

Vergennes Township

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

February 4, 2002

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on February 4, 2002 at the Township Offices. At 7:04 PM the meeting was called to order by Chairman Jernberg. Also present were Commissioners Gillett, Mastrovito, Mendendorp, Read and Richmond. Absent was Nauta. Also absent was Jay Kilpatrick.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES: Motion to approve by Richmond, seconded by Mendendorp. All approved.

APPROVAL OF/CHANGES TO AGENDA: Motion to approve as is by Gillett, seconded by Read. All approved.

OLD BUSINESS

1. ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS:

A) Commercial District: Per Jeanne - once there's a public hearing and recommendations are sent to twp board, the PC is asked to respond back if the board has further questions. This is the case now:

Questions: difference in sq footage/footprint of a building, Twp Board wants to know the reasons for the size/footprint recommendation of 10,000 instead of 20,000 square feet. Gillett: the planning commission (PC) felt 10,000 would answer needs of majority of businesses that would go into that location, so the PC wouldn't have to do a lot of approvals without the applicant having to come before the board, but it felt a larger business should have to come before the board. Jernberg: has built many 6,000-10,000 sq ft. businesses, those are substantial buildings; larger businesses of 20,000 sq ft, you have to consider including parking and lighting, which makes for a very large site (up to 40,000 sqft with those added features). Jernberg echoes Gillett that 10,000 and over they'd like to be sure the applicant is bringing something that would be the best option for the twp. Mendendorp: the issue relates to the overwhelming interest of the community via Master Plan to retain rural character. Gillett agreed. Mastrovito: 10,000 sq ft. seems small. What about when people have to come before us with 11-12,000 sq ft proposals? Possibly moving to 20,000 might be something to consider.

Jeanne: Lowell twp has rezoned a lot lately. Most commercial districts for permitted uses still have to have a site plan review. Jernberg: for reference, the downtown Rite-aid is about 6-7,000 sq ft.

Motion by Richmond to recommend to the twp board 20,000 sq. ft. as the base allowed square footage for commercial zone. Seconded by Read. Approved: Richmond, Mendendorp, Read. Disapproved: Mendendorp, Gillett, Jernberg. Tie vote.

Compromise Motion by Gillett to recommend to the township board to go with 15,000 sq ft. based on the fact that majority of commercial will be less than 15,000 and something larger would then come before this board for approval. No one would second

the motion. Discussion: obviously the board knows we're split. Motion not voted upon.

Third Motion by Gillett to send the collective comments of this discussion to the board. Seconded by Richmond. All approved.

B) Signs (front setback & commercial): Jeanne: presented report of sign comparisons for setbacks/commercial types. Front setback is the major problem. VT numbers are the smallest. Jeanne suggested the PC form committee to discuss the numbers. Mendendorp offered to be on committee, also Mastrovito. Nauta assigned by the Commission.

C) Manufactured Home Development Standards/Procedures (Update): Ordinance was reviewed twice by Kevin DeGroat) of the Manufactured Housing Commission. Their review committee will meet March 5 re: recommendation for approval, goes to full commission March 20. If sections are arbitrary or capricious, or higher than their standards, then they can deny them or offer wording that would be appropriate. Other areas need explanations, and they may then be approved. Jernberg: in holding pattern until we hear back from them.

NEW BUSINESS

1. PUD DEVELOPMENT: CARLSON FARMS PHASE II. Rick Pulaksi from Nederveld Associates here to talk about PUD, site plan, private road for Carlson Farms Phase II. Approved Jan 2000 as a two-phase project. The Lally Street sites all sold; they are ready to begin Alden Court site development. Nothing has changed, just here for approval.

Jernberg: is the performance bond from Phase I in good standing? Jeanne: it has been released. Jernberg: need to see new one prior to beginning. (Usually 5% of cost of project). Phase II wants to build a model home, construction plans have gone to Dave Austin (Williams & Works) for review. Next step: public hearing for private road.

