

# Vergennes Township

## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

August 6, 2001

### *Amendment addition in italics*

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on August 6, 2001, at the Township Offices. At 7:00 PM the meeting was called to order by Chairman Nauta. Also present were Commissioners Alger, Gillett, Jernberg, Medendorp, Read and Richmond. (Welcome, Tom Medendorp – new commissioner!)

**APPROVAL OF JULY MINUTES:** Motion to approve by Gillett, seconded by Jernberg. All approved.

**APPROVAL/CHANGES OF AGENDA:** Add Open Space Committee report. Delete Carolyn Way's item. Motion to approve by Jernberg, seconded by Gillett. All approved.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. HEADWATERS DEVELOPMENT PRIVATE ROAD.**

**Public Hearing** opened at 7:07pm. Presentation by Ron Van Single, demonstrating answers to committee questions posed at last meeting. Attention to water flow/drainage/emergency spillway to standards of a 10-year storm. Attention to clearing as few trees as possible, up to standards of 10% grade. Ready for preliminary approval.

**Public Comments:** Greg Hovey, neighboring property owner, questioned the storm drainage plans. VanSingle: system will slow down water flow & collect it in the ponds. Applicant to go through drain commission for approval.

#### **Public Hearing closed at 7:17 PM**

**Comments by support staff:** Jay Kilpatrick: how to prevent problems with water control re: orifice size, orifice plate /Van Single- the orifice plate will be permanently situated, hard to move by vandals, etc. Jay: the pond will go above the pipe at times, and a 6" orifice-effect will be created by the system being proposed.

Jernberg: recommends designing for 25-year storm standards/ Van Singel understands they may need to adjust plans. / Jay suggests going with whatever the more stringent standard is, if the Planning Commission is inclined to approve tonight.

Jay: also, the applicant's flattening the vertical curve is a good idea – will be safer.

**Motion:** Gillett moved to recommend approval to the Township Board of the final development and private road plan contingent that the applicant follow Williams & Works recommendations as submitted (using 6" orifice, agree to spillway easement and vertical slope for sight distance). Seconded by Jernberg. All approved.

**2. OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE REPORT.** Grant opportunity via Urban/Rural Committee, wants the Planning Commission's blessing to apply. Funds to be used for assisting the Planning Commission in development of an Open Space Ordinance and to help defray costs of natural features survey being conducted by Steve Platt and Mark Fleet from the MSU-Extension Citizen Planner series. Requesting support from Planning Commission to go forward with the grant application. Also, discussion about writing the Open Space Ordinance. Why, what it would be for.

**Motion:** by Gillett to recommend to Township Board that the Planning Commission supports the Open Space Committee's application for a grant from United Growth for Kent County for money to work with Jay Kilpatrick on the Open Space/PUD ordinance language and to do a natural features survey mailing. Seconded by Richmond. All approved.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

**1. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE.** Memorandum from Williams & Works for documentation for updating Master Plan. Jay Kilpatrick presentation: Discussion for need for commercial space as the township grows. Low density development/rural character remains a community priority. Referred to citizen letter from John & Carol Lee (attachment). Master Plan speaks to some commercial development. It is early in the cycle of the Master Plan, but the new census information shows a higher rate of growth than was projected (small now, but has impact on extrapolation over coming years). Traffic is a concern. There is enough support information to justify altering the Master Plan. Plan: come back in September with revised text for the Master Plan, and if the Planning Commission approves, have public hearing in October.

**2. COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AMENDMENTS.** Discussion of updated drafts of the General Commercial and Community Commercial Zoning District, draft dated 7/21/01. Particular discussion about prevention of light pollution and preservation of night skies. Effort has been made for objective standards which will promote a village atmosphere rather than "big box" retailing. Re: 2-story buildings – trying to maintain a low profile.

Jeanne: in General Commercial District language about residential buildings/ do they need to be listed? Jay: list of permitted uses so it's not all special exception uses. Do we want to encourage residential uses in a commercial district? If so, be consistent. Summary: make residential use a special exception use, so the Planning Commission can have a chance to review how an applicant would fit into the district.

Jeanne: Community Commercial, p.3: questions the setback minimum/maximum. Then, p.4 re: *feasibility of parking being allowed only behind/beside commercial buildings.*

Jeanne: re: p.5. Questions the canvas awnings re: looking residential. Canvas can look ratty after awhile; what about other materials that might hold up better? Suggestion: remove the word, "canvas," and consider allowing other porch-like fronts that are not awnings.

*Alger: Felt that front parking should be permitted.*

**Motion** by Gillett: schedule these drafts (with changes as discussed tonight) for a Public Hearing in September. Seconded by Read. Motion approved.

Motion to adjourn by Jernberg. Seconded by Richmond.

The next meeting is September 10, 2001 (**note: second Monday!**)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Dernocoeur, Recorder