

Springfield Township
Planning Commission – Business Meeting
Minutes January 16, 2012

Call to Order: Chairman Baker called the January 16, 2012 Business Meeting of the Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, MI 48350.

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

Dean Baker
Roger Lamont
Bill Leddy
Kevin Sclesky
Beverly Shaver
Neil Willson

Commissioners Absent

Ruth Ann Hines

Staff Present

Collin Walls, Supervisor

Consultants Present

Brian Oppmann, Planner
Dick Carlisle, Planner

Approval of Agenda: Approved.

Public Comment: None.

Consent Agenda: Minutes of the December 19, 2011 meeting.

Commissioner Willson moved to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2011 as presented. Supported by Commissioner Shaver. Voted yes: Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Sclesky, Shaver, Willson. Voted no: None. Absent: Hines. Motion Carried.

Public Hearing:

1. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance No. 26, Article IX, C-1 Local Business District, Section 9.01, to add the following, “9. Public utility buildings, such as telephone exchanges, electronic transformer stations, and similar uses, excluding outdoor storage.”

Chairperson Baker opened the Public Hearing at 7:32 PM.

No public comment.

Chairperson Baker closed the Public Hearing at 7:33 PM.

2. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance No. 26, Article X, C-2 General Business District, Section 10.01, to add the following, “12. Public utility buildings, such as telephone exchanges, electronic transformer stations, and similar uses, excluding outdoor storage.”

Chairperson Baker opened the Public Hearing at 7:34 PM.

No public comment.

Chairperson Baker closed the Public Hearing at 7:35 PM.

Old Business:

1. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance No. 26, Article IX, C-1 Local Business District, Section 9.01, to add the following, “9. Public utility buildings, such as telephone exchanges, electronic transformer stations, and similar uses, excluding outdoor storage.”

Commissioner Lamont made a motion to recommend Zoning Ordinance No. 26, Article IX, C-1 Local Business District, Section 9.01, to add the following, “9. Public utility buildings, such as telephone exchanges, electronic transformer stations, and similar uses, excluding outdoor storage.” be sent to the Township Board for first reading at the next available meeting. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Voted yes: Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Sclesky, Shaver, Willson. Voted no: None. Absent: Hines. Motion Carried.

2. Amendment to Zoning Ordinance No. 26, Article X, C-2 General Business District, Section 10.01, to add the following, “12. Public utility buildings, such as telephone exchanges, electronic transformer stations, and similar uses, excluding outdoor storage.”

Commissioner Lamont made a motion to recommend Zoning Ordinance No. 26, Article X, C-2 General Business District, Section 10.01, to add the following, “12. Public utility buildings, such as telephone exchanges, electronic transformer stations, and similar uses, excluding outdoor storage.” be sent to the Township Board for first reading at the next available meeting. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Voted yes: Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Sclesky, Shaver, Willson. Voted no: None. Absent: Hines. Motion Carried.

New Business:

1. **Randy Hosler – Site Plan Amendments**

Mr. Carlisle stated that some of the planning that went on in the Dixie Highway area of the Township predated the Dixie Corridor Study. He stated that the Davisburg Dixie Highway area was designated to be a focal point for community commercial activity. The intent was to make it a commercial node predominately designed to serve the community. He stated that the Kroger complex was developed and several residential neighborhoods. He stated that when the property south of Kroger became available, it was a challenge because it was the old Pontiac steel plant and there was a concern regarding contamination. He stated that there was a lot of attention and input from the neighbors behind this property as to how it was going to be developed including architectural compatibility. He stated although they are not at full capacity, there has been a lot of development in that area.

