

Almont Township

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ALMONT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

OCTOBER 11, 2017

The regular meeting of the Almont Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairperson Steve Francis at the Almont Township /Village Hall, 817/819 N. Main Street, Almont, Michigan 48003. Roll call was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Dodge, Steve Francis, Mark Lauwers, Kim Streeter, Jesse Thompson, and Bryan Zender. Also present: Scott Kree of ROWE Professional Services.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brad Bletch

ALSO PRESENT: 15 guests

MINUTES: MOVED BY DODGE AND SUPPORTED BY THOMPSON, TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 AS CORRECTED. MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE: Presented

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mr. Stephen Haynes who lives next to the Country Smokehouse expressed his concerns regarding the Country Smokehouse site.

LATE AGENDA ITEM: INTRODUCTION: #1. Ann Wolf – Dog Training (7021 Bordman)

Ms. Wolf was not present. Consensus of Commissioner's noted that they did not want to discuss this issue without Ms. Wolf being present to explain her application.

#2. Jason Icenhower – Auto Repair Garage (4516 Van Dyke)

Mr. Icenhower noted that he wanted to lease the building at 4516 Van Dyke to operate an auto repair shop. Mr. Icenhower stated that there would be no outdoor storage or work done on vehicles parked on the property. All work will be conducted within the building. There are approximately 18 parking spaces available. Mr. Icenhower stated that he and his employee would need 1 or maybe two of those parking spaces which would leave 16 parking spaces for the clients. Consensus of the Commissioners noted that they would not approve the proposed 5 parking spaces along the southeast front of the property along Van Dyke (M-53) as those parking spaces were clearly in the road right-of-way.

#2. Jason Icenhower – Auto Repair Garage (4516 Van Dyke) continued:

Chairman Francis commented that if the Commissioners found the use to be appropriate, that no vehicle sales would be permitted and also noted that as a variance was granted for the sign frames in 2010, the signs frames could continue to be used as submitted with the pre-application for JD's Patriot Auto Care.

Planning Commission discussion followed on the zoning (C-3) and what special land uses were attached to the property. Planner Scott Kree was instructed to research the site noting what SLU's had been approved for the site; and have a review submitted within a week so that the applicant would not have to wait until the November 8th meeting for an answer.

#3. Rick Furneaux – Rapid Response Restoration LLC (4013 Van Dyke)

Mr. Furneaux explained his business noting that he would be storing his business equipment such as fans, dehumidifiers, air scrubbers and protection equipment such as gloves, masks, etc. in the building. Mr. Furneaux also noted that he intended to build an interior storage room which would be temperature controlled in order to store his temperature sensitive equipment and computer. Mr. Furneaux stated that he does mostly flood damage restoration and not fire restoration.

Mr. Furneaux stated in his letter of intent that he has three employees (himself, his wife and a relative) who will be using the building. There are also only 3 vehicles and there will be no walk-in customers. The building will be used for storage only and he would be in and out of the building Monday thru Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The site is zoned Industrial and pursuant to Zoning Ordinance No. 39.18, Article 8 warehousing, and wholesale establishments, storage and mini-warehouses are permitted uses.

Consensus of Planning Commissioners agreed that the use was appropriate and asked the Planner to submit a review noting any items that needed to be addressed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

#1. Vineyard Church – LED Sign

Mr. Jonathan Townsend from Vital Signs and representing the Vineyard Church presented his application for a new LED Sign before the Planning Commission. Mr. Townsend noted that the photo cells automatically dimmed down as the light fades. The sign will be located in the same spot as the other sign. Discussion followed by the Planning Commissioners.

MOVED BY LAUWERS AND SUPPORTED BY ZENDER TO APPROVED THE VINEYARD CHURCH (3835 VAN DYKE) SIGN APPLICATION DATED 9/20/2017 AS PRESENTED PURSUANT TO ZONING ORDINANCE NO. 39.18, SECTION 2.20 SIGNS. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED:

#2. Robert Zgnilac & David Zgnilac – Possible Zoning Violations

Chairman Francis noted that this item was on the agenda to discuss with both property owners the possible violations that were on their properties so that zoning compliance could be achieved.

