

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 15, 2018 MEETING**

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, February 15, 2018, 7:00 p.m. at the Ada Township Offices, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, MI.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order by Commissioner Leisman at 7:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Leisman, Carter, Easter, Lunn, Butterfield, Jacobs

Absent: Burton

Staff Present: Planning Director Ferro

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Leisman asked for the New Business item to come first, then the Proposed Capital Improvements Plan, 2018-2024. Moved by Lunn, supported by Carter, to approve the agenda as revised. Motion passed unanimously.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2018**

Moved by Easter, supported by Carter, to approve the January 18, 2018 Meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

**V. PUBLIC HEARING**

**Proposed Capital Improvements Plan, 2018-2024**

Ferro stated one item not included in the projections under the Future Revenue table, the line labeled Local Government Stabilization Fund, was future projections. Since then more information has been received so revenues have been added for the future years. These are funds that come to us from the State that are allocated using a complicated formula. Some changes have been made in the Summary of Fund Balances on Pages 10 and 11 to reflect the added revenue.

Leisman opened the Public Hearing; with no comments he closed the Public Hearing.

Ferro stated you could approve the Capital Improvements Plan with a communication to the Board that you believe the Board needs to take a close look at the revenue and expenditure trends in the Public Safety Fund, and evaluate whether what's in the plan is achievable.

Moved by Jacobs, supported by Carter, to approve the Proposed Capital Improvements Plan, 2018-2024 subject to the communication to the Board that they need to take a look at the revenue and expenditure trends in the Public Safety Fund, and evaluate whether what's in the plan is achievable.

Motion passed unanimously.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

### **Request for Special Use Permit, Pre-K – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Private School (St. Robert of Newminster) in the R-3 Zoning District, 6477 Ada Dr. SE, Parcel No. 41-15-33-101-027, Roman Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids**

Planning Director Jim Ferro stated that schools are allowed by Special Use approval in all of the residential districts, as are churches. The proposed application is to add an elementary school operation to the St. Robert of Newminster parish property. The applicant will introduce the project to the Commission for members to identify any additional information needed.

Ferro stated everyone has been provided a copy of the By-laws and the provisions concerning conflict of interest.

Commissioners Lunn, Butterfield, Easter, and Jacobs disclosed they are members of the parish, but believe they can be impartial.

Lynn Peters, School Principal, introduced Peter Baldwin, AMDG.

Peter Baldwin, AMDG, stated as a majority of you know there is a vast amount of parking. There is a two-story wing, and the upper area was rented. A canopy will be added in the back; a small playground is proposed adjacent to the building; and a larger playground area north of the parking lot. In the first year there would be Pre-K through Grade 2, with one grade added each year through Grade 5. Grades 6-8 would require a future building addition.

Jim Rabat, Warner, Norcross & Judd, Counsel for the Diocese of Grand Rapids, stated this will be a very efficient use of the site. Submitted with the initial package is a site use chart with the school and church side-by-side to give you an idea of the flow of people in and out of the site. We felt there would not be a significant increase in the traffic on Ada Drive; there would only be a 3.6% increase in traffic, or even half that. When the school is fully occupied with Grade 5 the increase would be 5.4% and 2.7%, which we felt was a moderate increase. The two entranceways that service the site are each over 1,000 feet long when you measure them to the drop-off canopy. Another benefit of the site is it has ample parking, which will be more than required by the school needs. We think it's a great use and it won't create additional burden.

Leisman asked if they anticipate buses coming and going.

Peters stated she has been in contact with the Superintendent of Forest Hills Public School, and she assured there wouldn't be a problem and they would pick up our kids along the regular route and drop them off at St. Roberts.

Leisman asked if there would be a separate bus drop-off area.

Peters stated the plan would be for the bus to use the circle.

Baldwin stated one of the options would be to drop off in back of the church; another option would be to bring them by the canopy.

Easter stated she works along Ada Drive and morning and afternoons it's a "goat rodeo"; four schools in that two mile block. She believes adding another school is going to be a nightmare. She stated the community might have an issue with it because of the additional cars.

Jacobs suggested the possibility of turn movement restrictions at peak times.

Ferro stated evaluating traffic impacts of the additional school operation requires more than just comparing the estimated number of trips in and out of the facility to the current traffic volumes on Ada Drive on a total 24-hour basis. Traffic conditions need to be looked at during the peak hours of traffic on Ada Drive, which is concentrated around both school and commuting times; and morning is probably the worst time period because it layers school traffic on top of work community traffic. At 3:00-3:30 school times you don't have commuters in the mix. The application has been referred to a traffic engineer at Progressive AE who will look at it and offer some input.

Leisman stated we have looked at traffic routing in more detail for other school sites.

Peters stated maybe we could designate fences and gates and some kind of pedestrian flow with a diagram of the site that shows how the buses really work, how the drop-off works, how walkers get there, how the kids go from the play area back and forth; and in the play area what are we fencing, where are gates and points of entry. He stated we should know more next week regarding busing.

Ferro stated it would be helpful to know what percentage of students will be bused versus drop-off versus pedestrian.

Peters stated we know 75% are coming from the east; more traffic is coming from Spaulding.

Jacobs stated it might be helpful to know the start times of all the different schools.

Leisman stated the approval conditions should place limits on the size and scale of the operation.

## **VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER/STAFF REPORTS**

### **Review of Proposed Regulations for Short Term Rentals**

Leisman stated this will go on the agenda for next month.

### **Fulton Street Industrial Corridor Use Regulations Committee Report**

Ferro stated we would probably need another committee meeting to review a draft.

### **Communication from Vergennes Township regarding Master Plan Distribution for Comments**

Ferro stated their communication to us has a link to their plan amendment on their web site.

## **IX. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Jacobs, supported by Carter, to adjourn at 8:02 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jacqueline Smith  
Ada Township Clerk

JS/dr