He stated that the dealership's site plan was approved in 2002 and its approval was significant since it was a larger and more intense development than had existed previously. He stated that Springfield Township adopted Design and Architectural Standards and Requirements. Regardless if this was a new development or an amendment, development is required to meet these requirements, under section 16.23 of the Zoning Ordinance. He stated that there should be architectural interest through the use of color, texture and relief. He stated that the current building has 3 elevations all possessing details such as a pitched roof, gabled end and circular windows. The proposed amendment in façade design would eliminate the pitched roof over the main entrance and the new more contemporary roof structure is proposed. Building façade according to the ordinance should show a repeating pattern and should demonstrate no less than 2 of the 3 elements, color change, building material texture changes and projections recesses, windows extending along at least 20% of the façade. He stated that the existing building provides considerable interest with colors and texture changes. The proposed renovations will cover all of the masonry work and gables with an aluminum siding material proposed in 2 colors, white and black. The existing block will be painted the same color and the new façade will not provide any building material texture changes. He stated that the new façade does meet the requirement of 2 out of the 3 elements; the changes create a much less interesting façade. He stated that flat roofs shall shield HVAC units from view. The plans show the elimination of the pitched roof above the main entrance revealing the existing flat roof. He stated that the applicant does need to confirm that any roof mounted equipment in this area will be fully shielded.

Mr. Carlisle stated that the Ordinance emphasizes material and colors primarily to insure that in large buildings there is variation with color and materials. He stated that the proposed façade changes are not consistent with the surrounding area. He stated that the original approved site plan insured that the building was compatible with the neighborhood area and this is why there is brick and pitched roof. He stated that there are many traditional elements that were approved on the existing building. The proposed changes replace a very traditional look with something that is very contemporary and not complimentary to the surrounding area including the Kroger shopping center.

Mr. Carlisle stated that his opinion is that the proposed materials or modifications are not consistent with the surrounding area and the changes that are being proposed are not

consistent with the direction that the Township has been heading. This consists of a more traditional type of architecture. He stated that he does not believe that this change should be approved.

John Miller from The Garrison Company introduced himself as the architectural firm that has put together the proposed design. He stated that this project is one of many General Motors projects which are requiring all of the dealerships to upgrade their facilities. He stated that they have come up with a set of design intent documents which determines building materials and their company has no leeway whatsoever in the use of the materials to maintain General Motors requirements. He stated that they have taken the existing facility and incorporated the changes that General Motors is requiring for their design intent. He stated that there is not much renovation going on inside the building, just an upgrade to the customer service waiting room.

Commissioner Sclesky asked if the intent was to cover the beautiful masonry work with the aluminum siding material.

Mr. Miller stated yes; however, this siding material was a very expensive, high quality material that is a composite, flat material.

Commissioner Sclesky stated that he has visited the site and surrounding neighborhoods. He stated that the surrounding buildings and construction are consistent with the brick work which the Township intended for the long term plan of the Dixie corridor. He stated that the proposed change would be taking away from the intent of the design of the area.

Commissioner Leddy concurred. He stated that the current dealership with its roofline and brick work is a beautiful building and he doesn't understand why General Motors would want to change the current building into one that looks cheaper. He asked what General Motors could do if the Planning Commission said no; Springfield Township has their own requirements that they must uphold.

Commissioner Shaver asked about page A2 which indicates that the screening on the top will be removed and on page A-2.1, the screening is still shown with a gap where the logo is indicated. She asked about the placement of the gap and if it was still going to provide the screening for the equipment on the roof.

Mr. Miller approached the Commissioners to look at the drawing. He stated that the intention was to remove the screening.

Commissioner Shaver stated that one of the original questions from 2002 was the screening of the roof top equipment. She asked if the rooftop equipment will be screened.

Mr. Miller answered that this needs to be looked at closer.

Commissioner Lamont asked Mr. Carlisle about page 2 of his review and asked if the proposed design met 2 out of the 3 standards.

Mr. Carlisle answered that yes, the proposed design meets the 2 out of 3 standards required.

