

Springfield Township
Planning Commission – Business Meeting
Minutes September 21, 2009

Call to Order: Chair John Steckling called the September 21, 2009 Business Meeting of the Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Rd., Davisburg, MI 48350.

Attendance:

Commissioners Present

Frank Aiello
Dean Baker
Roger Lamont
Bill Leddy
John Steckling
Neil Willson
Ruth Ann Hines

Commissioners Absent

None

Staff Present

Mike Trout, Supervisor
Laura Moreau, Clerk

Consultants Present

Sally Elmiger

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Aiello moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Support by Commissioner Lamont. Vote on the motion: Ayes Aiello, Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Steckling, Willson and Hines. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Public Comment: None

Consent Agenda:

Commissioner Aiello moved to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. Support by Commissioner Lamont. Vote on the motion: Ayes: Aiello, Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Steckling, Willson and Hines. Nays: None. Motion Carried.

Old Business:

1. Revisions to CIP

Mike Trout, Supervisor stated that the he had incorporated the WECS (Wind Energy Conservation System) into the Capital Improvement Plan and that everything else stayed the same. He will e-mail a copy to all Planning Commissioners.

New Business:

1. Davisburg Overlay District Discussion

Township Supervisor Mike Trout presented a map on the Downtown boundaries. He expressed a need to create an overlay district or a Zoning district that allows for the character of the township to be preserved but also allows for new growth. He stated to consider the fact that in the downtown area we have a mix of uses, offices and commercial type uses, and do we want that trend to continue or do we want to look at areas where office uses might be more conducive or that commercial might be more conducive? What type of requirements are we going to place on people in terms of parking, limited space, setbacks and signage? It is important to do this now because some things are starting to happen and we want a plan in place to help guide development.

Sally Elmiger stated that about a year ago the board was working on a Downtown Davisburg plan and if that plan is not going to happen perhaps an overlay district or a separate zoning district for the downtown area can developed, with goals and objectives that can be put in the ordinance.

Mike Trout asked Sally to refresh his memory because what he saw was a streetscape plan.

Sally responded that most of it was aesthetic, but she recalled some other issues that were going to be addressed like parking and dealing with non conformities. Obviously the septic system was a huge issue that will really impact how well that area can develop. A wastewater solution did not get very far at that time. But if you're interested in how to encourage development in that area then you could come up with some goals for that area and then start working on either an overlay or its own zoning district.

Commissioner Aiello stated that even if it is not part of a formal planning process we should come to some consensus on what our goals are. Then we should identify what impediments currently exist in the zoning of that area that prevent those goals from happening, from our perspective at least. We should also identify outside strategies that we might use that aren't solely zoning to encourage those goals and then create a zoning overlay that allows those goals to be achieved. As far as the borders, the hamlet should be included from the cemetery to the civic center and Davisburg Elementary.

Chairperson Steckling agreed with Commissioner Aiello, that an overlay district does make sense. Just like what was done on Dixie Highway, it leaves what is in place there and then able to add other functionality that we decide is beneficial and gets the most done.

Commissioner Lamont also agrees with the boundaries and that the Fountain Hills area should be included because there are still several large lots in that area which would make Davisburg more than a one road area of development. Even though what is in Fountain hills does not align with what is in the hamlet, it would contrast and show the new and the old blending together. Even though there is some development there, there is plenty of vacant land for future development. Certainly as we look forward and the possibilities exist for a community septic or waste water treatment facility, the more users that can be put on the system will lower the cost per user.

Commissioner Hines agreed with Commissioner Lamont including up to the Fountain Hills area.

Commissioner Leddy also agrees with the boundaries and the overlay district but wants more historical restoration in the central core and maybe some other development that fits that mold in the open areas. Also try to reserve a spot for some type of septic system for that area and a pathway to connect everything together.

Chairperson Steckling stated that the consensus seems to be that we want some further studies done by Carlisle/Wortman with some recommendations for an overlay district. He also believes that in conjunction with the studies some serious thinking needs to be done on the septic and the parking situation specifically in the hamlet to come up with some realistic solutions. We can create something that allows for specific uses but if it can't physically be done, this would be a waste of time and energy.

