

Springfield Township
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes February 20, 2018

Call to Order: Chairperson Baker called the February 20, 2018 Business Meeting of the Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, MI 48350.

Attendance:

Commissioners Present:

Commissioners Absent

Dean Baker
Ruth Ann Hines
Dave Hopper
George Mansour
Jason Pliska
Kevin Sclesky
Linda Whiting

Consultants Present

Matt Lonnerstater, Carlisle Wortman, Associates
Randy Ford, Hubbell, Roth, Clarke, Inc.

Staff Present

Collin Walls, Supervisor
Laura Moreau, Clerk
Erin Mattice, Planning Administrator

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Whiting moved to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Sclesky, Whiting. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda:

- 1. Minutes of the December 18, 2017 Joint TB/PC meeting**
- 2. Minutes of the January 16, 2018 meeting**

Commissioner Pliska moved to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2017 Joint TB/PC meeting as presented and the minutes of the January 16, 2018 meeting as amended, adding “to be the front” to page 6, Commissioner Whiting’s comment. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Sclesky, Whiting. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Public Hearing:

None

New Business:

**1. Final Site Plan Review – Progressive Irrigation,
4584 Clawson Tank Drive, Parcel #07-36-401-010**

Mr. Jim Simpkins, business owner and applicant, introduced himself to the Commission. He provided an overview of his proposal and plan.

Mr. Matt Lonnerstater summarized his review letter dated February 6, 2018. He stated that details of the storage yard privacy fence and providing a cross section of the permanent driveway entrance can be handled administratively. There are two concerns that the applicant should address. The first is the paving requirements and he understands that, although the zoning ordinance does not have a requirement that the storage yard be paved, the Design and Construction Guidelines do. The Planning Commission does have the ability to waive paving standards so if they feel it is appropriate, they may do so. The other concern is the clear cutting of landscaping outside of the building envelope. The applicant should address if there is any other reason besides the storm water drainage issue that makes it necessary to clear all the vegetation on the eastern portion of the side. From a planning perspective, it does not seem necessary but if there are drainage concerns that can be nullified through the clear cutting, that would be reasonable. The applicant needs to provide some more information on this clear cutting.

Mr. Randy Ford summarized his review letter dated February 6, 2018. Applicant did go to the ZBA for a waiver for the employee parking area and the ZBA denied the requested waiver. Applicant is asking for waiver for paving of the storage yard. He stated that it is not clear why it is a necessity to clear cut the approximate one acre easterly half of the site. They are routing some of the surface drainage over to the proposed retention basin at the east end of the property. He stated that he does not understand the need to clear cut between the retention basin and the west part of the site where there are building and paving improvements. The grades are gentle and there is no cut fill requirement. The applicant will need to clarify what the intent is with mass grading and clearing of the site depicted on the plan. Some of the contour information needs to be cleaned up and some of the proposed elevation contours are missing or don't appear to be detailed enough. Township ordinance requires for a retention basin that there should be a demonstration of the permeability of the soils. The applicant did add a permeability factor into the calculations and he asked that the report from Hartley Geotechnical Group be provided. The septic shown on the plan is inconsistent with the Oakland County permit issued in the location of the primary and reserve field and the size of the tank shown. The applicant should provide clarification.

Mr. Simpkins asked the planner what he needed clarification on.

Mr. Lonnerstater responded he needed clarification on the clear cutting of the trees on the east side.

Mr. Simpkins stated that they need to do land balancing on the property. They have a retention pond going in and they need to get back to this part of the site. He stated that the property is not very level. He provided pictures of the property to the Commissioners. He stated that there are no hardwoods, only brush and dead trees. He stated that there are hardwoods in the far east and there are trees in the southwest corner. The pictures that he provided were taken in the center of the property and the front edge of the road. He took pictures down the roadside to demonstrate that the shrubs catch garbage. He stated that they are prepared to clean up and landscape this part of the property to look nice for the city and his business. He is in the landscape business and image is everything. The development of this property with the building and landscape improvements is a great asset for this industrial area with all the industrial developments around it.

Chairperson Baker stated that the question isn't why the applicant is electing to take out brush or trees that are relevant to where he is going to put the building. The question is, looking at the lot and elevations depicted in the prints and seeing the contours present, why is it necessary to clear cut trees on the east side of the property.

Mr. Simpkins asked him to turn to the last page. It shows the standing water on the property.

Chairperson Baker stated that everyone's interest is in the eastern side of the lot where the applicant is looking to put the retention facility. While they recognize that there are issues with balancing that area, they still have questions about getting the water to flow to that area and if it is necessary to take out all the other trees to allow the water to flow. The Township ordinance requires an applicant to maintain as much of the vegetation as they can and still allow development to progress. This question was raised by both the Engineer and the Planner. He reiterated that the applicant should speak about the necessity of removing these trees because they are not sensing that it is such an uneven site.

