

Almont Township Planning Commission

Chairperson: Andrea Bara
Vice Chair: Kevin Vallelunga
Twp. Board Rep.: Rick Dodge
Secretary: Dennis Sweers
Member: Jeremy Yarbrough
Member: Traci Pewinski
Member: Steve Hoffa

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Almont Township Planning Commission Regular Meeting June 14, 2023

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

Members Present: Andrea Bara, Rick Dodge, Steve Hoffa, Traci Pewinski, Dennis Sweers, and Kevin Vallelunga. Also present: Planner Alex Hritcu from ROWE Professional Services and Engineer Cory Mabery.

Members Absent: Jeremy Yarbrough

Present: Michelle Breen, Ray Shavers, Michael Sage, Sal Pansera and 2 others.

Minutes: Correction was made to the minutes on page 3, lamination should be lumination.

Moved by Sweers and supported by Vallelunga to approve the minutes from the March 8, 2023, meeting with correction. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Presented

Public Comments: Michelle Breen addressed the Planning Commission regarding her residence at 4741 Howland Road. She claims that the home has been used as a multi-family dwelling dating back in the 1970's. She said when they purchased the home in 1997 an addition was added on the north side of the residence and has been rented to various people over the past several years. They are interested in selling the home and the current buyers would like to be able to use the home in the same manner. She is asking for the home to continue as a multi-dwelling.

The Planning Commission held a brief discussion and informed Mrs. Breen that they would get back with her.

Late Agenda Item: None

Introduction: Cindy Zehnder was introduced by Jenny Henige as the new Recording Secretary. Jenny was appointed as the Township Clerk and she wishes to devote her time to her new duties.

Public Hearing: N/A

New Business: Annual Reviews

- 1. Ray Shavers – 4081/4951 Van Dyke (cold storage building) Original Site Plan approved 6/13/2018. 06/09/2021 given 60 days to appear or submit in writing the current status of the project. Extension granted until 08/12/2022. Extension granted until 08/10/2023. (Engineer Mabery’s report dated 6/2/2023)**

Mr. Shavers was present to request a one-year extension on his site plan. Discussion was held on the timetable for this project. Mr. Shavers explained that he was held up for 2 years due to litigation and lost his investor in the project. He also stated that he believed that while he was in litigation, the site plan would be considered on hold. He plans on completing the project once he secures funding. Engineer, Cory Mabery, said there are still outstanding items that need to be checked on and indicated that the site is secured and getting into the property is not always easy. His report indicates that the site is used for truck storage and other related activities. It was suggested that perhaps Mr. Shavers should sit down with the building department and engineers to see what needs to be done to complete the site plan in a timely manner. Mr. Shavers indicated he did not want or need any oversight from the Township. Discussion followed regarding the background and history of the site plan development as most current members of the Planning Commission were not on the Planning Commission at the time the site was approved June 13, 2018. Comments regarding the impact of COVID, the availability of and cost of materials resulted in almost every site plan given some schedule relief for about 2 years. Mr. Shavers stated that he wants the project done, he just needs financing.

Consensus of the Planning Commissioners to table Mr. Shavers site plan until the next scheduled Planning Commission meeting for a more detailed review of the history given the current site plan has not yet expired.

Time was provided for items not on the agenda. (Site plans, and fees.)

Planning Member Dodge suggested that the agenda items that had representatives at the meeting should be placed ahead of those that had no representative present. Chairperson Bara agreed and it was consensus to switch the order of the agenda items.

- 2. DTE Midas Substation – 5355 Kidder Road. SLU and Site Plan approval on 04/14/2021. Granted a one-year extension on 06/08/2022. (Engineer Mabery’s report dated 6/2/2023)**
Michael Sage, DTE representative, was present to provide an update on the project. He stated that they were at the testing phase of the substation, landscaping and soil testing needed to be done and the restroom needed completion. Cory Mabery’s report states that the applicant is progressing with the project. Discussion followed.

Moved by Hoffa and supported by Pewinski, to approve a one-year extension for DTE Midas Substation located at 5355 Kidder Road, Almont, MI

- 3. VP Capital Mining – 5766 Van Dyke. SLU approved 01/13/2021. On 06/08/2022 given a one-year extension. (Engineer Mabery’s report dated 6/2/2023)**

Mr. Pansera gave a progress report on the project. Mabery’s report indicated that the applicant is currently working on the project. Mr. Pansera has a meeting with the consultant in two weeks for removal of arsenic. He is not mining yet because he needs to put in a drive and do screening.

No action was needed by the Planning Commission

- 4. Daisy Lane –**

Mr. Pansera gave a progress report on the project. The retention pond is constructed and the road subbase is currently being inspected for approval.

No action was needed by the Planning Commission.

- 5. Country Smokehouse – 3294 Van Dyke (Building addition and site improvements). Originally approved in 2009. Updated plan approved 02/14/2018. Granted an extension until 01/10/2020. On 06/09/2021 given a one-year extension. Extended until 6/11/23 (Engineer Mabery’s report dated 6/2/2023)**

Ida Lloyd explained that Mr. Francis was in earlier in the day and expressed that he would be unable to attend tonight’s meeting. Cory Mabery, Engineer, stated that they were going to obtain a verbal occupancy. Items that still need to be addressed are:

- Retention pond is not constructed.
- An entrance is installed on the adjacent property to the south. A drive has been constructed that connects to the parking area in front of the Country Smoke House building. However, access to the drive is restricted by a gate.
- An easement is recommended by the Engineer.
- An As-Built Survey is required.

