

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE MARCH 16, 2017 MEETING**

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, March 16, 2017, 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 Jacobs, Butterfield, Burton, and Leisman

Absent: Easter, Lunn

Staff Present: Planning Director Ferro, Planner/Zoning Administrator Brent Bajdek

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Moved by Jacobs, supported by Butterfield, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2017 MEETING**

Moved by Burton, supported by Jacobs, to approve the February 16, 2017 Meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

**V. PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**PVM Development Plan Review, 2,411 Square Foot Building Addition, 7144 Headley St. SE, Parcel No. 41-15-33-228-013, Ada Historical Society**

Bernie Veldkamp, 8805 Hall Street, President of Ada Historical Society, stated what we are presenting will work well for the museum and the community. He showed a drawing of the addition, stating we are proposing to add on at the back with a wing coming out, and a building for the archives. Veldkamp then explained the uses for the proposed new addition.

Brent Bajdek stated the site is zoned V-R, Village Residential, within the PVM Overlay District as a Village Proper 2 Transect Zone. The Averill Museum site is considered a "Civic Building Lot" under the PVM District provisions. The proposed addition is in conformance with the dimensional standards for a Civic Building Lot, as well as all other standards contained in the PVM District appear to be met. A one-way traffic circulation route exists, with ingress from Headley Street exiting on to Teeple Avenue. In regards to parking the museum requires one parking space per 200 square feet of floor area; the PVM District standards allow for reduction in parking required to 80% of the normal requirement for Public and Civic Uses in the Village Proper 2 Transect Zone, to take into consideration availability of nearby parking, as well as reduction in demand due to offsetting demand peaks of mixed uses in the surrounding area. Seven parking spaces currently exist on site; no additional parking spaces are planned at this time. Based on parking requirements eleven parking spaces are required, nine with the reduction. The parking

amount has been adequate for daily use, along with the Post Office parking lot for special events, and lawn parking as well. A number of mature trees exist onsite; no new landscaping is proposed. It appears that one existing tree will need to be removed as part of the addition.

The proposed site layout and building design conforms with the PVM District standards. Approval of the development plan, including the deferral of construction of four parking spaces, or two with the reduction, is recommended, subject to the following condition: Exterior building mounted light fixtures shall qualify as “full-cutoff” control of light emission or of a low light intensity non-glaring style.

Jacobs asked if we deferred the parking what down the road might trigger us to say we’re going to require you to have these four parking spaces, or two with the reduction.

Ferro stated typically it would be upon a determination by the Commission that they’re needed, and there are no specific criteria in the zoning rules for that. The language in the ordinance states “at any time following approval of a plan for deferred parking the Planning Commission may require that the deferred parking be constructed within a reasonable time following a notice of such requirement made to the property owner.”

Leisman stated I have an extra condition that a revised plan shall be submitted showing the deferred parking.

Ferro stated if the PVM District reduction is used then it would be two spaces rather than four.

Butterfield asked under the Village Proper 2 with the design standards, does the vertical siding meet those standards.

Ferro stated board and batten is listed as a permitted siding material.

Veldkamp pointed out the seven parking spaces on the drawing, and explained other parking spaces that are available.

Leisman stated he likes the exterior cut-off condition, and likes the idea of adding a condition that a revised plan should be submitted to the Planning Department prior to issuance of a building permit.

Moved by Jacobs, supported by Burton, to approve the proposed PVM district development plan for a 2,411 sq. ft. addition to Ada Historical Society’s Averill Museum, subject to the following conditions:

1. Exterior building mounted light fixtures shall qualify as “full-cutoff” control of light emission or of a low light intensity non-glaring style, subject to approval of the Planning Department. Fixture specifications shall be submitted for approval, prior to building permit issuance.
2. A revised PVM development plan shall be submitted, subject to Planning Department review and approval, identifying the potential future location of two (2) deferred off-street parking spaces, prior to building permit issuance.

Motion carried unanimously.

