

Planning Commission Meeting

Vergennes Township

May 18, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Jernberg.

Roll Call – Jernberg, Mastrovito, Post, Gillett, Rosema were all present.

Also present was Jay Kilpatrick of Williams and Works.

A motion was made by Rosema to approve the minutes as written from April 27, 2015. It was seconded by Gillett. Motion passed.

There were no changes or additions to the agenda. The agenda was approved as written.

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

Don DeGroot of Excel Engineering and Dave Rapp representing the applicant were present to discuss revised plans for the development.

Don DeGroot – This development was introduced originally as a platted development with public streets. Through many discussions with the Planning Commission and the Township Board, changes were made and the development is now going to be a site condominium with private roads.

Highlighting the major changes – there is a boulevard at each entrance to Alden Nash Avenue instead of regular entrance. There are 2 cul de sac's instead of 3. All streets are now private. This allows them to incorporate unique design features in the road layout. On the southeast side of the development they have an "eyebrow" street that has two egresses. It serves 5-7 lots. There is also a larger "horseshoe" shaped road which serves 10 lots and allows some open space as well. There is fencing proposed along the LARA trail to define the boundaries between the trail and back lots. They plan to maintain the trees along the east side of the trail. Looking at Parcel "C", they imposed building setbacks which are stricter than the Township setbacks. They feel this takes into consideration the current homeowner's, Ms. Pavek, privacy as well as the Creek. There is also a proposed circle blacktop walkway around the outside of development. The private drive serving Lots "A" and "B" will also allow for easement access to Cooper Woodlands and access to LARA Trail.

Since this is no longer a plat, the time constraints are no longer an issue. Mr. Rapp sent a letter to the Township Board indicating such. They would still like to keep moving forward and have something started this year.

The streets are now 24' wide and liked the suggestion from the last meeting that some of the feeder streets be narrower.

There was some concern about Lee Creek and storm water runoff. They are proposing ditched street sections to allow for some runoff onto the sandy soils in resident's yards. This will be determined based on topography.

Questions from the Planning Commission members:

Q: Wondered about the 6' asphalt trail around development. Why not the standard 4'?

A: Asphalt is easier to maintain and repair. They consider the path a "mini Trail" and allows for both bikes and pedestrians.

Q: Is the path that runs by Parcel "C" right on the current resident's property line? Is there flexibility to add a 4'-5' screen along there?

A: the home is more on the south side of the property. There is some buffer in place already.

Q: Questioned the building envelope for Parcel "C". How is that enforced?

A: it is written into the paperwork when the lot is sold.

Q: wanted clarification of the proposed trail connection near the retention ponds.

A: the developer put it there to allow the Township an easement in the future to interconnect the trail to the ball fields or Cooper Woodlands. The developer will not put it in. It's just an easement allowing Township or the homeowners association to do so in future.

Q: Are stormwater calculations done yet? Are the retention ponds adequate?

A: They have run preliminary numbers. They may be able to reduce their size when final numbers come in.

Q: Many of the lots have 200+ lengths. Was there any thought to having a permanent 5' – 10' greenspace at the rear of the lots? It was done in another development and it looks good and separates properties nicely.

A: That will depend on topography. Some of the homes will naturally be built closer to road.

Q: will there be some type of fence between lots and trail? Yes. It should extend up to Lot 52 for consistency.

Q: Maintenance agreements for smaller roads? There would need to be clarification of some of the lots as to which road they were fronted on.

A: They are not having separate agreements for different areas of development. It will all fall under one agreement and costs will be divided equally. The only separate agreement will be between Parcels A & B for that private drive.

Vandersloot mentioned several items missing from current site plan. Would also like to see some type of sign posted on private drive for Lots A & B stating past a certain point was private property, no trespassing.

Per Jay Kilpatrick, Williams and Works, the goal of the Planning Commission meeting tonight was to make a recommendation to the Board about the proposed plat. Since it is being changed to a site condo, no recommendation is needed. They do need to advise the Board about the Private Road Ordinance, however. The developer cannot move forward until the changes to the ordinance are approved. They have acted in good faith making requested changes by the Township. Now our ordinance needs to reflect those changes. Also, if the Township wants differences between main roads, smaller feeder streets or cul-de-sacs, now is the time to put that language in the ordinance.

Jay Kilpatrick went over the May 8, 2015 memo discussing the Private Road Ordinance and changes made since the April 27, 2015 meeting. A few of the highlights are as follows:

1. Section 202.004 General Provisions
 - a. Sec.4.0 (a) talks about shared driveways. It is suggested a sub-paragraph be added here to allow "horseshoe lanes" which would serve no more than 10 lots and require two means of egress. If "lane" or some other terminology was used, a definition would need to be added under Definitions 202.003, Sec. 3.
 - b. (q) suggests limiting speeds through developments to twenty-five (25) miles per hour.
 - c. (c) added language to give the Township authority to look for traffic calming and safety features such as bump-outs, islands, boulevards, roundabouts, etc... when approving private roads.
 - d. Language added at 202.006 to require Township approval when making any changes to an existing Private Road, such as paving, etc...
2. Per discussion of April 27, 2015 regarding widths of feeder streets vs. main connector streets, the Cross sections have been adjusted to show these differences. Cross Section (B) is for feeder roads (cul-de-sacs) that serve less than 20 lots and Cross Section (C) for main connection roads that serve over 20 lots.

A motion was made by Gillett to recommend approval of the Private Road amendments as presented by Jay Kilpatrick, including new language regarding "eyebrow" and "horseshoe" lanes, to the Township Board. Post seconds the motion. Motion passed.

A public hearing is not required for site condo but is for any private road. The Private Road ordinance must be approved before any public hearing is set. Vandersloot can advise of hearing date.

Motion by Post to adjourn meeting at 7 pm. Rosema seconds. Motion carries.