

**Vergennes Township
Planning Commission Meeting
August 7, 2017**

The meeting was opened at 7:00 pm by Jernberg.

Roll Call – Gillett, Jernberg, Makuski, Rogers, Rosema. All members were present. Also present was Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator.

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 8, 2018 meeting was made by Makuski, seconded by Rogers. Motion passed.

The agenda was approved as presented.

1. **New Ordinance Amendments Review and Discussion**
 - a. **Landscaping business use – add to commercial and industrial districts.**

Rosema questioned if snowplowing would be included as part of the landscaping business. She often sees that as part of a landscaper's business offerings. Jeanne Vandersloot said it could be added as a definition and will do that.

- b. **Senior Housing as an added use to the RA and/or other districts.**

Marcia Roth has come before the Township Board requesting permission to build senior housing on her property at Cumberland and Vergennes. This is in RA district and this use is not currently allowed. The planning commission has been directed to add the use to the ordinance. There are not many other ordinances out there regarding Senior Housing. The language was reviewed from Georgetown, Saranac Village and Ionia City. They seem to have small lot sizes. How many units are proposed? Roth is looking at a condo style, not apartments like Schneider Manor, 3-4 units per acre. They have looked at several retirement communities in the area and like the way Cook Estates is set up.

Jernberg suggested that if we find out what the state of Michigan requires for a senior housing facility; that could be the basis for our ordinance. There are three levels of care and each one could stand on its own.

Rosema questioned requirement of well/septic. Level 1 and 2 could use well/septic. Level 3 care requires public water/sewer. Would that be stated in ordinance? The state and county requirements can be mirrored in our ordinance. When Level 3 care is needed, it can be addressed at that time. Lowell Charter Township provides the water for the high school area. They would need to have capacity to support the project.

Jernberg – suggests Vandersloot take conversations from this meeting and put something together for Williams and Works. Let them do the legwork on making sure it complies with State and County regulations.

Everyone is on board with the idea. Roth would just need to come in for zoning approval once the ordinance is done. She would be looking at the first of the year to begin approval process.

2. Existing Ordinance Review

Wireless Communication Facilities (cell tower) – Review for Amending

The planning commission is tasked with going over entire cell tower ordinance and updating or changing it as needed. The current language is based on engineering calculations when the ordinance was developed. The fall zone is based on materials used and how it is anchored. The setback is the major issue in ordinance currently. Neighbors of the Beckwith tower believe there should be no lesser fall zone written into the ordinance. It should be done by variance on a case by case basis and is usually a percentage of tower height.

Rogers looked on the Michigan.gov website and could find nothing on a fall zone for cell towers. The 110% rule sounded good to him. There was further discussion about minimum lot sizes. The height of the tower would have to meet the setbacks of the property it is being placed on. This would eliminate smaller lots automatically.

Item D2 of cell tower ordinance should have any mention of a lesser fall zone removed from language. “The Wireless Communication Facility must be set back from all property lines a distance equal to its height, ~~unless engineering specifications certified by a licensed structural engineer and reviewed by the Township Engineer document a lesser fall zone.~~ 110% of tower height was recommended setback. It should also update the FCC, FAA and other statutes to current revisions.

Neighbors also requested that the application not be accepted until every required document was submitted. This prevents the 90 day clock from running and forcing the Township to make a decision without all the facts. Jernberg explained that the Township should be the easiest hurdle to jump. We work with contractors, developers all the time with the understanding that if we don't get the required paperwork, the project does not move forward. There are stipulations attached and if any of them are not met, the project does not move forward.

Jernberg left meeting at 8:25pm. Rosema took over as chairperson.

Alcoholic Liquor Ordinance – Review to Correspond to State Regulations

The Red Barn Market has applied for a package liquor license. This requires state approval but needs the township to acknowledge they are asking for it. There are a lot of new regulations and new types of licenses and it can be complicated to follow. The current ordinance requires any type of alcohol application to come before the Board regardless of State requirements. Suggested that Andy Moore of Williams and Works review it for language such as packaged beer/wine and other license types and it can be added to the current Township Alcoholic Liquor License Ordinance. Andy Moore can possibly present something at the next meeting.

3. Discuss master Plan 5 Year Review/Update Areas

The Township Board has approved funds to get started on Master Plan 5 year review. Members should be looking at master plan for areas they feel need changing or updating. It was suggested that they hold a workshop to go over the Master Plan item by item and determine if anything needs updating or change.

4. Set Dates for Master Plan Update

The next Planning Commission meeting is set for October 2 to go over ordinance changes. Members will meet one hour prior to that meeting, at 6 pm, to discuss the master plan and any changes required. Andy Moore will bring updated census numbers.

5. Any other Business

Lowell Township is hosting the joint Planning Commission meeting in October. The tentative date is October 23 at 7pm. Vandersloot will let them know that all Vergennes Township members are available that day to attend.

Announcements

Bob Rogers – He obtained a grant to purchase and install the video equipment that is in the meeting room. He obtained a grant for \$2400 to purchase a television and video equipment. Installation was done by volunteers from Impact Church during their “Love Week” community service days. The Township is appreciative of the work done and for getting the grant money.

Bob Rogers – has to resign his position on the Planning Commission since he is moving out of the Township area. He tried very hard to stay in Vergennes. He looks forward to possibly working with Lowell Township on one of their boards or committees.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 was made by Makuski, seconded by Rogers.

