

MINUTES
PARK TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
October 18, 2011
7:40 PM

DRAFT COPY

Commissioner Pfof called the regular meeting of the Park Township Planning Commission (PC) to order at 7:40 PM.

Present: Linda Dykert, Dennis Eade, Jeff Pfof, Steve Schaftenaar, Tom Vanderkolk

Absent: Bill Cole, Bob Ellis

Others: Andy Bowman, Planning Consultant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION

A motion was made by Schaftenaar and supported by Vanderkolk to approve the agenda as presented.

VOTE

Ayes 5/Nays 0 Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION

A motion was made by Eade and supported by Dykert to approve the minutes of September 20, 2011 as submitted.

DISCUSSION

Schaftenaar asked if the Planning Commission was continuing its discussion on the amendments and who was writing the specific language. Bowman said he would draft initial language to reflect the intentions of both the Commission and Township code enforcement staff. Township legal counsel would review that language for proper ordinance format and draft an amendment to the zoning ordinance using the new text for placement into the ordinance.

VOTE

Ayes 5/Nays 0 Motion carried.

Item #1 Review of Macatawa Bay Yacht Club Site Plan

Bowman introduced the item indicating that this is an existing marina in a C-2 Resort Service Zone which is presumed to have received special use approval for conduct of this use in that zone. Township office staff had produced a set of minutes from a 2007 Planning Commission meeting indicating action was taken to amend a previous special use for this site and approve a site plan for this location. Therefore the request before the Planning Commission is to amend the site plan for this special use to allow an expansion of a building on the site.

Chuck Posthumus, architect, 5355 Michigan Drive, NE, described the proposed building expansion for 2157 South Shore Drive as an addition to the current Yacht Club building at that location. He explained that north of the building is Lake Macatawa and Eldean's shipyard is to the left of the property. There is a club pool which was built in 1999 and a bathhouse which is the focus of the proposed addition. The Macatawa Bay Junior Association (sailing school) currently operates in the parking lot. A donation to the school has made it possible to build the proposed addition to house the existing sailing school.

Posthumus is proposing to enclose an open entryway on the current building and a completely enclosed addition to the building to house the sailing school activities and make their use of the site more flexible. This addition will not change parking needs, enclose the existing sailing program and not bring new boats to the site. The building will also allow the students to store their belongings and equipment and give them additional space for improved learning center activities. This includes improved workspace to enable the students to learn rigging. There will also be a conference area. During the winter months the addition will protect the sailing equipment.

He showed an illustration of the proposed exterior design which provides sufficient glass for clear view of the lake. The building will be used primarily on a seasonal basis.

Vanderkolk asked about the reasoning to enclose the existing open entryway. Posthumus explained it gives a larger learning space to students. Bowman asked if the outside character of the structure will be changed and found it will have a better roof and the siding will be a concrete material with board and batten look. Schaftenaar observed that the new roof addition will have more pitch.

Bowman said since the proposal really does not change the use, that site plan approval is all that is necessary. The addition will not impact parking or drainage. Pfost asked why this proposed site plan was submitted to the Planning Commission. Bowman explained that according to the Park Township Zoning

Ordinance, commercial uses and special uses require site plan approval by the Planning Commission. If the use itself was being expanded or changed, an amendment to the Special Use conditions would be appropriate.

MOTION

Schaftenaar moved and Dykert supported to approve the site plan as submitted.

VOTE

Ayes 5/Nays 0 Motion carried.

Item #2 Miscellaneous Zoning Amendments

Pfost explained that several potential zoning amendments were addressed at the September meeting. Bowman was asking to clarify what had been previously discussed before writing up the amendments. The Planning Commission proceeded to review the amendments as follows:

Dangerous Buildings - Commissioners agreed to add the wording to the language regarding notification of dangerous buildings: “...**or the Township Building Department Office.**” This would allow the Township and/or the County Sheriffs to be notified instead of just the sheriff as currently worded.

Changeable Letter Signs – Commissioners recommended changing Section 38-575, (g), (4) to allow changeable letters **every 10 seconds instead 5 minutes and include the concept of no fading in or out for LCD signs.**

Front and Rear Yard Averaging – the recommended change was to use front yards within **300 feet** for averaging to allow for more data in front yard setback calculations.

Satellite Dish Antennas – the recommended exemption was for dishes **under three feet in diameter.**

Home Occupations – Bowman said a provision should be written for temporary use which goes with the property not the owner. Legal counsel will write language based on the Planning Commission’s recommendation for the definition of short term use. Legitimate use such as a yard sale is already considered temporary use.

Corner Lot and Waterfront Lot Set Backs – Bowman said that more work needs to be done to devise workable solutions for corner lots and waterfront setbacks. Pfost said he thought the portion of a building that faces the waterfront is considered the front yard, but Vanderkolk referenced the ordinance book that stated it is the street. The view- shed issue is still a problem however.

The Planning Commission agreed the corner lot issue should be left to the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider on a case-by-case basis. Bowman stated he would also look at other ordinances for potential guidelines in considering corner lots.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Vanderkolk moved and Dykert supported to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM.

VOTE

Ayes 5/Nays 0 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith R. Hemwall
Recording Secretary
10/20/2011