

Almont Township

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ALMONT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

May 13, 2009

The regular meeting of the Almont Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairperson Francis, at the Almont Township Hall, 819 N. Main Street, Almont, Michigan. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT, Steve Francis, Jean Gross, Fred Hunter, Bonnie Krauss, Kim Streeter, and Dennis Sweers. Also present: Brian Wilson of Community Planning & Management, P.C.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bryan Zender, excused absence.

ALSO PRESENT: 3 guests

CORRESPONDENCE: Correspondence was presented.

MINUTES: MOVED BY GROSS AND SUPPORTED BY STREETER TO ACCEPT THE APRIL 8, 2009 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mr. Lowell and Mr. Ron Bristol were in attendance inquiring about property they own on the east side of Van Dyke, between Hough Road and Bordman Road. The S.E. corner of Hough and Van Dyke is currently zoned C-3 and the N.E. corner of Bordman and Van Dyke is planned for commercial. There is a gap in between the two corners that is not currently zoned nor is proposed to be zoned commercial. As the Bristol's own the properties in question, they asked the Commissioners if the Planning Commission would be open to rezoning their properties from Ag/Residential to General Commercial. Chairman Frances noted that as this was not an agenda item, the Planning Commission could not answer with a yes or no. Chairman Francis suggested that the Bristol's meet with the Township's Zoning Administrator and get the required applications.

LATE AGENDA ITEMS: Township Supervisor Paul Bowman discussed the economy and mentioned the following terms: (1) "shovel ready sites" and does that make sense to discuss further for the industrial/commercial zones. (2) Adaptive Reuse of commercial buildings and industrial sites.

INTRODUCTIONS: None

PUBLIC HEARING: None Scheduled

OLD BUSINESS: #1. Sign Ordinance 51.1 - Review

Commissioner Krauss noted that she and Township Supervisor, Paul Bowman, attended a workshop sponsored by ROWE Professional Services Company on April 29, 2009. Commissioner Krauss noted that the discussion on digital signs dealt mainly with the pros and cons. Supervisor Bowman noted that digital signs are the new technology and the township is likely to see more of them. Copies of the handout from the workshop will be made available for all the commissioners so that they will have a chance to review the same information. Chairman Francis suggested that as Commissioner Zender was not available, that the matter be tabled until the June meeting.

#2. Wind Energy Conversion Systems (proposed Section 2.31)

Commissioner Krauss noted that at the same workshop that was held on April 29th, discussion was also held on wind energy. Again the discussion was on the pros and cons of wind mills. Enclosed in the packet was a sample ordinance on wind energy systems. Copies of the handout from the workshop will be made available for all the commissioners so that they will have a chance to review the same information. The subject was tabled until the June meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: #1. Review Section 2.11 - Fences

Supervisor Bowman noted that the current fence provision, located in the township's Zoning Ordinance, is difficult to enforce as the language is vague and open to interpretation.

Mr. Wilson asked if the commissioners felt that fences should be allowed in the front yard. After some discussion it was agreed to allow fences in the front yard, but that front yard fences would need to follow height and fence type restrictions. Mr. Wilson suggested that the height be no more than 42-inches and that only decorative fencing, no solid fencing, (obstructing the view through the fence), be allowed in the front yards. The front yard is considered parallel to the front face of the house and it extends in both directions to the property lines.

Parcel sizes, setbacks and types of fencing were also discussed. Mr. Wilson agreed to have a sample ordinance available for review and discussion for the June meeting.

REPORTS:

Planner: No Report

Engineer: No Report.

Zoning Board of Appeals: No Report.

Zoning & Building: Zoning & Building Report for April was submitted.

General Comments: Chairman Frances asked a question regarding home based businesses. Also questioned were dumpster enclosures. In certain instances, could dumpsters be exempt from the current standards of enclosing a dumpster? Mr. Wilson agreed to bring draft language for the June meeting.

Also discussed was the lack of follow through on the Great Lake Helicopter site. Supervisor Bowman stated that he will contact the township attorney as to what can be done to conclude the matter.

It was suggested that a handout be prepared to educate the public on procedures for site plan/special land use hearings. The Zoning Administrator agreed to work on such a handout.

Agenda for June 10, 2009

Old Business: Sign Ordinance 51.1 – Review
Wind Energy Conversion Systems
Fences – Review of section 2.11

New Business: Article 7, Section 7.03 – Location and
Screening of Trash Receptacles

**MOVED BY STREETER AND SUPPORTED BY KRAUSS TO ADJOURN THE
MEETING AT 8: 35 P.M. MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted by



Ida L. Lloyd, Recording Secretary