**PUD Pre-Application Conference, Attached Townhomes (74 Units in 17 Buildings) on a 9.9 Acre Site, 1040, 1050, 1078, and 1090 Spaulding Ave. SE, Parcel Nos. 41-15-31-451-017, 008, 009, and 010, John Wheeler and Michael Maier**

John Wheeler, 7840 Conservation, stated this development will be north of Cascade Road on Spaulding, and our goal is to submit on April 20<sup>th</sup> for a May 18<sup>th</sup> public hearing and request for re-zoning of the

property. He stated the project would contain 14 four-unit buildings and three six-unit buildings. There will be two ways of ingress/egress that loops the property so there is no through traffic on either one of the accesses; it's all serviced by public utilities. There are five areas on the property that service storm water and Nederveld will be doing a study of that. We are not asking for any special uses/variances. In the center of the property is a knoll with trees which will be saved. We usually do two and one-half units of parking per residential, one inside the garage and one and one-half outside the garage.

Leisman stated Ada Zoning Ordinance has limits on the number of units on private roads even with two accesses.

Wheeler stated in the PUD we read that, and the drawings will reflect that as part of the PUD application; it can go up to 75. We'll have Nederveld look at it and respond to that question.

Ferro asked if there is a Consumers Energy easement that is actually on the property that is an unused easement.

Rob Berends, Nederveld, stated there is a power line that services one home, maybe two homes, and the out building.

Ferro asked if it would affect the plan if they could get the easement abandoned.

Berends stated we will pursue that.

Ferro stated one thing that's not clear is what your building setback is from the right-of-way along Spaulding.

Berends stated it is a 33-foot right-of-way. In preliminary discussions with the Road Commission, they asked that we either grant over to them an additional 17 feet of right-of-way or grant them a permanent grading easement.

Bajdek stated amendments to the Township Master Plan were approved in 2016. The Township Master Plan amendments included the Future Land Use Map being amended to designate the property for either Medium Density use or Office-Service use; it also allowed for the densities of the "Medium Density Residential" land use category of the Future Land Use map to increase from a maximum density of six units per acre to nine units per acre. The total density of the site is calculated to be 8.79 units per acre with the assumption that 50% of the gross land area will be devoted to rights-of-way. The property is zoned R-2 Single-Family Residential, and PO Professional Office, and under the PUD provisions of the Zoning Ordinance there is only a maximum density of six units per acre allowed. A rezoning of the subject property to R-4 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential is required in order for the site to be residentially developed at the proposed density. Under the PUD provisions, up to a maximum density of twelve units per acre is allowable for property zoned R-4 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential. A looped internal private drive/road has been designed to align with existing curb cuts on the west side of Spaulding Avenue for traffic safety.

An expansive permanently-preserved wetland/open space is located at the northeastern extent of the site that extends northward; other wetland areas also exist onsite. The site has been designed to conform to the Township's Riparian Area Protection Standards; "natural vegetation zones" and "transition zones" are indicated on the concept plan. The site is planned to be served with public utilities from Spaulding Avenue. The applicant is looking for feedback and direction from the Planning Commission.

Burton asked if there is enough space around the Riparian area, around the wetlands where the two middle northern most units are hugging that area, not a backyard.

Berends stated we will abide by the Township rules for the natural buffer and the transition zone.

Wheeler asked what is the buffer from high water to the building.

Berends stated 25 feet total.

Butterfield stated you think we should walk it and take a look at it.

Wheeler stated you need to do that because right now you can see the watermark, the water lines, the setback lines are all out there. We can do a tour with Nederveld.

Ferro stated concern at the southern access driveway onto Spaulding and the proximity of the western most unit driveway backing into the main access road, and how close that is to the driveway throat onto Spaulding Avenue. You've got potential for stacking there.

Butterfield questioned if there are sidewalks on Spaulding.

Ferro stated no, there is on the corner office building frontage but that's it.

Butterfield stated she agreed with Susan, looking at what are the plans to protect the wetland areas during construction.

Ferro stated no. There's a subdivision at the southeast corner of Spaulding and Ada Drive, and on the west side of that intersection as well.

Wheeler stated our goal on the PUD is to connect to that trail. We talked with the Township Planner about an easement that goes out to the trail to connect our resident; that's definitely a part of our application; we want to use that trail; that's a very big asset to these people.

