

**Vergennes Township**  
**Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**February 2, 2004**

**Draft**

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on February 2 at the Township Offices. Chairman Jernberg called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm. Also present were Commissioners Gillett, Kropf, Medendorp, Richmond, Zoning Administrator Jeanne Vandersloot and Township Planner Jay Kilpatrick. Commissioners Nauta and Mastrovito were absent.

**Approval of January 5, 2004 minutes: Motion** to approve by Gillett, seconded by Medendorp. All approved.

**Approval of/changes to agenda: Motion** to approve by Gillett, seconded by Richmond. All approved.

**1. Public Hearing: dwelling minimum square footage amendments**

Jay Kilpatrick explained that multi-family standards were absent from the ordinance and during discussion of same, other related areas needed updating to be in coordination and have consistency and flexibility. A definition of "ground floor" was added, add 2-family use to R-2, amend the current minimum square footage for homes by enlarging the ground floor amount and adding provisions for two story homes. Standards for minimum floor area were added for multi-family housing and the maximum number of units per building allowed and the bulk table will be updated.

The public hearing was opened at 7:11 pm. Bill Makuski asked what caused these changes to come to the Planning Commission? Vandersloot answered that after several preliminary proposals for apartments off Alden Nash near the high school, an office discussion noted the absence of multi-family and duplex floor area standards. The public hearing was closed at 7:12 pm. Gillett motioned, Medendorp seconded, to recommend to the Township Board adoption of the presented amendments. Motion carried.

**2. Review draft amendment: temporary animal permit**

Jay Kilpatrick explained that a request had been tabled for some time to allow some animals such as 4-H projects in the R-3 zoning district. He said that special use permits run with the land and any permits given will be always be on that land. A better way, with this being a residential district, is to amend the general law ordinances to allow a provision for a temporary animal permit that is of an annual duration and approved by a staff person, planning commission or zoning administrator. A fee would be set and an appeal process given to the Township Board. In the zoning ordinance, section 201.404, with animal and pet restrictions, should be amended to note the temporary permit and add the words "permanent" and "site condominium subdivisions" to update and coordinate the language.

Discussion items: question if approved many years, then denied, a problem for the township? Jay stated that a denial would only be if they could not meet the standards, something would have to change to having met them and then not to meet them. They could also appeal to the Township Board. Should there be a number formula? It was noted that this will rarely be used, and each application will need some flexible common sense used with the number of acres/animals/shelters requested. Gillett motioned, Medendorp seconded, to recommend this language for the Township

Board's review, suggest the attorney then look at it, and report back to the Planning Commission comments from the attorney and the Board, so that they can later hold a public hearing on it. Motion carried.

**3. Review draft amendment: change in occupancy**

Jay explained that in the commercial and industrial districts, buildings are bought and sold or leased and often the township is not consulted. This can result in a business coming in that may not be a permitted use or may need a special use permit. It is more difficult after the fact to have the new tenant apply for permits or to enforce any ordinance violations. In a regular site plan review for a new building, the use is also proposed, but that business may move later or go out of business. Questions included: Does the original permit conditions go with the property and apply to the new tenant? Jay said that is correct. It was noted that in (G) (c) the word "may" should be "will". The amendments include language in the Industrial and Commercial sections to note change of occupancy regulations and similar language in the site plan review section of chapter 5. Motion by Medendorp, seconded by Gillett, to place the proposed amendments with the noted change on the next available public hearing (probably April). Motion carried.

**4. Review draft amendment: keyhole development and lake access regulations**

Gillett asked if this ordinance came from the Board? Vandersloot said the Murray Lake Association asked for it to be adopted. It is the same ordinance as Grattan Twp except that our lot widths are inserted and it has worked well for them for 10-12 years. The Association wants the lake regulations to be the same on both sides of the lake for both townships. The Township Board recently adopted a stand alone ordinance to regulate docks and this ordinance compliments that one. It should go in the general section chapter 4 of the zoning ordinance. The association is concerned about future development, especially the lands being sold on the south side of Lally that may allow large amounts of lake users on small lake frontages. The Township Board approved the Planning Commission to begin work on it. Question: formula/lake edge or road frontage? Ordinance says normal high water mark. Jay said that some areas completely prohibit keyhole development and others allow some access like this one, which is the same frontage per house as regular lots would be in the district. Gillette motioned, Kropf seconded, to send this ordinance to the township attorney for a review (with Supervisor Tim Wittenbach approving the review), and bring the comments back to the next meeting and then to hold a public hearing in April. Motion carried.

**5. Discuss mini-storage parking amendment**

Jay Kilpatrick explained memo detailing the parking formulas of some other municipalities. Some ordinances, including the current one, would require excessive parking spaces that would not be typically used. Users of a mini-storage park by their cubicle and load or unload and then are gone. People come and go at various times, no "rush hour" times. Parking should have some spaces for employees and people inquiring about rentals or paying their rents. The Huron Township formula is likely the more suited to Vergennes Township. Chairman Jernberg requested some formula language be brought back next month for review and add language concerning fire movement/blockage/parking of vehicles. A public hearing could then be set for April.

**6. Set joint meeting date with Township Board (private road amendments)**

Vandersloot stated that the Board was interested in a joint meeting with the Planning Commission and Dave Austin to discuss the estimate for the work, what changes are desired, why changes are desired, how to proceed with the changes and a timeline. The members would also like to meet Dave. Vern Nauta is on both groups and he will be available the first week of March for a meeting. March 1 is the regular meeting date and Dave Austin has a prior commitment for that

date. Wednesday March 3 was discussed but many have other commitments. After some discussion, a consensus of those present determined the best time for most people is Monday, March 8, at 6:00 pm before the Board meeting.

**General Public Comment Time**

There were no general comments.

**Motion to adjourn** by Kropf, seconded by Richmond. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm. The next meetings will be March 1 and March 8, 2004.

Respectfully submitted by:

*Jeanne Vandersloot*

Jeanne Vandersloot, Substitute Recorder