

Vergennes Township

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

October 5, 1998

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held on October 5, 1998 at the Township Offices. At 7:01 PM the meeting was called to order by Chairman Gillett. Also present were Commissioners Dalga, Howard, Pfaller, Pedley and Weber.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES: Motion to approve by Pfaller, seconded by Pedley. Motion carried.

1. JAY KILPATRICK - THE PROBABLE EFFECTS OF CHILD CARE, MEDICAL, DENTAL, VETERINARIAN FACILITIES IN RA & R-1 DISTRICTS:

Gillette explained the current situation (allowing these facilities in R-2 and R-3 Districts if they look like a residence) and that the question is whether to add language allowing them in RA and R-1 Districts.

Kilpatrick explained state licensing requirements of child care operations of 12 children or less, and that larger operations have a different impact. If a Special Use Permit were to be the way someone could open a larger operation, the Commission would want to establish standards to address outside impacts such as signage, lighting, proximity to neighbors, traffic volume and circulation, fencing, etc. A larger operation might create a commercial-type feel to an area that could bring the evolution of additional requests for commercial operations.

Discussion ensued, including the following points:

- ❖ whether the Master Plan should be used to help define these requests in the future.
- ❖ a change in policy will mean answering the question of what makes good sense.
- ❖ whether a “neighborhood commercial node” concept would be the best potential placement sites for larger operations like these.
- ❖ whether the Commission is encumbered by having already allowed such an operation in a high-density area, not to allow one in a low-density area. (Kilpatrick: you can depart from precedent if it makes sense. Have to decide the impact of this land use.)
- ❖ what if there’s a bankruptcy on a Special Exception Site? (Kilpatrick: the allowed use can continue if the facilities are not appreciably altered.)
- ❖ The child care center being proposed around this discussion was noted as being in an area with infrastructure (sewer) that could support a commercial-sized use.
- ❖ If the language were to go into the R-A and R-1, it would be as a Special Exception Use with very specific guidelines.

Motion by Gillett to add “Child Care, Medical, Dental, Veterinarian Facilities” as something to look at in the Master Plan update, and also look at how we set it in R-2 and R-3, allowing these uses only as a home occupation, and keep larger ones in a commercial district. Seconded by Weber. Motion carried.

2. CONTINUING DISCUSSION: ACCESSORY BUILDING SETBACKS IN RA: Discussion included:

- ❖ requiring the same (or similar) materials be used as the main building
- ❖ considering creating a lot width/length ratio of the residence location & proposed Accessory Building location so they aren’t too far apart
- ❖ noting how unique each situation is regarding the topography, distance from the road, etc. - that calls often for a separate review of each project.
- ❖ noting that the front edge of an accessory building cannot project more in front of the house than the depth of the house, or the proposal would need to go to the ZBA.

Summary: It was decided that a sub-committee composed of Pedley, Howard, and Marsha Wilcox should flesh out the idea of a ratio and make a proposal, keeping in mind frontage issues, different scenarios, and existing setback rules.

3. HISTORIC DISTRICTS COMMISSION ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

Dave Thompson, spokesman for this commission (Carol Blundy, Cyndi Dalga, Tom Medendorp, Ron Rittersdorf, and MaryDell Rivette) explained the proposed update to the existing ordinance.

Discussion ensued regarding setting of a specific (nominal) fee for permits to alter historic district structures. The question was asked whether the seat requiring an architect could be reliably filled, and whether a resident of a historical district should also be found to serve on one of the Board positions. Appeals to the ordinance currently go directly to the state level; they should have to go first to ZBA to keep it local.

Motion: (Gillette) Move forward with this discussion and set up a Public Hearing for the November meeting. Seconded by Pfaller/ all approved (Dalga abstaining).

4. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE CHANGES NEEDED TO THE PRIVATE ROAD ORDINANCE IN VIEW OF CHANGES TO ROAD COMMISSION SPECIFICATIONS: It was recommended that the Private Road ordinance be amended to keep language consistent with the County Road Commission, which has increased its required thickness from 1 ¾ inches to 3 inches for bituminous installations. A Public Hearing will be scheduled for this at the November meeting.

5. MARC DANEMAN: PRESENTATION OF PLANNING SERVICES:

Mr. Daneman presented his credentials and history of planning services. Commissioner comments included acknowledging the tremendous pressures and changes here, and that we're at the point where it would be helpful to have a professional to turn to. His legal and planning backgrounds are an impressive combination. He could also assist with drafting ordinances.

Motion: Gillett motioned to recommend to the Township Board to use Marc Daneman's services on a trial hourly basis until the next budget cycle, and then see if annual retainers are warranted and should be incorporated. Seconded by Howard. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS: Developers in other municipalities must come to a hearing with both PUD and site condo plan at the same time. The Commission will discuss this in November.

Motion to adjourn by Gillette. Seconded by Pedley.

The next meeting is Monday, November 2nd at 7 p.m.. **at the Vergennes Church.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Dernocoeur, Recorder