

# Vergennes Township

## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

December 7, 1998

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on December 7, 1998 at the Township Offices. At 7:10 PM the meeting was called to order by Chairman Gillett. Also present were Commissioners Dalga, Howard, Pedley and Weber.

**APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES:** Motion to approve November minutes by Pedley, seconded by Weber. All agreed.

### **1. PUBLIC HEARING: BIERI INDUSTRIAL PARK**

Attorney for the Bieri Family addressed concerns raised at prior meetings. Discussion ensued regarding the 80-acre parcel, including concerns about the wetlands, drainage, whether ditches (as opposed to asphalt valley gutters) would carry water away adequately, sewer hook-up v septic, length of road, dual throat entrance.

Re: roads & drainage: Ray Zandstra pointed out that Kent County Local Road Standards does not require valley gutters both sides, although Vergennes Township's ordinance refers to them. Pavement needs to be 26 feet wide (not 22 feet as noted).

Howard: any chance of other access for the long road?

Re: septic/sewer discussion: Hagerty's judgment would be to do the job right up front, with the best option (for many reasons) being to hook up into public water & sewer. Dollar costs aren't far apart. This option, however, is not available at this time through City of Lowell, and this proposal is here, now. Zandstra proposed requiring hook-up language for owners when public utilities become available. If industrial septic is allowed (this being the first known location of such), Vergennes Township will be able to review the data. Weber: would industrial contaminants be left behind when the development hooks into sewer? If all lots aren't sold, Bieri's might have to pay a lot to obey a Master Deed requiring sewer hook-up. Weber: can't support septic until feels sure there's no chance of harm to Vergennes Township. We don't want contaminated soil.

Re: dual throat entrance: would enable City plows, etc., to turn around easily.

Daneman's points: need to pay attention to the buffer zone requirement in the ordinance. Planning Comm. can request a study on the impact on the wetlands. Questioned whether the road to the septic drainfields exceeds 2,650-foot length maximum. The proposal doesn't mention a signage provision. Unit 14 is too small (noted: part of it is in another township). The project may still need some ZBA variances. Community septic will require monitoring/could reach maximum release volume if each site has 7 employees.

Zandstra expressed an interest in expediency, no more delay.

Hearing was closed at 8:30.

**Motion** (by Gillette): Table the proposal, and have the Township Engineer investigate and help us understand what it will take to get a sewer system, and clarify the question of the rationale behind ditch versus valley gutters in terms of economic impact on the developers and how we can obey the ordinance. Seconded by Weber. All agreed.

**2. RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING APPROVAL: JOHNSON PRIVATE ROAD (BIERI DRIVE):**

**Motion** (by Howard): There being no representatives of the project, table the agenda item since the Commission does not have enough information, and also publish the item for a Public Hearing so neighbors will be notified. Seconded by Pedley. All approved. It was requested that information regarding private road divisions be given to the commissioners in the future.

**3. CONTINUING DISCUSSION CONCERNING SIGN ORDINANCE:** This regards the discrepancies noted between the home occupation rules for signs and the sign ordinance.

**Motion** (by Gillette): Have Marc Daneman look at the discrepancy and report back to the Planning Commission. Seconded by Weber. All approved.

**4. CONTINUING DISCUSSION - ACCESSORY BUILDING SETBACKS IN RA:** Daneman had been asked to report what's been done in other townships. Regulation of accessory buildings is minimal. Use of accessory buildings tends to cause problems especially in growing areas. Pedley: one idea would be to set a minimum acreage for putting up an accessory building without needing a variance. Daneman proposed creating a starting point with specific criteria that, if cannot be met, would then require a special use permit, and offered a set of criteria to begin the discussion.

**Motion** (by Gillette): Commissioners can study the proposal and discuss it at the January meeting. Seconded by Pedley. All agreed.

**5. MEETING DATES FOR 1999:** 1/4, 2/1, 3/1, 4/5, 5/3, 6/7, 7/6, 8/2, 9/7, 10/4, 11/1, 12/6.

**6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1999:** **Motion** (by Pedley) No reason to change, renominates Gillette for Chairman, Howard for Vice-Chairman. Seconded by Weber. All agreed. **Motion** (by Gillette) nominate Pedley for the Secretary position. Seconded by Dalga. All agreed.

**7. LAND DIVISIONS - MARC DANEMAN:** Presented considerations regarding the handling

of land divisions that meet the Land Division Act but do not meet the local ordinance. Daneman has a land division approval certificate form for the Commissioners to review, which will put everyone on notice about the situation, but which protects the township. The form would be in the landowner's file for when someone wanted to check title.

**Motion:** Recommend that this form be taken to the Township Board for consideration. Seconded by Pedley. All agreed.

The next meeting is January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1999.  
The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Dernocoeur, Recorder