



**ADA TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MINUTES
TUESDAY AUGUST 7, 2007, 4:30 P.M.
ADA TOWNSHIP OFFICES
7330 THORNAPPLE RIVER DR. SE, ADA, MICHIGAN**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Hartley, Fields, Pratt, Korth and Boman
STAFF PRESENT: Kushion, Thompson and Ferro
COMMUNITY PRESENT: 11
ABSENT: None

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER-4:30 pm

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA-Moved by Member Korth, supported by Member Pratt. Yes:5 No: 0
Motion Carried.

III. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 3, 2007, ZBA MEETING MINUTES-Moved by Member Pratt
Supported by Member Hartley. Yes: 5 No: 0 Motion Carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

None

V. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Request for Variance from sign standards to allow a billboard to be 5 feet from the front property line instead of the required 50 feet in the C2 zoning district, Wing, LLC, 7980 Fulton St., 41-15-35-100-015.**

The applicant is present for the variance. Kevin Green with Wing, LLC stated this property has been a legal billboard property for some time and the current owner contacted him for use. Mr. Green stated billboards are potentially the only use for this site and gave a past background of discussion with Mr. Ferro and his concern was size and height of sign. Mr. Green stated they wanted to keep the size a favorable 10ft by 36 ft and is seeking the variance for the diminished size. It would be 22 feet below the pavement and they want to follow the law. Mr. Green stated the Ordinance is vague in size and dimensions but they could build the billboard within a favorable size and they have no desire to cut or clear vegetation as there is not a lot of vegetation to be concerned about. Mr. Green stated proportionately it would look like what the existing signs look like.

Open to Public comment.

James Todd, 8025 E. Fulton, stated he lives across the street from the site and thought there was a moratorium on billboards. Chairman Boman stated the applicant put in an application prior to the moratorium. Mr. Todd stated he objected to the billboard and his letter to the Zoning Board of Appeals with his concerns is on file in the clerk's office with the minutes of this meeting.

Bruce Mattheww-8067 E. Fulton, has lived there about a year and enjoys the esthetics that exists in the area. Mr. Matthew stated putting a billboard in the place being requested is a safety factor and a concern it would attract attention and be detrimental to traffic. He objects to any billboard being put in this property.

Monica Sekulich, from Greencastle Properties, stated the board should keep in mind the rights of the property owner. As discussed previously at a past Ada Township Board meeting, a billboard would be allowed there and Mr. Greene agreed to reduce the size of the board and is here today to ask for a smaller sign, stating it was a good compromise.

Bill Wood, 8060 Vergennes, stated the property has been a C2 for some time and questioned if there was need for a variance. Mr. Wood stated he was against the variance request and not to give any additional variance as he stated the township is going along very nice as it is. A bill board would be a thumb in everyone's eye.

Ray Kisor, 354 Greentree, Ada, stated as a resident and property owner adjacent of the 8066 property he agreed with Mr. Todd and was concerned the traffic would be distracted by the billboard.

Kelly Matthews, 8067 E. Fulton, stated they moved here for the small town feeling and the character of Ada. Ms. Matthews stated you could drive up to Ada and know you are in Ada because of the quality of life and safety issues. Ms. Matthews stated she is a Fisheries and Wildlife management director and was concerned about erosion which could be an issue by the bridge if this variance would be passed. She stated a bill board would be considered an eye-sore and asked about the content of billboard. She stated she opposes this request.

Co-Chair Fields responded to Ms. Matthews comments about the content of the billboard and stated "this is the zoning board and our questions are whether a billboard should be allowed."

Kevin Green addressed some of the comments and said two options were to pursue the variance or to work with the township to make it smaller in the spirit of the law. Mr. Green stated there are no studies that show it hurts traffic safety and it would be located a half mile east of downtown Ada. Mr. Green stated his company has no intent to put anything perverse on the billboards.

Co-Chair Fields asked if discussion had taken place with DEQ regarding destruction of any wetlands and Mr. Green stated when seeking the DEQ permit they stated it didn't matter to them as it does not destroy the water or anything in it.

Jim Todd, stated it should be considered they do have a turn around factor which is west of his driveway and emergency vehicles go down Pettis Avenue.

Closed public comment

Chairman Boman stated Walter Jousma, 7980 E. Fulton, sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals correspondence regarding he was not in favor of the variance which is on file with the Zoning Board of Appeals minutes in the Clerk's office.

Open to board discussion.

Planning Director Ferro stated in June the board did implement a moratorium on new sign permits and billboards and it is still in effect. Ferro suggested asking the township board to exempt this application for this billboard request at the next Ada Township Board meeting on 8/13/07.

Chairman Boman stated "we are not being asked to approve or disapprove the request but can it be built 5 feet instead of 50 feet off the road." It is the charge of the Zoning Board of Appeals to decide if there is practical difficulty or self created and stated he does not see it as practical difficulty.

Member Pratt stated she was in agreement with Chairman Boman with the same issue whether or not the sign would be put in wetlands. Member Pratt state the request for a variance is self created and asked if the DEQ had been contacted.

Member Hartley stated part of the issue is the taking down of trees.

Co-Chair Fields stated he agreed with Member Hartley and would taking down the trees cut into the floodplain. Co-Chair Fields stated he wanted more information from the DEQ, have their representation at the next meeting and table the request for a month. He suggested showing the Zoning Board of Appeals what it would look like 5 feet back from the road and 50 feet back from the road.

Member Korth stated with the information he had he could not make a decision at this time. Additionally if there is a moratorium, he would want to have this variance request postponed.

Move by Co-Chair Fields to table request and ask applicant to supply the original plan and a new plan, supported by Member Korth. Yes: 5 No: 0 Motion Carried to table until further information is provided.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE-None

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT-None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT-Moved by Co-Chair Fields, supported by Member Hartley to adjourn at 5:25 pm. Yes: 5 No: 0 Motion Carried

Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC
Ada Township Clerk

RS/DT