

Vergennes Township Planning Commission

June 29, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm by Chairperson Scott Jernberg.

Roll Call – Jernberg, Mastrovito, Post, Rosema, Gillett were present. No one was absent.

Andy Moore of Williams and Works was also present.

The minutes from the May 18, 2015 meeting were approved as written by Rosema, supported by Gillett. The agenda for this meeting was accepted with no changes by Post, supported by Jernberg. Motion passed.

1. DAS & DHS Holdings, LLC – Home Development Site Plan Review

Don DeGroot of Excel Engineering spoke on behalf of the applicant. There have been a few changes to the site plan since the May meeting. Most of it has to do with the private street detail. The plan has been changed from a plat to a site condo. Drainage detail has been submitted to the Township Engineer at Williams and Works. Open space has increased to over 15 acres. The trees along the north side of the property are staying. The east side of the property is completely wooded. The proposed layout meets the Township's zoning requirements; the property is zoned for R-2. The surrounding properties are zoned R-1. There will be two boulevard entrances to the development, similar to those at Alden Nash West across the street. There are connections to the LARA trail and there will be access through the private drive at the south side of the property to Cooper Preserve. They are here to seek approval of the Private Roads through a public hearing.

The public hearing was opened at 7:07 pm.

Bob Rogers of 13700 Grindle, Lowell asked if they knew how many fire hydrants would be on site. Also, had names for the streets been determined? Hydrant placement had not been determined. That would be decided as they begin excavating and see the actual layout of the land. Street names have not been decided.

The public hearing closed at 7:09 pm.

Andy Moore of Williams and Works went over some highlights of his June 18, 2015 memo to the Planning Commission. The street network has been reconfigured to include narrower travel lanes (11' instead of 13'), an intersection between Streets A and B (phase 4), and two smaller private lanes that access additional parcels. A 6' wide asphalt walking path is proposed throughout the development, though it does not serve all lots in the development and is only on one side of the proposed streets. It does connect to the LARA Trail and the two proposed land divisions to the south. Special attention should be paid to the Lowell Area Trailway crossings at Street A and Street B including but not limited to a striped cross walk and signage.

There are no stub access points to the property to the north. Having the stubs would allow future connections to any development on that property. It would lessen the number of conflict points on Alden Nash Avenue and be a convenience to future property owners, motorists and pedestrians.

Street lights are proposed based on Planning Commission and Consumers Energy requirements. Any lighting must meet the standards of Section 201.413 of the Zoning Ordinance. Plans for the specific lighting fixtures, as well as a plan to maintain them, should be submitted to the Township before final approval.

There was discussion among the Planning Commission members on several items.

Open space- it is just space that will not be developed. It is usually natural, but if the HOA wants to keep it mowed, they can do that. The open space by the retention ponds will not have fencing around it. Anyone from the development can access it.

Property access to the north – when the streets were public, it was an issue to have connectivity. Now that the streets are private and must be maintained by the HOA, it is better to not have access between developments.

There was some concern about the water drainage from the north property onto this development. Can they talk with Kent County Health Department and get some sort of approval that Lots 31 – 51 will have adequate space to have two drainfields, the house/deck and any leech basins and still meet the setbacks? Can the drainfields be put in the front yards if needed?

Is there any thought to adding the sidewalk to the entire length of Road “B”. No. Asphalt matches the LARA Trail design. They are in talks with Ms. Deb Pavek , who owns the property on the south side of the development, to have access to Parcel “C”. If things cannot be agreed upon, they can put another drive in but would prefer not to.

There is no connection to the Little League property at this time. There are no immediate plans to develop the property and it would be difficult to say where the best access point would be. They have a proposed trail through the open space at the south side of property which can be used to connect when the ballfields are developed.

Fencing along the LARA Trail is probably going to be more decorative, similar to a 3-rail vinyl type fence. They are not putting up privacy fencing or trying to keep anyone out. It would just be to delineate property lines.

Gillett made a motion to approve the Private Road plan and the Site Condominium Plan with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall provide a completed and finalized copy of the proposed Master Deed and Bylaws to the Township Attorney for review and approval. (Per applicant, the basic portions have been submitted.)