Butterfield stated that trail will connect the residents to Ada Village, as well.

Leisman stated there should be some kind of connectivity for these people.

Wheeler stated we had a discussion about let's get an easement, so we got with Consumers about putting a connection path between a couple of the buildings to get out to the trail.

Ferro stated I think the major power line corridor is under the ITC's control, which is a separate entity that was spun off from Consumers Energy to the major transmission lines.

Jacobs asked if there is a higher power regarding the curb cuts for the ingress and egress, and have they okayed this?

Ferro stated the Road Commission for sure.

Berends stated he took this plan to them and their only caveat is to make sure both right-of-ways line up with driveways across the street; and they have their own standard requirements for width and setbacks, pavement types, etc.

Wheeler stated what we'd like to do with that six unit building on the very north piece is flip it over and have it walk out more toward the regulated wetlands to the south, and bring the drive right along our north property line, and have it tie into the office park driveway. We met with the County and they do not want to grant us an easement across their property, which means about five feet in order to make that alignment. We need about five feet to line up those curbs, but we're going to keep working with them.

Ferro asked if they had talked with the Drain Commissioner.

Berends stated that parcel is under control of the Kent County Drain Office.

Leisman asked is the idea in your proposal to run the re-zoning and the PUD together.

Wheeler stated yes. The sellers are pretty impatient and they've given us a drop dead deadline to close in August. If you'll allow us to, we can have the public hearing and the re-zoning in the same meeting.

Leisman stated I would prefer that. He stated he would like to see a little more on the elevations with some design features.

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

### **Review of Proposed River St. Design**

Ferro stated we have been working with the landscape architecture and engineering team on design development of the planned future park that would be along the Thornapple River frontage at the rear of the current shopping center. The overview plan shows the future redeveloped shopping center area with a planned new street called River Street that will be constructed this year that will extend off Headley Street. It will define the edge between the developed mixed use commercial property on the north side of River Street, and land that will be donated to the Township for a public river front park. In the Envision Ada Plan and dating back to the Charrette we had the concept of a potential trail through all of the natural area that is Township owned at the confluence of the Grand River and the Thornapple River. On this plan, and included in the cost estimate, is a future boardwalk that would extend from the public river front park out and underneath the M-21 bridge to connect to the existing trail. We don't have the funds available to complete that now, so it's not part of our proposed improvements in the next two years.

Ferro then went on to explain what is proposed in two phases over the next two years in the main part of the park that would include a river front trail; at the edge of River Street 67 head-in parking spaces; a couple of raised plaza areas 67 feet above the main park green space; a raised plaza east of the school house plaza with outdoor seating and tables with a barrier-free ramp system extending down to the park level; a children's playground located adjacent to the seating plaza; and closer to the river and the existing pond is an outdoor performance space with a deck that extends over the pond, and natural stone seating on the slope. At the west end of the park is a small paved plaza that could be the location for some type of public sculpture at the intersection of the new street and Headley Street with a barrier-free walkway to the main trail that runs through the park.

He stated the DDA Board has seen this plan; the DDA Citizens Committee has reviewed it and commented on it. An additional aspect of the design is it includes proposed re-contouring of some portions of the river bank along this area, or a fence for a safer condition. The cross-section shows a typical 3 to 1 slope that would be established along the river bank where the vertical drop off conditions exist, and it would incorporate planting native plant materials, shrubs, ground cover, and erosion control measures to stabilize the bank. He showed other cross sections of: the boardwalk; how the school house plaza relates to the main portion of the park; the layout of the building that could be used for restrooms; and how the tiered stone seating area would relate to the outdoor performance deck surface.

He stated it is about a \$1.6 million total project not including the boardwalk connection. Our goal is to construct portions of the project this year at the same time that the street and the head-in parking is constructed; the hardscape areas of the raised plaza for the school house and the plaza for the outdoor seating area. The playground, the outdoor performance space, the river front trail, and landscaping would be constructed in 2018. Concern has been expressed by the Parks Recreation and Land Preservation Advisory Board and by the DDA Citizens Council with the extent of 20 large trees being removed and 35

small trees. Starting in mid-July when street construction starts, we could potentially relocate the schoolhouse at the east end of the shopping center and then relocate it at the end of the street construction. He stated we are looking at submitting a DNR grant application for \$300,000 toward the cost of the Phase Two portion of the project that would be in 2018.