Mendendorp: concerns about storm water. Have to detain wetland then release the area for draining. Detention ponds are shown on detail plans.

Need to go through same procedures as first time.

Mastrovito: these houses are on 1.2-1.3 acres, all own septic/well? KC Health Department require reserve area for septic? Answer: primary & reserve for each site are planned.

Everything seems in order for the public hearing, per Jernberg.

Motion by Gillett to recommend this for public hearing at the March meeting. Seconded by Mendendorp. All approved.

2. REZONING REQUEST: LANDON COMPANIES. John Truscott, consultant representing Landon Company, requesting rezoning from RA to R3 on a 99-acre parcel in the area of Vergennes/Alden Nash, for a manufactured housing development. Application holds all the information. Ready to answer questions: # homes?/not discussed - closer estimates to come at the public hearing. Landon tries to work with twps re: what is acceptable to the

twp. Homes run 1,200-2,100 sq ft, many with garages & porches. High end, top of line fixtures, can be custom-ordered.

Sewer?/it's their first preference to connect to local municipal water/sewer. If not, they put in state of the art sewer facilities and dig wells. No research yet on connecting with municipal water/sewer for this project.

These developments show 7-8 year development so it's not hard all at once on services, schools, etc. Manufactured housing is assembled at a factory, then sent to the property. Typical size is "double-wide," some triple-wide. / Are there basements?/typically not. Not a modular home - these are 2-3 joinable sections with asphalt shingle roofs, regular siding. Steel frame sits on 16 piers that are sunk on 4 feet bores. Mostly single-story although the industry is moving to 2-3 stories.

Other nearby developments: one in Monroe area, one in Northville area. None within an easy drive from here.

Jernberg: not ready to embrace a mobile home park without seeing more information. We'd show you what the development would look like - there's give & take in the process. Wants a feel for lot size, typical houses, so someone in our community can see what's up. Not ready to request a public hearing until we can digest this information. Wants to know what amount of sewer capacity they'd require re: # of parcels and see whether there is capacity or what they'd have to do otherwise. / that's typically what we bring to a public hearing / Jernberg - we want to see it first so we're not seeing it for the first time at the public hearing. Gillett: PC needs knowledge and time to digest. Bring answers to big, key questions before scheduling a public hearing.

Jeanne: this is a rezoning request, they don't have to present that info at a rezoning hearing — that would come at a site plan review. Might want to do the rezoning public hearing. Mendendorp / hard to make a recommendation without any information. Jeanne: don't typically get much info at a rezoning hearing. What the Planning Commission needs to do is look at the permitted and special uses of each district, and roads, utilities, area changes, and compatibility of those uses in the area.

Mastrovito: the sketch didn't give me what I need to see. Richmond: primary thought is how many units would go in there / Jeanne: that takes place in the site-planning process.

Richmond: seems a large parcel to rezone into this type of housing. Jernberg: we have a responsibility to the community to not go too fast.

Motion by Read to schedule a public hearing for March meeting for the rezoning request. Seconded by Mendendorp. All approved. Applicant agreed to send the requested information within approximately a week.

3. ORDINANCE AMENDMENT: OPEN SPACE PUD. Jay has been working with the OS Committee, through several drafts. Various questions from Planning Commission were directed to representatives of the Open Space committee at the meeting.

Motion by Gillett to table this until the April meeting to focus on it then.

Seconded by Mendendorp. All approved.

Public Comments/Questions: re: tax base issues re: manufactured homes. Gillett: recommends everyone write his/her congressmen. Would a play area/swimming pool on the property be open to the public? Landon would provide info about impact on the community re: schools, water/sewer, etc.

Jeanne passed out maps showing water/sewer lines from the City.

Motion to adjourn by Gillett. Seconded by Richmond. All approved.
The next meeting is March 4, 2002, to be held at the Lowell High School Auditorium.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Dernocoeur, Recorder