2. The applicant shall provide a maintenance agreement for the private roads to the Township for review and approval. (Not drafted yet as of this meeting).
 3. To allow residents of the development to have safe access to the LARA trail, sidewalks should be at least 6 feet wide and installed at or prior to 80% of the phase completion.
 4. Once chosen, fencing and lighting detail (both house and street) should be provided to Township to ensure it meets Ordinance requirements.
 5. The applicant shall provide the Township Engineer with additional detailed information pertaining to stormwater management and drainage. If infiltration basin system is needed, show on lot 48 how it can be accommodated and still have a building envelope that meets setbacks.
 6. The developer shall install detectable warning strips and trail stop signs at both intersections with the LARA Trail, per LARA standards, when the streets are constructed.
 7. The developer shall install temporary cul-de-sacs at the end of street segments as phases are developed to afford adequate turnaround areas or demonstrate how adequate turnaround access would otherwise be provided during phase 1 construction.
- Post supports motion. Motion passes.

2. Envision Engineering Site Plan Review

Applicant presentation: Joe Geelhoed of DanVos Construction went over Envision's plans. The parcel is located on the south side of OE Bieri Industrial Park in Phase 2. They are planning to construct a 60,000 square foot manufacturing/warehouse facility. They are hoping to defer putting in some of the parking until actually needed. There is a small existing pond for stormwater detention. This will be enlarged. Most of storm drainage is gravity flow or overland runoff. Two ponds will be connected with a culvert. A wider easement is needed at railroad path that runs adjacent to property. There is an existing easement that runs through the middle of the property set up for a future phase 2 road and lots. This is no longer needed and will be vacated. A 66 foot wide easement is proposed adjacent to the railroad for access to the property. They are buying the entire parcel on the west side of the rail trail except for the community sewer, with plans to split the property and sell the other lot in the future.

Public Hearing – opened at 8:10 pm. There was no public comment. Public hearing closed at 8:10 pm.

Planner Comments – Andy Moore of Williams and Works went over his memo of June 22, 2015 to the Planning Commission. The Zoning Ordinance indicates the setbacks are measured from right of way lines or private road easements, the building location cannot be considered in compliance until the current ingress/egress easement is abandoned.

The Ordinance requires that at least 80% of the front side of industrial buildings, as well as any sides facing residential areas, be finished with face brick, wood, glass, stone, fluted cement block or future acceptable building materials. According to the building drawings submitted,

about 45% of the front of the building is faced with proper materials. Also, landscaping plans need to be submitted.

The applicant has proposed 56 spaces for parking plus another 76 deferred spaces. Once constructed, there would be a total of 125 spaces, with the Township Ordinance requiring 124. Deferred parking could be considered.

Lighting fixtures proposed exceed the 20' maximum height per the Ordinance. Those need to be revised.

Comments from Commission members – Post questioned splitting the property in the future. Does anything have to be done now? No. The middle of the property is muck. The north end and south end are buildable areas with a total of 35 acres, 12 acres of which will be used by Envision. The sewer system is on a separate 2 acre parcel at the north end of the property.

Jernberg motioned to recommend approval of the site plan by Envision Engineering to the Township Board with the following conditions:

- a. Require language and proof of filing to abandon existing easement through center of property and to create new easements for access over and along rail trail.
- b. Submit landscaping plans per code requirements.
- c. Confirm any lighting, both parking lot and on building, are within the Township lighting ordinance.
- d. Façade is acceptable with 45% of the front of building in acceptable materials per May 27, 2015 drawings submitted.
- e. Since the proposed development is not consistent with the originally approved layout for OE Bieri Industrial Park, an amendment to that site plan may be needed.

Gillett supports. Motion passes.

Ordinance Amendments – Overlay District

The township attorney, Jim Doezema, looked over the ordinance amendment. He provided a marked up copy of the Ordinance showing recommended changes and recommendations. It is ready for a public hearing. Jeanne Vandersloot would like to get it approved this year. The next regular scheduled meeting for the Planning Commission is August 3. There is no other reason to meet in August except to hold this public hearing. There is a joint meeting with Lowell Township and City of Lowell on September 28. They will meet at 6pm that day to hold the public hearing for this ordinance. The joint meeting starts at 7pm.

Mastrovito made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm. Supported by Post. Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting is set for September 28, 2015 at 6:00 pm with Joint meeting starting at 7:00 pm.