Commissioner Lamont stated that from this perspective, the proposed changes would meet ordinance, but maybe not personal opinion. He stated that he would need confirmation that the removal of any parapet would still provide shielding for any roof top equipment. He stated that under section B, black is a prohibited color under the ordinance. He stated that according to the Dixie Corridor Study and the Master Plan, the goal was to create a sense of architectural compatibility and architectural complementary buildings that would fit into the neighborhood and the surrounding buildings. He stated that the goal was continuity in design. He stated that the proposed changes would not fit into either of those documents and these documents do not allow these changes. He stated that he heard Mr. Miller state that there was zero tolerance in General Motor's plan. He stated that he is not opposed to the arch and personally feels that they are taking a beautiful building and making it less beautiful.

Commissioner Willson concurred with Commissioner Lamont. He stated that if this building were sitting in a completely different area, he would not have a problem with the building, but it clearly violates the spirit and intent of Township Ordinance. He stated that he understands the facility upgrade programs as they come from General Motors; however, they need to understand that they still must conform to Ordinance standards. He stated that this is not a design that he could accept in this location.

Commissioner Lamont asked about the neon being removed. He asked if there was less square foot of signage because it appears that way from the drawing.

Mr. Carlisle stated that this was not part of the request.

Commissioner Lamont stated that if this comes back to the Commission, they would need to know the amount of square footage proposed.

Chairperson Baker stated that the Township has been working to try to create a plan for Dixie Highway and the businesses that front it including architectural harmony. He stated that in his opinion, the Commission felt like the current Hosler building meets the desired standards. He stated that the proposed design goes against the architectural harmony. He stated that he can appreciate the expense that will go into the new design, but he feels that it is not complementary to the adjoining design of neighborhoods and commercial buildings that are in the proximity of the dealership.

Supervisor Walls stated that it was important for the record to reflect how important the current Hosler dealership has been in providing a positive example for buildings like Springfield Town Square and Buscemis; it has been an excellent pillar in the community for the design standards and desires for Springfield Township and Mr. Hosler is to be commended.

Commissioners concurred.

Commissioner Lamont stated that he understands the design changes that General Motors is proposing, but also thinks that some compromises can be made and he has seen other changes in neighboring communities that reflect compromise. He stated that he would entertain some adjustments to this design going forward and there are possibilities there. He stated that his job is to enforce the ordinance as a Planning Commissioner.

Commissioner Sclesky stated that the entire Commission feels the same way about Randy Hosler and his dealership being beneficial to the community and Mr. Hosler is a total asset to the community.

Commissioner Lamont stated that money spent in the community would be a good thing.

Chairperson Baker stated that the Planning Commission approved the original site design and any modifications are required to come back to the Planning Commission for approval. He stated that if the Planning Commission does not accept this design, the applicant is free to come back with modifications and he suggested working with the Township Planner and Township Engineer as to creating an acceptable design. He stated that the responsibility is now on the applicant. He stated that if this design is accepted, the applicant can move forward on the exact proposed design. He stated that they are there to approve it or deny it.

Commissioner Shaver made a motion to deny the proposed Hosler Dealership façade renovation as submitted because the requirements in Section 16.23 are not met by the proposed design. Supported by Commissioner Leddy. Voted yes: Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Sclesky, Shaver, Willson. Voted no: None. Absent: Hines. Motion Carried.

2. Village Center – Ordinance amendments

Mr. Carlisle provided aerial photographs of the Downtown Davisburg area to all of the Commissioners. He stated that the current zoning of the Downtown Davisburg area is C-1 and the dimensional requirements of this zoning are not conducive to the downtown area. He stated that what they are trying to do is reflect the current physical conditions including common walls, zero setbacks and common parking areas. He stated that these amendments recognize these special and unique characteristics and requirements of the area. He stated that the waste issue cannot be addressed with the zoning requirements however and businesses would not fit until there are some valid wastewater options available. He stated that the goal is to preserve the architectural design in both existing and new buildings and it is also seen as permitting new development with an intensity and mixture of uses. He stated that there are some uses that are subject to special approval, primarily because of their need for review and consideration by the Planning Commission and Township Board. He stated that there also are conditions attached to the district that are related to the nature and the character of this area that attempt to regulate certain aspects that would insure that the existing character were maintained and any

improvements would be consistent. He stated that one of the things that he did not do was address the issue of signs, these modifications still need to be made. The schedule of regulations permit zero setbacks in this zoning district.