Commissioner Baker stated that if our goals are intended to impact decision making on future uses, and types of business, than the septic situation is "mission critical". Even if a septic solution was not possible the idea of pathways and parking would be important and we should not walk away from our efforts Downtown even if the septic situation was not possible to resolve. But it is a critical first step.

The Commission determined boundaries for the overlay district: From Dilley Road west to include the Civic Center and Davisburg Elementary then south to include the Fountain Hills Development, septic system issues should be a primary consideration.

2. Zoning Ordinance No. 26, Section 18.07 – Site Plan Review

Commissioner Steckling explained how it has been discussed in the past various ways to streamline the process of site plan reviews. Part of this has been a recommendation from our Planners where we get rid of some of the requirements that are placed on an applicant initially and do more of a planning and concept rather than so much of a construction compliance analysis. With that in mind, revisions were intended to target that.

Sally Elmiger explained that this would not require the applicant to provide road commission and drain commission approval for things that you don't really need to get approval for until site plan is finished. While those things will be required by the township, it just would not be required at the time that this ordinance says it's required. This revision is in the preliminary stage.

Commissioner Lamont stated that in the past, many motions have included language contingent on this whole paragraph. So approval for a final site plan would be granted and sent to the building department to wait for approval from the Road Commission and Drain Commission.

Commissioner Aiello asked if the Township Attorney has reviewed the proposed amendments.

Supervisor Trout indicated that Greg Need has not reviewed the revisions but he will ask him to do so.

Commissioner Aiello moved to set the amendments to section 18.07 – Site Plan Review to Zoning Ordinance for Public Hearing at the earliest convenience of the Clerk, contingent on review of the Township Attorney. Support by Commissioner Leddy. Vote on the Motion: Yes: Aiello, Baker, Hines, Leddy, Lamont, Steckling and Willson. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Supervisor Trout asked about section 2d about "or agencies having jurisdiction"

Sally Elmiger stated that it would make sense to strike this sentence but either way would be fine.

3. Soil Erosion Ordinance Discussion

Supervisor Trout stated he wants to look at having more control of this process and bringing it "in-house."

Sally Elmiger stated that Brian Oppman is certified as a Soil Erosion Inspector/Administrator.

The Commission discussed how, at this time, Oakland County is handling this and if it is brought in-house the Township would need to develop a fee schedule.

Supervisor Trout read Greg Need's memo. He noted that this Ordinance is something that needs to be approved by the Township Board but he would like input from the Planning Commission. All agreed it was a good idea.

Other Business:

1. Priority/Task List

Supervisor Trout asked if the Commissioners wanted to look into Adult Foster Care, to try to clarify definitions. It was decided to have Greg Need review.

Supervisor Trout mention that an applicant came into the office concerning Wind Energy. He explained how this is to be a private system for the school system at the technical center. They are exempt from the ordinance. Supervisor Trout suggested that the Planning Commission should look into the Wind Energy ordinance fees and how they are set between commercial and private usage.

Supervisor Trout wants the Planning Commission to look into the restrictions on banners. He would like to consider permitting temporary signs and banners of certain size and for a specified length of time.

The Commission discussed how this would be handled through the Ordinance Officer, fees to be collected and type of signs and banners that would be allowed.

Commissioner Aiello asked Clerk Moreau if updates to the Zoning Ordinance could be sent electronically. Clerk Moreau stated she can send electronically. Instead of getting updates on paper, she will send electronically first and then if anyone would like it on paper the Clerk's office could provide it at that time.

Public Comment:

Clerk Moreau mentioned that Connie Willson will be filling in for Renee Wilson as recording secretary.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Steckling moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Support by Commissioner Lamont. Vote on the Motion: Yes: Aiello, Baker, Hines, Leddy, Lamont, Steckling and Willson. Nays: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Michelle Cox, Recording Secretary