

# Vergennes Township

## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

March 1, 2004

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on March 1, 2004 at the Township Offices. At 7:03 PM the meeting was called to order by Chairman Jernberg.

**ROLL CALL:** Present were Commissioners Gillett, Jernberg, Kropf, Nauta and Richmond. Absent were Mastrovito and Medendorp.

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2, 2004 MINUTES:** Motion to approve by Richmond, seconded by Kropf. All approved.

**APPROVAL OF/CHANGES TO AGENDA: JEANNE VANDERSLOOT REQUESTED ADDITION OF TEMPORARY ANIMAL PERMIT ITEM.** Motion to approve by Nauta, seconded by Gillett. All approved.

**1. SITE PLAN REVIEW APPLICATION – J&T MACHINING .** Pat Thomas from J&T Machining presented a plan to build an addition in order to accommodate delivery of product and storage. Business has been good and they are eager to expand. Primarily a automotive parts machine shop, primarily machining steel and aluminum. Looking to build a 60x100 addition with a 16x20 lean-to on west side of facility; question re: lean-to's proximity to property line. It holds chip dumpsters to prevent collection of water/snow inside. Does not currently have a loading dock - the one being built would meet code, including drainage with attention to groundwater protection. Company has nine employees. Parking is getting tight. Additional parking for proposed addition would be obtained from clearing some brush and putting in gravel to fit 8-10 more parking spaces. Start date? Hopes to start when frost breaks and approval is given.

Can lean-to be moved away from setback line? If moved to the north, it could probably avoid a problem with the 30 foot side yard setback and still make the 40-foot rear yard setback. Jay: if go with 12x20 structure, could probably make it. Dumpsters are approx. 4-1/2 feet wide. Jay: set-back standard is for a 2-acre lot and this lot is smaller than that, creating a hardship, so ZBA could be asked to give a variance on the setbacks. A suggestion was made to slightly alter the footprint to make it work better; applicant will discuss with builder.

Applicant understands and agrees to match exterior to existing exterior design & materials, and to use downcast lighting. Applicant is proposing some more lighting, but it would be switched to turn on only when needed. Need to address drainage issues - not shown on plan. Will show on next plan.

Jay's letter addresses six points that need attention. Square footage calculates a need for the greater of either 22 spaces or two spaces for each 3 employees. A different calculation would call for 16 spaces, which is do-able. No odors or manufacturing planned that would be a change from current use? Odd delivery times? Applicant said no

to all concerns, tries to be a good neighbor. Assuming the concerns brought up tonight and in Jay's letter are addressed, the next step is to come back with a revised plan next month or let Jeanne take it from here.

**Motion** by Gillett to recommend to the Township Board to approve this plan based on the comments/conditions outlined, plus modification of structure such that it fits within the footprint, presented in a plan on paper for the Zoning Administrator to make the call that all items have been attended to. Seconded by Nauta. All approved.

## **2. REVIEW DRAFT AMENDMENTS – KEYHOLE DEVELOPMENT & LAKE ACCESS**

**REGULATIONS.** Presentation by Zoning Administrator, Jeanne Vandersloot: the document was sent to Township Attorney to review. A copy with his notes was in commissioners' packets, with an email memo from Jay Kilpatrick. The idea is to either make this specific to Murray Lake, or to add wording if it's intended to apply to any other river or stream or lake. Having the word "stream" in there might be a good idea. Also clarification of PUD allowance for lake use above the standard in the document. There is a conflict per Jay under paragraph F, where a PUD with access could require restriction of how many residents could make use of it – or take that language out of paragraph F. Lot width requirement is 50 feet, but adding language regarding a 50-foot frontage stipulation = some non-conforming lots.

Murray Lake and the Flat River already have some ordinances. Why are we concerned about this? Per Jay: if a development was created with 50 feet on the stream or lake, but the acreage opened behind to a bunch of homes, that's what the keyhole concept needs to address. Advisable to make these regulations the same as Grattan Twp (Murray Lake Association has been asking for this ordinance.) Jay: tradeoff creates a few non-conforming lots, but would address the "paper roads" that could create a funnel of people with access to the lake, allowing too many people wishing to have access. Murray Lake (not the stream) needs to be the focus.

**Motion** by Nauta to set a public hearing date in April to decide these amendments to match Grattan's keyhole ordinance/lake access language and delete the PUD language in Section F and remove the streams language. Seconded by Gillett. All approved.

**3. REVIEW DRAFT AMENDMENTS – MINI-STORAGE PARKING FORMULA.** Jay Kilpatrick reported: a simple amendment to correct an exorbitant requirement. The current proposal would yield 5 spaces plus one per employee per shift (instead of the other complicated requirement).

**Motion** by Gillett to set a public hearing in April for this. Seconded by Nauta. All approved.

**4. DISCUSSION: TEMPORARY ANIMAL PERMIT LANGUAGE.** Jeanne Vandersloot reported: This item was sent to Board and Township Attorney (Jim Doezema), who reported today. Also noted several other items that might need to be taken into discussion in a different

meeting. Among several inconsistencies is that RA has a special use permit for larger farms, and questions about PUD ordinance (zoning act says Twp Board needs to hold a public hearing, which was taken out in the last revision). Re: animal permit language itself, township attorney made it into a stand-alone ordinance format with definitions and other language inserted. Jeanne questions section 3 (Permit Required) where he suggests allowing up to three farm animals under this permit – seems low, esp. re: 4-H projects (regarding animals where there is often more than three, such as pigs, sheep, goats, rabbits– esp. if a family has multiple children). Form of application has Jay’s language and whether neighbors might have a say in the matter. Section 6 (appeal part) is the same as Jay’s language. Jeanne wants to be able to help people who call asking whether they can have animals, so language that uses the word “lot” is a problem. She needs to be able to check whether a person is in a site condo. Re: number of animals, suggests the language could leave it so applicant would say what animal, how many, and how much land the applicant has, giving the Zoning Administrator a way to use judgment. No reason to have a cap if it’s up to the Zoning Administrator to consider the circumstances. On platted subdivisions, no need to invoke “Right to Farm” act. Re: intensive livestock operations, we shouldn’t have a problem, re: 1500-foot buffer requirements. No need to create a separate zoning district. Doezema’s comments re the PUD language is worth fixing next time amendments are being approved so that final approval, when given at Board level, the Board must hold a Public Hearing.

Jeanne will follow up with Jim Doezema and a draft amendment for 4-H type projects can be written for township board approval based on tonight’s discussion. Section 404 needs Planning Commission approval and a Public Hearing.

**Motion** by Gillett to have Jeanne Vandersloot follow through as written and have a public hearing at the April meeting. Seconded by Nauta. All approved.

**General Public Comment Time:** March 17<sup>th</sup>, 7-9 PM at Wittenbach Center, 4<sup>th</sup> annual Open Space Educational Forum. Also, Alden Nash Corridor Study inviting residents in the High School area will be May 12 and 19 at LHS - commissioners encouraged to attend all three events.

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

The next meeting is March 8 (Joint Board/PC meeting). The next regular Planning Commission meeting is April 12, 2004.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kate Dernocoeur, Recorder