Mr. Simpkins asked if Chairperson Baker was referring to deciduous trees that are not in there. It is a bunch of overgrown and dead trees. He pointed to an area on the property where a lot of the pictures were taken and noted an area that contains water 3 feet deep running all of the way to the back of the property. He stated that clearing and seeding and providing irrigation to this area will demonstrate the product that he has. He wants to clean up the roadside because of the Township requirement for landscaping which is tremendous. It actually comes out to a small area being cleared when you take the landscaping into account. He explained the hazards of keeping the existing vegetation. He does not want to kill trees or bushes but he wants to start with a clean slate and insure proper flow. He has not asked for one variance on the landscaping which is extremely excessive. He asked Chairperson Baker what deciduous trees he is referring to on the property because in that acre, there are none. It is all shrubs and dead stuff. He asked Chairperson Baker if he visited the property.

Chairperson Baker answered yes. There is live vegetation on the property too. Mr. Simpkins stated that he wants to come in to the community and build a successful business. He has been here three times and he understands they want to make it right but he is here to build something nice. They are not talking about the functionality of the business, they are talking about dead trees right now. And then from dead trees they are going to go on to talk about paving the parking lot. He does not want to pave it. He is putting in a tremendous amount of landscaping and irrigating on this property. This site plan shows it needs to be balanced, period. There is not a lot there to preserve and that is why he brought the pictures.

Chairperson Baker stated that there are a number of issues that are beyond just the opinions of the Commissioners because there is certain ordinance language that the Commission is not here to create, omit or decide that it is not necessary on this site. There are obligations through the ordinance that the Commission must abide by and all the applicants must abide by them. He is trying to have a discussion about this because the ordinance has an intent to preserve vegetation native to the area.

Mr. Simpkins stated that they are getting off the subject of the building and his business. They went through this in the last meeting.

Chairperson Baker agreed and stated that they are back here again on the same topic.

Mr. Simpkins stated that they are in an industrial area. If a cement company comes in, are they going to tell them to save the trees.

Chairperson Baker replied that every applicant will follow the ordinances.

Mr. Simpkins told Chairperson Baker to have a great day stating that he was being smirked at and he did not want to be part of the community.

Chairperson Baker replied that the Commission was asking a question to determine why all of the vegetation has to be removed.

Mr. Simpkins replied he would be back to make the property outdoor storage and he abruptly left the meeting.

Old Business:

2. Ordinance Amendments – Section 40-277 and Section 40-572 Addressing Nonconforming Properties

Mr. Lonnerstater summarized the updated amendment to Section 40-572 dated February 9, 2018. He stated that changes were made to address concerns of both the Supervisor and Clerk. Prior to this amendment, he believes the changes were scattered throughout

the different zoning districts where this amendment puts all of the information in Section 40-572, Schedule of Regulations.

Commissioner Hopper asked if the setback would apply to lake lots. That setback is 50 feet and he believes that requirement should remain.

Commissioners agreed to the amendment with the addition of language referencing Section 40-639.

Mr. Lonnerstater suggested adding to the bottom of Section 40-572, “Structures on lots which abut a water body shall meet the minimum ordinary high-water mark setback contained in Section 40-639.”

Commissioners agreed and discussed the ordinance amendment to Section 40-572.

Commissioner Hopper moved to set for Public Hearing certain ordinance amendments to the Zoning Ordinance specifically Section 40-277 and Section 40-572 addressing nonconforming properties with the addition of “lots abutting bodies of water must comply with Section 40-639” to be located as a note to the Schedule of Regulations. Supported by Commissioner Sclesky. Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Sclesky, Whiting. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Other Business:

1. Priority Task List

Commissioners reviewed and made changes to the Priority Task List. Commissioner Pliska provided an update regarding the recent actions of the Pathway Committee. Commissioner Whiting suggested adding Erin Mattice to the list for Strategic Planning Committee since she serves on the Committee.

Public Comment:

Tom Weiler, 9171 Hillcrest, stated that the County said no to pathways along Davisburg Road past Dixie Highway toward Holcomb Road in past discussions. He suggested that another traffic light was needed on Dixie Highway near where the new General RV development was going because kids are going to be crossing Dixie Highway and it is dangerous.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Hines moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. Supported by Commissioner Pliska. Voted yes: Baker, Hines, Hopper, Mansour, Pliska, Sclesky, Whiting. Voted no: None. Absent: None. Motion Carried.

Erin A. Mattice, Recording Secretary