Commissioner Lamont stated that they should move forward on this.

Mr. Carlisle stated that this would make all of the current businesses conforming. He stated that he has not had the chance to check with the Clerk to determine exactly how this added section would be numbered.

Commissioner Leddy asked if there was any architectural control over new buildings so that they would blend in with the historic character of the district.

Mr. Carlisle stated that they included a provision under Section X 06 regarding the preservation of existing architectural feature to encourage this. He stated that they do not have a historic survey of this area and the best they can do is encourage the historic preservation of the architectural features.

Commissioner Leddy asked if there was a map included of the proposed area.

Mr. Carlisle answered that he did not include a map but it was primarily the properties that front Broadway from Andersonville Road to the Mill Pond and it would probably include the lumberyard property.

Commissioner Lamont stated that he does not believe that they finalized and approved the map.

Chairperson Baker stated that this came from the discussions regarding wastewater treatment and properties included, but he does not think that the map was formally adopted.

Commissioner Lamont asked if it included Fire Station #1.

Mr. Carlisle responded no, it would be up to the Commission.

Chairperson Baker asked about the acronym EFIS.

Commissioner Lamont stated that this material was cement over fiberglass mesh and chicken wire and Styrofoam.

Chairperson Baker asked how handicapped parking would be addressed.

Mr. Carlisle stated that if there is an area to provide parking, you are required by State Law to provide barrier free parking. This Ordinance does not require the businesses to provide their own parking. He determined that the parking areas that exist now are actually Oakland County Road Commission property.

Supervisor Walls stated that the Road Commission ownership was verified in the 1980's.

Commissioner Leddy asked if there was some way to gain possession of the undeveloped road right of way.

Supervisor Walls stated that the Road Commission would have to abandon it and you would need to go to court to leave the right of way vacated.

Mr. Carlisle stated that if the Planning Commission was ready to move forward on this, they would provide the correct numbers, sign provisions and they would also provide a district map that was suggested. He stated that they could set a public hearing.

Chairperson Baker stated that the maximum height was given as 28 feet without a basement. He asked if this was the height of the existing structures.

Supervisor Walls stated that it was close to this. He stated that even though it was 28 feet without a basement, it is still only a 2 story building.

Commissioner Slesky stated that the lumber yard property was large enough to require parking and also adding the Fire Station #1 to the downtown district and remove it from residential would be in the Township's interest long term.

Supervisor Walls stated that once they break the intersection of Broadway and Eaton with zoning requirements, they will be faced with many zoning requests which could be a dangerous situation.

Mr. Carlisle stated that keeping the Fire Station #1 zoned residential would make future Township Boards think very carefully about what the zoning pattern should be west of Andersonville Road. He stated that a positive part of Downtown Davisburg is it framed on both sides with residences.

Chairperson Baker stated that instead of a public hearing in February, he would like to incorporate the changes and give the residents and property owners a chance to preview the plan and offer comment. He suggested moving forward to a public hearing in March.

Mr. Carlisle and Commissioners concurred.

3. Safe Streets – Presentation

Mr. Carlisle and Mr. Oppmann provided a PowerPoint presentation about Complete Streets including current legislation (PA 135 which amended Act 51) and examples and pictures from various communities demonstrating Complete Streets and summarizing the benefits of such programs. The goal is to have all interested parties working together so that streets are designed to provide all of the functions that roadways should perform including vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and transit systems. A difficult consideration is

that the roadways in Springfield Township are primarily owned by the Oakland County Road Commission. This would require a considerable amount of consideration and cooperation from this agency. The first step is to create a complete streets policy and consider all users and all roadways in the community and then include this in a network that may already be in place. This may allow you to get funding for non-motorized projects. Mr. Oppmann suggested the ways that this program will directly affect Springfield Township. He suggested that they look over and update the current pathways plan, when the Master Plan is updated they should include Complete Street language and consider adopting a Complete Street policy. He stated that it is important to lobby the Road Commission so that if a local roadway gets repaved, they should incorporate some of the Complete Streets aspects in Springfield Township.

