

Vergennes Township Planning Commission Minutes
April 9, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Gillett.

Gillett, Makuski, Mastrovito, Medendorp, and Post were all present. Nauta was absent and Jernberg arrived at 7:40.

The minutes for the March 5, 2007 meeting were approved by Mastrovito; seconded by Medendorp.

The agenda was approved with changes to wait on the master plan until Jernberg arrived. Motion by Makuski; seconded by Post.

1. Ordinance Amendment Discussion – Michigan Enabling Zoning Act (MEZA), Updates, and Clarification – There was a discussion regarding changes to the zoning ordinance, complying with MEZA standards and general housekeeping. The zoning ordinance was sent to Williams and Works and was reviewed. There was a motion for a public hearing on May 14th for the zoning ordinance by Gillett; seconded by Medendorp.
2. Ordinance Amendment Discussion – Street and Trail Requirements – LARA currently has trails started, and are constructing more. The trails will go through site condos, subdivisions, and public land. Mari Stone likes how the Comprehensive Plan requires builders to consider including a trail. The Planning Commission would like to see this plan go forward, and possibly become a requirement to include a trail. LARA will have a presentation at the May 14th meeting.
3. Public Hearing on Comprehensive Plan Update – Williams & Works Presentation – Public Comment – Planning Commission Discussion and Motions – Ryan Kilpatrick, from Williams & Works, presented the basics on the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Plan is updated every five years. The Township is planning for restrictive local use type of commercial development around the Murray Lake area.

The public hearing was opened at 7:48 P.M. *Roger Odell, Bailey Dr., stated the triangle area around Bailey/Lincoln Lake and the railroad tracks is considered LDR, but wants it to be RA or open space. It is a built up area and a lot of wetlands prevents more development. On page 65, he suggested tax benefits for agriculture areas. On page 67, he had a question regarding the defined area of manufactured home community and that the higher densities should be sections 35 and 36 rather than 33 and 34. *Peter Gustafson, 12213 Bailey Dr., also commented on the area of land by Bailey and the railroad tracks, mentioning the wetlands. He would like careful consideration of that area, and would like to change the wording from open space to RA. He noted that the area at the end of Alden Nash south off Bailey is planned LDR. This area is mostly built up and abuts the Wege Preserve to the west and is along a natural beauty road. This west half of the SW quarter of section 27 should be open space. *Mari Stone,

Township Clerk, suggested that the wording of chapter 8 goals and objectives concerning a natural features inventory. This inventory has been completed by Calvin College of most land in the township. She thought the land division regulations needs to be looked at. *Cheryl Murphy, Flat River Dr., is concerned about the supposed development around her house. *Rita Kline, Vergennes St., wanted to know what the future plans for the airport were. Kilpatrick stated that the airport has no current intentions of expanding and the current zoning around the airport allows home sites. *Amy Hill, 12365 Bailey Dr., asked if there were plans to remove the railroad tracks. Kilpatrick stated there were no plans to remove the tracks. She also agreed with Roger Odell and Pete Gustafson on the triangular area off Bailey. *Carol Lee, 34 Lincoln Lake Rd., wondered where the possible wastewater treatment plant would be and where the creeping commercial area is going. Kilpatrick said that the plant could go on the DuRay/Cook property. It was also stated that the commercial area around Lincoln Lake and Vergennes was at one time proposed for a community look with mixed commercial and residential but that ordinance section did not pass. *Dale Fegal, 12752 Vergennes asked how far east the commercial is going. Jernberg said that it would run north off Jensen's NE corner and north to the ridgeline and west to Lincoln Lake below the corner residence on LL and Burroughs. *Jeff Phenix, Forstrom Dr., wanted to know what the difference between the future master plan use map and the zoning map was. It was explained that the zoning map is what is current, and the master plan map is what the zoning map may look like in the future. What about the rezoning for homes around the airport? There is no rezoning application for this area; it is already zoned for single-family home sites. *Rich Chandler, 605 Forstrom, (and several other neighbors) wanted to know if the Schreur land is going to be developed around the airport and Forstrom into multistory condos. The land is going to be developed, has been planned for many years but the same as Forstrom, single-family home sites. *Matt VanderWerff wanted to know what the definition of open space is. Kilpatrick explained that it is vague on purpose, to define agriculture, mixed residential and woodlands. *Larry Roelofs, 11665 Lally, wondered if people could sue the township over the land use map. Kilpatrick stated it would be difficult to because it is updated frequently and a current plan can stand up in court. *Jeff Lende, Lincoln Lake, was interested in the Planning Commission's take on commercial and residential divisions and planned areas. Jernberg said it depends on what the community wants and natural landmarks and barriers. The Vergennes/Lincoln Lake area has a lot of traffic and the railroad is a natural barrier. *Jeanne VanderSloot, township zoning administrator, pointed out a few color errors on the map that will be fixed for next month. *Bill Schreur, 538 Flat River Dr., sent a letter to the Planning Commission, which they had read. He said he wants his land to look like the Cook's property in comparable area. He said he felt discriminated against because he was asking for the same thing the Cooks were and he didn't receive the same treatment. He changed his plans to use the natural buffer on his property so that less people will be able to see his development. He is proposing a 160-foot residential buffer along Vergennes St. *Mari Stone, Clerk, questioned the detail

of the commercial Schreur area, seemed too specific for a master plan. The public comments were closed at 8:40 P.M.

The Comprehensive Plan needs to be approved by June so that it can go into effect in July. The Planning Commission decided that the open space needs to be changed to RA or some other similar name, they need to deal with the commercial zoned area of Schreur's property, check the Lowell master plan/ airport reference, they will change Wege buffer, the map color typos will be corrected by Jeanne, change the triangle piece, the Lowell Area Recreational Plan and the Calvin College study (natural features) needs to be included in the Plan. There was a motion to table the Comprehensive Plan and fix the aforementioned areas by Gillett; seconded by Makuski.

General Public Comment Time

Jeanne VanderSloot said that the Grand Rapids article discussing Bill Schreur's property has many errors in it and to disregard it. She stated that the Schreur's property has been planned and zoned for single family residential for decades and that they are working on new plans for it so watch the Lowell Ledger and the website for any upcoming applications.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 by Gillett; seconded by Makuski.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Mork
Recorder