

Vergennes Township Planning Commission
Monday, May 9, 2011

Scott Jernberg, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Roll Call – Baird, Jernberg, Rasch, Mastrovito and Medendorp were present. Post was absent.

Motion by Mastrovito to approve the minutes from the February 7, 2011 meeting as written, seconded by Baird. Motion carried.

Motion to approve the Agenda as written by Mastrovito, seconded by Rasch. Motion carried.

1. Public Hearing on Ordinance Amendments

Explanation by Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator. The Building Official, Mark Fleet, indicated that river access stairs and landings fall under the Building Code and therefore require a building permit.

Changes include 201.307 “FR” Flat River District. 3.07B Permitted use Section b to add must obtain a zoning compliance permit *and a building permit...*

Section c “must obtain a zoning compliance permit *and a building permit...*

201.309 “I” Industrial District 3.09E.Roads, streets and parking 1...with particular reference to [subsection] 202.005 (e) to (d) to correct wrong reference letter.

In 202.004 General Provisions. Sec 4.0, paragraph (f), remove the word “residential” from the last sentence so that all types of lots must have sequential address numbers.

202.005 Private road construction specifications.

(d) change subsection (d) to (c) to correct wrong reference letter.

Public comment time opened at 7:07 pm. Ron Dawson, resident, clarified that Mark Fleet is the Building Official and is in charge of issuing permits. There are no changes for docks, zoning permits only per State ordinance. He suggested that when issuing a permit for stairs, it would be a good time to update the residents on the vegetation requirements along the river. Agreed. We are figuring on average, two inspections per stair unit, with a building permit cost of around \$100 - \$150.00. Closed at 7:12pm.

There was no comment from the Commission. A motion was made by Medendorp to recommend to the Township Board adoption of the ordinance amendments as written , seconded by Mastrovito.

2. Discuss Joint Planning Commission Meeting/Hosting

Vergennes Township is the host of the next joint planning commission meeting between Lowell Township, Lowell City and Vergennes. Vandersloot gave three dates to all municipalities, June 6, 7 and 9. Lowell Township was the only respondent at meeting time opting for June 6. That date works for Vergennes Township as well. Once we hear from Lowell City, we can confirm the date with all. We should have some topics for discussion as a starting point. High speed internet is a good suggestion.

3. Discuss Accessory Dwelling/Guest house.

Alex McPherson has property at 1313 Parnell Ave., Lowell, MI 49331. He would like to change the grainery into a garage/man cave/guest house. It would include a bathroom, kitchen, bedroom and office space. He applied for a building permit but a second dwelling on a parcel is not permitted. He applied for a special use permit for an accessory dwelling. The Board will be holding a public hearing on it at their May 16 meeting. The Board wants the Commission to work on this ordinance section to change to allow any type of accessory dwelling in our township, not limited to mobile homes.

Medendorp suggested it be limited to immediate family occupying space. Also, the wording should be changed to say "the building/improvement should match or complement existing buildings on property. Screening would not be needed in the case of McPherson.

The re-write of the ordinance should include clauses about lot size, length of time allowed on property, appearance. It would require a special use permit so if it was limited to 3 acre parcels or larger, someone with a slightly smaller lot could come forth and have it considered. Also, improvements must meet all health department rules. No rental, commercial or businesses would be allowed in improved area.

Jeanne Vandersloot will look at some other ordinances already in place, take into consideration the above suggestions and draft a new ordinance for review at the August 1, 2011 meeting.

4. Update on High Speed Internet status

Ryan Peel is attempting to get some type of Wi-Max co-op Internet service together. His attempts to receive some funding from the Community Fund or Cable Fund were rejected since he is not a 501C3 entity. He and Vergennes Township are arguing that status. The Township is acting as a fiduciary to handle receiving and disbursing funds only. It was run past our Township attorney for legality questions. Peel would like to put towers up on Vergennes and Beckwith. There are coverage maps and more information at "countdown to broadband.com". Peel has many residents signed up indicating they are interested in obtaining service from him if the funding and everything else comes through as planned. His special use permit application will be

considered at the Board meeting on May 16 and setback variances will be requested at the ZBA meeting on May 25.

Announcements – None

General Public Comment Time –None

Adjourn Regular Scheduled Meeting

Mastrovito motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm. Medendorp seconded. Motion carried.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is set for August 1, 2011.