Mr. Carlisle stated that with this legislation, the ground work is laid as the State intends for the development of roadways. This should allow the various Road Commissions to make the desired improvements without the acceptance of all of the liability which really hindered them in the past.

Commissioner Willson asked about the additional cost as well; he stated that it cannot be all liability.

Mr. Carlisle stated that this was true, but Act 51 has required for a number of years that 1% of Act 51 monies be devoted to non-motorized transportation. There has always been a provision in Act 51 in which monies should have gone to these types of projects. He stated that Complete Street legislation will force the issue.

Commissioner Shaver asked if MDOT has the ability to provide the guidance that they are supposed to.

Mr. Carlisle responded probably not. Mr. Oppmann stated that the difficulty is that they want to focus 100% of the monies to road projects, especially in these economic times.

Commissioner Willson stated that it will take time for them to recognize that this exists and how they intent to deal with it.

Commissioner Sclesky asked what the process would be to devote that 1% to Springfield Township's pathways plan.

Mr. Carlisle stated that a report is provided to the State by the Road Commission regarding how this money is spent. He stated that it is actually spent in areas that you would not recognize as being non-vehicular. He stated that there has not been oversight on the part of the State as to how that 1% has been spent. He stated that this Complete Streets policy and legislation can change this because now communities are aware that this money can be used to help with Complete Streets projects. He stated that Springfield Township should move forward in adopting a Complete Streets policy. He stated that he does not know how the Oakland County Road Commission is addressing these issues.

Chairperson Baker stated that they have discussed pathways and have proposed a pathway system which is intended to connect areas in the community. He stated that he is pleased that this legislation must provide an impetus for the Road Commission to exhibit efforts to support non-motorized transportation.

Mr. Carlisle stated that the first step is to adopt a Complete Streets policy and a resolution as to how this policy will be used in the community. He stated that should also make sure that the Master Plan and the Pathways Plan incorporates and exhibits aspects of this Complete Streets Policy. He stated that it is up to the Commission on whether they do it separately or do it during the next update. He stated there is a benefit to taking the proactive approach.

Commissioner Sclesky asked if the Township should contact the Oakland County Road Commission and inquire about the Complete Streets programs that they are looking at for Springfield Township and what their plans are to conform to this legislation.

Mr. Carlisle answered yes; he would be interested to hear how they respond.

Supervisor Walls asked what the neighboring communities were doing.

Mr. Carlisle answered that Independence Township has not considered this yet.

Mr. Oppmann replied that Oxford just adopted the additions to their Master Plan to include Complete Streets. He stated that Holly Township adopted a Pathways Plan, but they do not have a dedicated millage and they are similar to Springfield in this regard.

Chairperson Baker asked if the pathways were going in the Road Commission's right of way, or are they attaining an easement. He stated that this was a large roadblock to Springfield's pathway system.

Mr. Carlisle stated that this information regarding the 1% of funding is not well known to other communities.

Commissioner Sclesky asked if there was a process to request the funding.

Mr. Carlisle answered that he was not aware of one. He stated that he knows that the Road Commission has to submit a report to the State on a yearly basis substantiating how this money is spent.

Chairperson Baker stated that he was in favor of moving ahead with Mr. Carlisle's suggestions. He asked Supervisor Walls if he thought the Planning Commission should move ahead or consult with the Township Board.

Supervisor Walls stated that the commitment already exists at the Township Board level. He suggested collaborating with the 6 or 10 other communities through a joint meeting with the Road Commission so that they form a united front. He suggested that this might

get them further than approaching the Road Commission in a solitary fashion. He stated that the Road Commission has new staff and this might be the time to see what new ideas might be. Supervisor Walls suggested having representatives from the different communities and the Road Commission and hold an informational meeting off site.

Commissioner Sclesky concurred.

