles being a man of integrity and his development in Wyoming being great neighbor. Mr. Beld stated he is Superintendent of the

Maple Hills Golf Course, located adjacent to the Villas of Rivertown property in Wyoming.

17. Donald Jacoby, 1000 Paradise Lake Dr., set forth his concern about the lake and runoff. There has been no discussion of this and this should be looked at.
18. Nancy Nagel, 5619 Far Hill Dr., also spoke about water runoff and submitted photos showing the path of runoff. She believes there are problems with this that have not been addressed.
19. Bob Vanderwerff, 5648 Far Hill Dr., stated he chose this rural area to live in and he feels this is going to be lost. He is also concerned about traffic on Ada, Hall and Paradise Lake, and high school students using Paradise Lake as a cut-through. He stated he is concerned about the elevation of the houses.
20. Charles An, 1120 Gros Ventre Dr., spoke about enjoying the environment. His concerns are traffic and water runoff. Believes the decision should also be based on scientific data.
21. Phil Engelsman, 5655 Far Hill Dr., stated he thinks the project is nice, but believes it is not a project for this area. He agrees there are traffic concerns and will be drainage water problems. He doesn't want street lights or porch lights in his back yard. He believes the density is way too high. The real concern is damage to the trees and the woods.

The public hearing was closed.

Ferro spoke about the need for a park somewhere along the Ada Drive corridor noting there was past inquiry of purchasing some of this land for a park, but the Parks Committee decided not to pursue it. Ferro also spoke about a future bike path on Hall Street in the next year or two. Korth asked the applicant to address a couple of issues. VanderKodde noted the location of the proposed drive on the north side of the site is approximately the location of the existing "for sale" sign on the property. VanderKodde discussed the Paradise Lake drainage plan. They have Kent County Road Commission approval on this. A majority of the storm water runoff will be collected and redirected – basically 90%+ will be going south.

Korth commented to the applicant that this is a PUD request and regardless of whether or not it is a better plan conceptually, it nonetheless is a distinct change in zoning with respect to the number of units and every effort to minimize that impact is necessary at this point in order to move forward. Korth stated this matter will be postponed to the November 15, 2007 Planning Commission meeting.

**3. Request for Amendment to Special Use Approval Condition, to Permit Addition of Lighting on a 190 Foot Telecommunications Tower, 6677 Grand River Dr. NE, Parcel No. 41-15-28-100-011, SBA Towers, Inc.**

Ferro stated he received correspondence from the applicant asking for action to be postponed to the November Planning Commission meeting.

**4. Request for Amendment to Special Use Approval Conditions, to Remove Required Driveway Interconnection to West Village Trail, 655 Spaulding Ave. SE, Parcel No. 41-15-31-177-001, Keystone Community Church**

Gene DeJong, Pastor of Keystone Community Church, presented the request for amendment. He stated that their plan has shifted and they have purchased one campus outside this location and are purchasing at least two other campuses. The projected usage at this location has changed and they are asking that the timeline be taken off for the driveway interconnection between the church parking lot and West Village Trail. The condition originally required this connection to be completed within one year of completion of the private road in West Village.

Ferro went over factors to be considered in evaluation of this request. He said the benefits would be that it would provide a more convenient route for residents of the West Village development, would help relieve traffic congestion at the main Keystone driveway during peak traffic times, would provide a second means of emergency access to the site, and would provide a route for traffic between Keystone and Ada Drive that avoids having to go through the Ada Drive/Spaulding intersection.

The public hearing was opened with the following comments made:

1. Kevin Moran, 5176 Clear Springs Dr. NE, stated Keystone Church is a pleasant neighbor and he believes postponing this connection is in the best interest of West Village as well.
2. Steve Wierenga, 5017 West Village Ct., stated his primary concern is with the traffic that would be incurred from that road. Should it be a necessity in the future, this could be dealt with, but he would be in favor of this being postponed indefinitely.
3. Nancy Nagel, 5619 Far Hill Dr., stated St. Matthew's has a shared, gated driveway and feels this would be an option when the need arises.

The public hearing was closed.

Butterfield asked what the current status is. Korth stated it is just a berm now. Ferro commented that if the direction is to postpone to a future time, there needs to be some definition as to how that determination gets made, such as a request for parking expansion. Korth stated he likes the idea of putting a foot path connection which would be conducive to the pedestrian orientation that we are attempting to accomplish.

Motion by Lowry, second by Butterfield, to amend the special use permit approval conditions for Keystone Community Church, to remove the time requirement for the driveway interconnection to West Village Trail (655 Spaulding Ave. SE, Parcel No. 41-15-31-177-001) Motion passed 5 to 1.

Motion by Hoeks, second by Lowry, to request Keystone Community Church negotiate with West Village to install a 5-foot wide pedestrian path using one of the easements between West Village development and the Church. Motion passed unanimously.

**5. Request for Special Use Permit for a 2,600 Square Foot Accessory Building in the AG District, 3065 Honey Creek Ave. NE, Parcel No. 41-15-03-400-005, Travis A. Miller for Todd Konwinski**

Travis Miller presented the request for special use permit on behalf of Todd Konwinski. He stated the accessory building will be for storage of a boat.

The public hearing was opened and the following comments were made:

1. Don Shankin, 1021 Dogwood Meadows Dr., asked why a special use permit is needed for an agricultural building.
2. Charles Snow, 3197 Honey Creek Ave., asked the location of the building in relation to his property line and to the wetland.
3. Gail Snow, 3197 Honey Creek Ave., noted that the wetland is a pond and she is concerned about this storm water retention area that fills in easily. She is concerned about the soil washing into the pond. Special provisions need to be made during and after construction.

The public hearing was then closed.

Ferro stated a special use permit is needed because the building is a residential accessory building, not an agricultural building. The size proposed is larger than permitted by right.

Miller noted that a silt fence will be put up during construction and they want to disturb the least area possible and will also install a retention wall if need be. Ferro spoke about the wetland boundaries noting that the mapping from the REGIS system does not definitely establish accurate wetland boundaries and recommends that a wetland determination on the site be completed by a qualified consultant prior to issuance of a building permit. Gutierrez stated that instead of grass seed, a grass straw blanket reinforcement mat should be used. The applicant stated no exterior lighting is planned on the building.

Motion by Gutierrez, second by Burton, to approve the special use permit for a 2,600 square foot accessory building in the AG District, at 3065 Honey Creek Ave. NE, Parcel No. 41-15-03-400-005, with the following conditions:

1. A determination by a qualified wetland consultant that the proposed building site is not located within a regulated wetland shall be obtained prior to issuance of a building permit.
2. During construction the applicant will make provisions to protect against sediment getting into the pond/wetland during construction and after construction, the applicant is to use a soil erosion type blanket to re-establish the hillside to protect runoff into the pond.
3. The building shall have a 6/12 roof pitch with asphalt shingles and shall have siding color and trim to complement the existing home, as described by the applicant.

Motion passed unanimously.

## **VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Proposal for Rezoning of Village Properties to Planned Unit Development**

Korth gave a summary of the proposal noting they do not have the zoning to support the Master Plan and thus suggests rezoning the core Village to PUD by default. He suggests holding a public hearing on this at an upcoming meeting.



**IX. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS/STAFF**

None.

**X. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC  
Ada Township Clerk  
rs:lm