It was noted that the properties owned by David and Sandra Zgnilac were the Lumberjack Shack, 7230 Webster Road (44-001-004-019-00), the old Party Store, 3070 Van Dyke (44-001-004-020-00) and the white house where the gun store is, 3078 Van Dyke (44-001-004-004-022-00) are currently zoned C-1.

The vacant 9 acres (44-001-004-034-00) which is owned by Robert and Carolyn Zgnilac was zoned C-3 in 1998.

Chairman Francis informed the Zgnilac's that the sign located at 3070 Van Dyke is currently in violation of sign ordinance 2.20 subsection I.5 which states *"If any maintenance is proposed to an existing nonconforming sign that requires the removal, replacement or alteration of the sign frame, sign brackets or other structural components of the sign, the sign shall be required to be brought into full compliance with the Sign Ordinance."*

Mr. David Zgnilac noted that he had provided the Planning Commission with a copy of the police report of when the car skidded on the ice and hit the sign pole damaging the sign. The sign post and frame up to that accident were in good shape. Mr. David Zgnilac also noted that a sign application and electrical application had been submitted to the Building Department as requested, but was told by the Permit Clerk that until the Planning Commission approves the sign, the Building Department could not issue the permits for the sign. Chairman stated that was correct.

Chairman Francis noted that the sign was too tall. Mr. Robert Zgnilac noted that the sign is 23 feet which is allowed by the ordinance. Chairman Francis noted that the sign ordinance does not allow for off-premises advertising signs, especially when that use has not been officially approved by the Planning Commission. Chairman Francis explained that the motor vehicles that have been approved to be displayed on the Lumberjack Shack site have not received special land use approval to be displayed on the other C-1 and C-3 zoned properties.

Discussion followed noting that the properties in question needed to be brought into compliance with Almont Township's current Zoning Ordinance.

Commissioner Streeter suggested that Planner Kree and Engineer Cory Mabery, PE review the properties and submit a review noting what the violations were and what procedures would be required to bring those properties into compliance. Mr. David Zgnilac asked that no one come out to the property until he has received a list of the violations.

OLD BUSINESS:

#1. Planning Commission Process Guidelines

Commissioner Streeter noted that the Planning Commission and the Zoning Department need to speak with one voice in regard to accurate/correct direction being given to applicants and residents. Commissioner Dodge expressed his desire to have the Planning Commissioners be united and stand behind a final vote, even if the vote was not unanimous. Discussion followed.

Discussion was held on how to better communicate with Planning Commissioners, the Township Supervisor and applicants. Discussion on the best way to obtain historical information on projects in front of the Planning Commission and digital records was heard.

The Zoning Administrator will begin to update the Planning Commission, Township supervisor and applicants by following up via email on recent questions raised by applicants, and proposed projects. The intent of this is to make everyone aware of the direction given so that all parties are working with the same information. Moving forward, the Zoning Administrator will also prepare a brief historical background review for the Planning Commission to make the Planning Commissioners aware of pertinent information on projects before them.

More information will follow on the Planning Commission Process Guidelines.

REPORTS:

Planner: - Mr. Kree handed out copies of some Solar Ordinances and asked the Planning Commissioners to review it and be ready to discuss at the next available meeting.

Engineer: No Report Received

Zoning Board of Appeals: N/A

Zoning & Building Report: N/A

Planning Commission General Comments: N/A

November 8, 2017 Proposed Agenda: Chairman Francis stated that his architect may not be ready for next month and asked if he could present the revisions to his site plan in December. Consensus of Commissioners stated that if the plans weren't ready for the November 2017 meeting to present them at the December 2017 meeting.

MOVED BY LAUWERS AND SUPPORTED BY ZENDER TO ADJOURN. MOTION CARRIED. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ida L. Lloyd

Ida L. Lloyd, Recording Secretary