

Vergennes Township

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

July 7, 2003

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on July 7, 2003 at the Township Offices. At 7:05 PM the meeting was called to order by Chairman Jernberg. Also present were Commissioners Gillett, Kropf, Medendorp, and Nauta. Absent were Mastrovito and Richmond.

APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES: Motion to approve by Nauta, seconded by Gillett. All approved.

APPROVAL OF/CHANGES TO AGENDA: Motion to approve as they stand by Gillett, seconded by Kropf. All approved.

1. WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS AND WORDING CORRECTION. Explanation by Jay Kilpatrick: this item on the agenda came from recent discussions about the current ordinance. It streamlines the process and improves definitions, removing wireless from R1, R2 and R3 and Commercial as permitted, adds as use by right in Industrial and as special exception use in RA, also permitting them as a permitted secondary use in RA and Industrial. Co-location standards are streamlined: if an existing tower is in place it can be approved by the zoning administrator. Increased stringency: map towers within 2 miles to see if options exist for co-location. More explicit language calls for lien requirements on owners to cover expenses for eventual removal. After much discussion, staff is satisfied with the language.

Public Hearing opened at 7:07 pm: Ronald Noall, 12530 Heim Street, wanted to hear the discussion. David Yomtoob (via Jeanne Vandersloot) wanted to ask about definition of “wireless communication facility” wanted to be sure an internet antenna would still be allowed. Also wanted to know about why other facilities (radio, TV) aren’t part of this ordinance /per Kilpatrick: some of these are regulated by FCC, township has less capability to regulate. Adding AM/FM and commercial TV would increase confusion. Internet is incorporated in the definition and is covered.

Yomtoob (address: 13980 Rolling Creek, Lowell) then arrived to ask his questions about mobile versus fixed antenna. / Jernberg: the words “and/or” covers the question, or they could recommend removal of the word “mobile” where it appears in the document to cover Mr. Yomtoob’s concern. / Jay: wouldn’t want to rewrite this on the fly, can revisit it next month. / Yomtoob suggests different language to clarify and eliminate problems in the future. / Jay: Want to encourage co-locations and need a definition. The suggested changes don’t really add or subtract from the ordinance.

Public Hearing closed at 7:18 pm. Motion by Gillett to recommend to the Township Board to approve this ordinance as written except for removing under the definition of “wireless communication facility” the word “mobile” in the four instances where it appears. Seconded by Medendorp. All approved.

Public Hearing on Wording Correction opened at 7:18 pm. (to change “ZBA” to “Township Board”) **Public Hearing closed at 7:18 pm without any public comments.**

Motion by Nauta to recommend to the Township Board to approve the changes as written, seconded by Gillett. All approved.

2. ORDINANCE AMENDMENT: AGRICULTURAL GARDEN CENTER DRAFT 1. Jeanne Vandersloot described the proposed ordinance amendment. Question about adding a provision for sale of produce. It could be added (maybe) for locally-grown produce. / Piles of wood chips would need to be a concern / Jeanne suggested such a thing would need to be shown on a site plan. Special exception use, there would have to be a feasible method to control of such piles. Remove “bark/soils” and say “storage of loose/dusty materials.” Jay: let the applicant show you how it’d be handled. / Medendorp: concern over sale of “used” and “new” equipment, what problems could come of that? Such as an eyesore. / Jernberg: could limit a business / Jay: you can have a designated part/percentage of the site to prevent eyesore.

Jay: This is a use being added as a special exception use in the RA district. General provisions would be according to the RA district.

Jernberg: what about an existing facility where setback and parking isn’t being met. / Jay: it would be appropriate to visit the owners of the existing facility and see how the standards work with the existing site. Parking in RA isn’t permitted in the front, so an amendment would be required here as well.

Al Baird: this needs to be written for the whole township. Also, a 50 hp tractor is a big tractor. Maybe the ordinance should be at the lawn care level, not this big. / Nauta: I’d limit it to 40 hp.

Baird: what is a “utility vehicle” supposed to mean? / Jeanne: vehicles such as the John Deere “Gator” and the “Mule” / Jernberg: could clarify by saying non-road-use vehicle or something that doesn’t require license plates.

Jay: will look into amendment language regarding parking in front.

Medendorp: parking surface? / Jay: standard is dust-free. / Jernberg: sign, lighting, etc., as per commercial ordinance.

For the next draft: add locally grown fresh produce, 40 hp tractors (new and used), and no more than 25 percent of the sales area (not to exceed a certain specific sized area) to be dedicated for used vehicles, and clarify the definition of “utility vehicle” (excluding sport utilities and recreational vehicles), and deal with the loose/dust containment. Make recommendation regarding signs (32 sq ft, as per commercial district). Also regarding set-back standards to potentially conform with commercial standards.

Goal: to see the next draft next month.

Lengthy discussion with Mr. Kropf, who arrived toward the end of the discussion, about tractor size and volume, and other concerns. Also reviewed the discussion about farm market/produce sales.

General Public Comments: None

Motion to adjourn by Nauta. Seconded by Kropf. All approved.

The next meeting is August 4, 2003

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Dernocoeur, Recorder