

Vergennes Township

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

June 7, 1999

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on June 7, 1999 at the Township Offices. At 7:01 PM the meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman Howard. Also present were Commissioners Dalga, Jernberg, Culross, Pfaller, and Weber. Alger arrived during agenda item #2. Absent were Gillette and Nauta.

APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES: Motion to approve by Pfaller, seconded by Dalga. All approved.

1. DISCUSSION OF DAYCARE IN R1, R2, AND R3 DISTRICTS:

In all the discussions in the last few months, a detail slipped everyone's attention, that of adding the possibility of day care in R1, to create consistency throughout the zoning districts.

Motion by Pfaller: Hold a Public Hearing to add daycare to R1 districts. Seconded by Dalga. All approved.

2. BARB ROTH: DAYCARE DISCUSSION:

Roger Roth spoke on behalf of Barb. They continue their interest in creating a daycare facility in the community.

3. LINCOLN LAKE AUTOS: SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE APPLICATION:

Robert Wilczewski (owner) and John Muha (manager) of Lincoln Lakes Auto were made aware that their new wrecker is not allowed under their current special Exception Use. He's located in the Lincoln Lake Business Park, in the Industrial Zone. Five people work on site. Want to be able to include the wrecker in their business in order to be able to tow vehicles to their facility (instead of having to subcontract) and for diversification. It was noted how closely related towing and body shops are. This will not involve adding on to their building, all vehicles on their place would be inside their fencing or in the building (capacity: 15-18 outside, 14 inside).

Motion by Pfaller: schedule a Public Hearing for next month. Seconded by Alger. All approved.

4. CELL TOWER DISCUSSION:

Alger spoke about the draft concepts they've got. They took out the monopole spec (applies just to cities). Re: illumination, they recommend night obstruction lights to be red, not strobes. Ideal spots in the township for a cell tower: 3 & 4 Mile Roads (on a ridge) and RA locations.

Should one facility be asked to serve many to minimize the number of towers? Could have a co-location requirement in the ordinance to limit penetrations. Alger noted that 2-way operators needs are different from cell towers, and co-location requirement could be an unfair financial burden. Kilpatrick noted towers have a visual impact on the community, co-locating would better serve residents. Most people probably want as few towers as possible.

As technology becomes obsolete or non-functional, there should be a mechanism to insure the dollars are there to have a tower removed. Suggestion to require builder post a bond.

Kilpatrick will draft a sample ordinance for discussion next month.

5. DEFINITION OF FRONT LOT LINE:

Sample language was introduced and discussed for the purpose of clarifying this detail for the Zoning Administrator and others.

Motion by Pfaller: Have a Public Hearing to adopt the wording discussed next month. Seconded by Weber. All approved.

6. DRIVEWAY SETBACK - PROPOSED SAMPLE LANGUAGE:

Purpose: to clarify setbacks because they are hard to enforce as currently written. Sample language was introduced and discussed. Some felt a buffer between driveways is important re: gravel scraped by plows, snow piles, etc. This language would cover cul-de-sacs and flag lots.

Motion by Weber: Schedule a Public Hearing to accept the ordinance as written, with the addition that at no time can the driveway be less than three (3) feet from the side property line. Seconded by Pfaller. All approved.

(Note: also, discuss 2 shared driveways setbacks next month)

7. POLICY FOR SUBMITTAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION DOCUMENTS - SAMPLE

LANGUAGE: As the volume of reading material increases for the commission, it has reached a point where commissioners need enough time to read material submitted.

Motion by Dalga to adopt the policy (attached) as written. Seconded by Alger. All approved.

8. LAND PRESERVATION PRESENTATION: Bob Pfaller attended a conservation design seminar that gave, in one hour, the “gist” of a 12-hour presentation, which he then tried to condense into a ten-minute discussion for the Commission. Seminar, by MSU’s Extension Service, is complicated but appealing. They’ll do the whole seminar this fall locally if enough people sign up.

Basically, our ordinances are modeled on an urban design, but there’s a different way to preserve rural character by having a density factor replace the lot-size method of growth control. Requires a reversal of thinking about site plans and yield plans, etc.

There are various incentives to property owners to try this different method of development. Most of the Commission (plus the recorder!☺) expressed an interest in attending the classes in the fall, depending on the exact dates.

9. DISCUSSION CONCERNING PRIVATE ROAD ORDINANCE: Jeanne collected ordinances from Grattan, Cannon, and Spencer Townships. Issues include paving limitations, depending whether it comes out on a paved road. It was requested that re-visiting this topic be put early on the agenda for the July meeting (after the Public Hearings)

Motion to adjourn by Weber. Seconded by Dalga.
The next meeting is **[NOTE!] TUESDAY, July 6th, 1999.**
The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Dernocoeur, Recorder