Leisman asked what about places for fishing boats or kayaks.

Ferro stated the plans from a year ago did have a kayak launch on it. The environmental consultant and the landscape architect both felt that because the river current tends to hug the bank that it's not a good location for a kayak launch.

Butterfield stated she likes the manicured area, the public space amphitheater, etc.; to the east natural vegetation is very positive; doesn't like removal of the trees.

### **Status of Parking Study Update**

Ferro stated the Parking Committee has had one meeting where the Parking Consultant gave an overview of the parking study from 2015, and some information regarding general desired parking management practices in a downtown area. The consultant has been provided with updated information regarding projected future square footage in the village, including the re-developed shopping center as well as revised future parking inventory information, including the spaces to be added this year. A second meeting of the committee is scheduled for the 28<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting they will be seeing projections of future parking demand from the consultant in relation to supply, so we can hopefully better quantify what our future needs are, and then start talking about potential solutions.

### **Information Regarding Regulations of Short Term Rentals**

Bajdek stated at the January meeting a representative for John Barr with property located on East Fulton Street expressed interest in getting the process started on developing regulations for short term rentals. Since that time, Mr. Barr provided material/ordinances from several municipalities regarding short term rentals, with common language. The majority of the examples are for resort communities.

Burton asked if this would include B&B's.

Bajdek stated Airbnb's.

Leisman stated I think the subject will be addressed at the MTA Conference in April. Do we want to see any more information, do we want to form a sub-committee, do we want to do nothing?

Butterfield stated we need to look at it.

Ferro stated I would like to see if we can find any examples from communities that aren't resort communities, or major cities that have conference visitors; would like to find an example of a typical suburban type community that has adopted regulations.

Butterfield stated what are their differences from a weekend rental versus somebody who wants to rent a space for a month or two.

Leisman asked how long that would take, a month or two.

Ferro stated we could probably have more information in a month.

Ferro stated last month you asked for some information regarding the relaxed parking provisions in the PVM District. He then handed out the exact language that is in the form-base code. It points out that mixed-use in fill developments are located in proximity to on-street parking; in proximity to existing or

future public transit; adjacent to an extensive public sidewalk system; and within an area having a mix of different but compatible land uses that can share parking spaces. Based on these standards, the following standards pertaining to off-street parking supply apply in the PVM District. It then says “the minimum off-street parking requirements shown elsewhere in the ordinance will be multiplied by the factors in the table below to produce modified off-street parking requirements for the PVM District.” The reduction factors vary from 40% of the normal required parking up to 80%, depending on the land use type and which sub-zone within the PVM District you are dealing with. He then went through a parking calculation example, and stated it cuts the parking in half down to 15.1 spaces. That approach is basically consistent with the philosophy that’s expressed in the Envision Ada Plan and in the Parking Study that we should be striving to have a higher proportion of our parking needs met through public on-street and off-street parking, and less reliance on individual restricted lots on each development site in the village.

Ferro further stated the regulatory approach I think we should strive for in the village is that we have no on-site parking required, and that all of our parking needs are met by either on-street or in off-street lots. That’s the solution we should be working toward. Or the next best alternative is private shared parking similar to what we have in the West Village Commercial Center, and that’s what we’ll have in the re-developed shopping center.

Ferro asked what do you think of using the old school house for restrooms?

Butterfield stated what about an alternative use; how about an information center.

Ferro stated it has been suggested the elementary schools that have school trips into the village can use it for an impromptu classroom space.

Butterfield asked if it was still potentially being considered for use near the green space.

Ferro stated I’ve heard that idea.

Jacobs asked who would maintain the building.

Ferro stated if it was used for restrooms it would need to have a durable interior that would be maintained by the Township; it would probably have an automatic locking door system on it. Converting it to restrooms is going to be more expensive than just leaving it as a single space.

## **IX. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Jacobs, supported by Butterfield, to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jacqueline Smith  
Ada Township Clerk

JS/dr