Supervisor Walls suggested asking the Road Commission where the 1% of funding had gone so far. He stated that the OCATS organization used to be an active organization to get things done, but this organization no longer is active in making change occur.

Commissioner Sclesky asked about the Oakland County pathway plan.

Mr. Carlisle stated that this comes from Oakland County Planning and Development.

Commissioner Willson stated that he has seen it and it consists of connectivity of recreational areas. He stated that one of the priorities has to be a united front presented to the Road Commission that says that we are aware of the legislation and how they have responded to the legislation.

Supervisor Walls stated that the Planning Commission should prepare and recommend the Complete Streets resolution to the Township Board.

4. Planning Commission Bylaws – amendments

A redlined copy of the amended Bylaws was provided to each Commissioner. Supervisor Walls stated that the Township has an opportunity to add Bev Shaver to the Board of Review due to the vacancy created when Beth Lavalley resigned from the Board of Review. He stated that he reviewed the Bylaws to make sure that there was no conflict in having a person be on both the Board of Review and the Planning Commission and it appeared that this was against the Bylaws; this was a section that was amended in 2009. Attorney Greg Need was consulted and he concurred that there was no conflict in having one person hold a position on both the Planning Commission and Board of Review. Supervisor Walls stated that he consulted with Chairperson Baker and asked him for his input on the revision of the Bylaws. He stated that they made amendments such as substituting Vice Chairperson/Secretary for the word Secretary so that the Bylaws would reflect actual practice. Supervisor Walls stated that they also made the adjustment in the language reflecting distribution of material to adequately reflect actual practice. He stated the key issue is the removal of the conflict between having Bev serve on both the Board of Review and the Planning Commission since this has been confirmed to not be against State Statute. He also asked the Commission to ignore the section which requires the Planning Commission to discuss something one month and make decisions regarding it the next month at least in reference to the first page so that Bev can be appointed at the February Township Board meeting.

Chairperson Baker concurred with Supervisor Walls' comments.

Commissioner Willson asked about the amended Conflict of Interest section.

Supervisor Walls asked if it was actually a conflict if the property was located 300 feet away from you. He stated that an actual conflict would be a business or financial interest in the lot in question.

Chairperson Baker summarized the conflict of interest section including the existence of language allowing a majority vote to determine a valid conflict of interest.

Commissioner Willson concurred. He stated that he likes the way it is worded and it makes sense.

Supervisor Walls stated that this is similar language that is used at the Township Board level.

Commissioner Leddy stated that the important thing would be disclosing the information and then letting the Commission vote on it.

Supervisor Walls directed the attention to Section #8 regarding abstaining. This indicates that Commissioners may not just abstain, it must be determined through procedure that they may abstain.

Chairperson Baker explained that simply being absent is not grounds for abstaining from the vote regarding the minutes of a prior meeting.

Commissioners concurred.

Commissioner Willson asked if Supervisor Walls has the authority to refuse to put an item on the agenda.

Commissioner Lamont stated that if a site plan is submitted that is not ready, it is suggested that they wait.

Supervisor Walls suggested if anyone asked to be put on the agenda, with the Chairperson's concurrence, that person is placed on the agenda.

Chairperson Baker stated that they want flexibility; they should not set all parameters.

Commissioner Lamont made a motion that the Planning Commission Bylaws be amended as outlined in the 12/30/11 Memo from the Supervisor and presented to the Planning Commission on January 16, 2012 and discussed and that the change take effect immediately overriding the one month delay. Supported by Commissioner Willson. Voted yes: Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Sclesky, Shaver, Willson. Voted no: None. Absent: Hines. Motion Carried.

Other Business:

1. Update Priority List

Commissioners made updates and revisions to the current Priority List.

Public Comment:

None.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Willson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:19 p.m. Supported by Commissioner Lamont. Voted yes: Baker, Lamont, Leddy, Sclesky, Shaver, Willson. Voted no: None. Absent: Hines. Motion Carried.

Erin Mattice, Recording Secretary