

NELSON TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission Meeting
Nelson Township Municipal Building
2 Maple Street
Sand Lake, Michigan 49343

Wednesday, July 20, 2016
7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

The regular Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Hoffman, Stolk, McKown, Grifhorst, Wall, Litwinchuk, and Covell.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Also Present: Zoning Administrator Jerry Gross, Township Attorney Ross Leisman, Tom and Dan Larabel from Edwin Allen Homes, and Township residents Mary Stidham, as well as those who signed the attendance sheet attached to these minutes.

Approval of Agenda: It was proposed that the words “Planning Commission Discussion” be added under the Public Hearing section of the agenda. A motion was made by Wall, and seconded by Stolk, to approve the July 20, 2016 agenda as amended. Yes – 7, No – 0.

Approval of May 18, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Stolk, and seconded by Wall, to approve the May 18, 2016 regular meeting minutes as presented. Yes – 7, No – 0.

Approval of June 15, 2016 Special Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Hoffman, and seconded by Litwinchuk, to approve the June 15, 2016 special meeting minutes as presented. Yes – 7, No – 0.

**Public Hearing: Proposed OSPUD “White Pine Ridge”
 Edwin Allen Homes, 18 Mile Road and Shaner Avenue**

The public hearing was opened at 7:07 p.m.

Carl Lee, 6340 18 Mile Road, stated he would like to see the Kent County Health Department approvals for the project, had concerns that there were no parcel numbers for two of the parcels, and expressed concerns about how emergency vehicles would be able to maneuver if there was a fire, as well as the safety of the firefighters. He made the suggestion to put in drains along the roadway instead of ditches and to also modify the retention pond with proper barriers and a fountain to minimize the high potential for groundwater contamination.

Mary Stidham, 14216 Shaner Avenue, asked if Edwin Allen has started to build because there is a section of Shaner that has been dug out.

Loretta Lee, 6340 18 Mile Road, raised concern about what kind of water issues neighbors will have to deal with during a time when there is no drought or in heavy snowfall. She is concerned about runoff from accidents and the cost of cleanup, as well as trying to prevent that runoff from entering the water table.

Patty Prawdzik, 14585 Shaner Avenue, wants to know what the water plan is and if a water impact study was conducted.

Commissioner McKown then read three letters from Dave and Jerry Ann Gilson, Mary Stidham, and Loretta Lee. Those letters are attached to the minutes.

The public hearing was closed at 7:35 p.m.

Attorney Leisman advised the Commissioners about their procedural options moving forward with the OSPUD. He confirmed that the lot line can run to the middle of the road if the Township wants to do it that way and that the Board has discretion about how they want to lay out the lots.

Engineer Gritters then spoke about the revised plan submitted by Edwin Allen:

- Asphalt thickness for the private road should be updated.
- Grading details must be provided on subsequent plans.
- The private road cul-de-sac details should be added to the construction plans to ensure they comply with the Kent County Road Commission requirements.
- Water system is not on plans. Soil borings need to confirm groundwater elevation to make sure retention pond has adequate clearance from groundwater levels. Need calculations for different components, infiltration rates, overflow, capacity, etc.
- Soil borings didn't go down to four feet below the basin. This should be clarified to show there is clearance.
- The water flow is not adequate as it is on the current plan and would need major revisions. There is concern that the run off from the 57 acres to the east that comes through the site would fill up the retention pond and it would not be adequate for a larger storm event. Calculations are only preliminary and would need to be reviewed on subsequent plans.
- It is recommended that the first 6 acres to the east should follow the natural drainage course.

Tom Larabel confirmed that Roosien will do an engineering analysis for the water flows and that the storm sewer system maintenance will be subject to a maintenance agreement with the home owners.

There was then general discussion about the suitability of the septic systems, the soil test borings, and whether the OSPUD meets the intent of the Township and will provide benefits to the Township. The Commissioners were in agreement that they prefer the OSPUD over a development by right, but there are concerns that the open space as shown on the plans is used mostly for swales with little room for open space recreational activities.

There was more discussion about water issues, whether or not sump pumps will be installed and the need for a surety bond or escrow for long term water issues.

The Planning Commission would like to see a letter from the City of Cedar Springs stating that they are aware of the development and the impact it may have. They would also like to see the Kent County Health Department approval.

Dan Larabel confirmed that the tapers were added to the modification of the private drive entrance.

There was then discussion about having two points of egress instead of a cul-de-sac. Edwin Allen expressed that they are not proposing it and they don't want to do the two points of egress. A cul-de-sac is more desirable, you don't lose the buffer, and it is a better layout. There was discussion amongst the Commissioners about whether they preferred the extra drive or not.

There was discussion about setbacks and confirmation that there is no plan for sidewalks.

Stolk made a motion to table the approval. Hoffman seconded. Yes – 7, No – 0.

Planning Commission Discussion: There was talk about why the approval was being tabled stating the need for more information about the issues, specifically the swales, the water issues, and the need to have the feeling of open space. There was then clarification to the audience about the public hearing and OSPUD process.

New Business:

Review Draft No. 1 of Proposed Sign Ordinance.

Attorney Leisman spoke about the need for revision of the sign regulations in light of a decision by the United States Supreme Court. There is a broad spectrum about how it can be interpreted. This draft revision of the Township's ordinance is something in the middle. The draft ordinance has more definitions and clearer instructions about when you need a permit, exempts political signs, makes provisions for right-of-ways, and provides specific provisions that deal with temporary and portable signs. It is more standardized and integrated. It would take care of the new Supreme Court issues and new digital sign issues.

The Commission believes this draft is a good start. It will be reviewed in more depth at upcoming meetings.

Comments from the Commissioners. There is talk about updating the Master Plan, hiring a planner for the Master Plan, and the Township joining Cedar Springs and the Kent County Parks and Recreation Department for monthly meetings.

Extended Public Comments. Jerry Gross stated there is a gravel pit on 18 mile that wants to reopen and will make an application to be heard at a future meeting. He also asked the Commissioners if a daycare needed an entire site plan drawn up. The Planning Commission stated that they must have it to be considered for a special use.

Jerry Ann Gilson expressed her disappointment that Edwin Allen didn't follow through on some of the revisions to the plans they said they would provide. She is confused because they are very vague on some things.

Dave Gilson wants to know if the road counts as part of the acreage. Attorney Leisman stated it would depend on how they develop it. If it was done as a plat, the road would be excluded, but not if it was done as a land division.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

The next regular Planning Commission meeting will be held on September 21, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.