Discussion followed and Planning Commission stated that two trailers are still on the property. They also discussed that the current site plan is already expired. They would like Mr. Francis to address each item and give an estimate on when they will be completed before they will grant an extension.

Moved by Dodge and supported by Vallelunga, to table the site plan extension until the next planning commission meeting. Motion carried.

- 6. 1st Choice Maintenance Wm. Saintonge (1st Choice Maintenance) 3645 Van Dyke (New building and site improvement) Project complete**

- 7. Superior Contracting – 3044 Van Dyke (New Building and site improvements) SLU and Site Plan approved May 9, 2019. On 06/09/2021 given a 60-day extension. Amended Site Plan on 08/11/2021. Extension until 08/11/2022. Extended until 6/14/23 (concrete pile was to be removed by 2/3/23 – (Engineer Mabery’s report dated 6/2/2023)**

Cory Mabery, engineer, presented a report that listed the following required items.

- The approved outside storage area (150x150) is not constructed. The screening fencing has not been installed. The berm needs to be seeded. The entire limestone surface area is being utilized for material and equipment storage.
- An extremely large topsoil stockpile is currently located on the north end of the limestone surface area.
- A large crushed concrete stockpile is also located in the limestone surface area.

Discussion followed.

Moved by Dodge and supported by Sweers, to table the extension until the next planning commission meeting and to have a letter with a punch list sent to Mr. Tencza to be addressed at the next meeting. Motion carried.

- 8. Pine Crest – Phases 2 & 3 Site Plan. Application approval 06/04/2019. Site Plan approval 08/14/2019. 06/09/2021 given one year extension. On 06/08/2022 granted an extension until 08/10/2023.**

Cory Mabery, engineer, does not know the status of the project. The ground has not been broken and no pre-construction meeting has taken place. The current site plan expires August 10, 2023. Ida Lloyd stated that she has had no response to her emails and that she will proceed with a formal letter.

No action taken.

- 9. Paul’s Collision Repair Centers LLC – 4248 Van Dyke – Building Addition. Building Project Completed.**

- 10. United Lawnscape – 4296 Van Dyke – Expand Outdoor Storage. SLU and Site Plan approved 01/22/2022. Site Plan Amendments 03/09/2022. (Engineer Mabery’s report dated 05/04/2023)**

According to the engineering report, the project is substantially complete. The applicant must provide an As-Built-Survey prior to final approval.

No action required.

- 11. Master Robotics – Building Project Complete**

- 12. Paolo Iacobacci – 5648 Van Dyke - SLU outdoor storage – approved 10/12/22.**

Site is degraded and they have not broken ground. This site plan does not expire until October. It was suggested that he be emailed to be put on the September or October Agenda.

No action taken.

13. Legacy Metal – 4701 Van Dyke - Building Addition (still under review – see Planner’s review dated 06/06/2023)

Alex Hritcu indicated that the site plan is still under review and he would like certain items cleared up before it is presented to the Planning Commission.

No Action Required.

Time was provided for members to discuss items not on the agenda. (Cash deposits and irrevocable bank letter of credit.)

Old Business:

Reports:

Planner – N/A

Engineer – N/A

Zoning Board of Appeals – N/A

Zoning & Building Report – Heard updates from Ida Lloyd. She will contact Ray Shavers, Country Smoke House, Superior Contracting, and Michelle Breen.

Discussion was held on Michelle Breen’s presentation. Alex Hritcu, planner, said that there are not too many options since it is not a legal non-conforming use. He suggested that when we update the Master Plan there could be a text amendment, or possible re-zoning but that would be doubtful. Ida said she explained to Michelle Breen that the township does not allow spot zoning and she did not think it would be possible at this time to allow the use to continue.

Planning Commission – General Comments

1. Rowe contact information/procedure and billing charges.
Chairperson Bara wanted clarification on who and when to call the planner or engineer and what charges were involved. Alex Hritcu explained that they are on retainer and they could ask questions, or require clarification as needed. It was suggested that if a planning commission member had a question, they needed to ask Chairperson Bara and she could contact either Ida Lloyd and/or Alex Hritcu for clarification.
2. Special joint meeting with Twp. Board – Master Plan.
Alex Hritcu said that they will plan a kick-off meeting to explain the Master Plan process regarding updates, changes, input, goals, objectives, land use, and future land use map. Then we will proceed with updating the Zoning Ordinance based on the information. Discussion followed regarding the Master Plan and Joint Master Plan with the Village of Almont. It was

consensus of the Planning Commission to host a kick off meeting on August 9, 2023, and to extend an invitation to the Township Board members to attend.

3. Planning Commission Member Required Training

Discussion regarding training type was held. Consensus was that training should be yearly but no number of required hours was mentioned. Planning Member Dodge suggested that each member should be required to take a basic planning commission class. Chairperson Bara said that she thought that was a good idea but reiterated that no number of hours was required only that training needed to be completed once a year.

Moved by Dodge and supported by Vallelunga to adjourn at 9:51 p.m. Motion carried.

Submitted by Cindy Zehnder Recording Secretary