

**Almont Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
November 8, 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 and invocation was recited. Roll call taken.

Members Present: Andrea Bara, Kevin Vallelunga, Traci Pewinski, Dennis Sweers, Jeremy Yarbrough, and Rick Dodge.

Members Absent: Steve Hoffa.

Professional Services: Planner Alex Hritcu from ROWE Professional Services.

Guests Present: John Brzozowski, Connie Brzozowski and Joe Brzozowski representing American Tree.

Moved by Vallelunga and supported by Pewinski to approve the minutes from the October 11, 2023, as amended. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Presented

Public Comments: None

Late Agenda Items: None

Introductions: None

Public Hearings: None

New Business: Mr. John Brzozowski representing American Tree proposed site updates.

Mr. Brzozowski had provided a marked-up site plan, a description of his plans, pictures of a hoop style greenhouse and 2 covered walkways prior to the Planning Commission meeting. These documents will be attached to the official minutes of the Planning Commission meeting for November 8, 2023. Mr. Brzozowski is proposing a 2-phase project with the first phase to include a hoop style greenhouse and 2 covered walkways one in front of the main store and the second around the hoop house. The second phase will be the construction of a cold storage pole barn. Mr. Brzozowski was invited to address the members of the Planning Commission and he provided a description with some background regarding the cost of producing a professional site plan. Mr. Brzozowski is requesting that a site plan not be required for Phase 1 and indicated he understood a site plan would be required for Phase 2. He also stated the hoop house would have both power and water.

Discussion followed with some concern for not setting a precedence that would not be in the best interest of the community. The property is currently zoned Industrial with a Special Land Use for this commercial business. Mr. Hritcu from ROWE Professional Services was asked for his comments. He cited several areas of the Ordinance with specific focus on Article 4, Site Plan Requirements and Procedures. Mr. Hritcu suggested more research would be required and that he would follow-up with additional guidance for the Planning Commission and American Tree.

Old Business:

1. Review/Update Master Plan

Discussion:

Mr. Alex Hritcu provided handouts as well as email documents ahead of the meeting. Discussion followed regarding the existing land use map based on tax classification. There was some discussion as to whether this is the best approach to achieve an accurate map of current use. Mr. Hritcu indicated that although the Lapeer County is working on their GIS capability, GIS data will most likely not be available to support our Master Plan update. Mr. Hritcu provided a large color copy of the land use map based on tax classification and handed it over to the Zoning Administrator.

Discussion was held regarding the survey results as to whether to have a stand-alone section in the Master Plan that shows the tabulated results of the survey. Further discussion to follow. One of the recurring themes from the survey was the need for a recreational center for children, adults, and seniors to utilize. Currently the Park Board is working on a Parks and Reactional Plan considering additional property.

Community facilities and a thoroughfare plan will be the next two chapters of the Master Plan to be discussed. Mr. Hritcu indicated he would provide information for discussion at the next Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Hritcu provided a proposed Section 5, Goals, Strategies and Tasks for discussion. The current Section 5 covers Visions and Strategies. The layout of tasks will be more specific as to follow on actions to meet the Goals for the community. The first Goal of preserving natural resources generated a lot of discussion. There are 6 strategies associated with preserving natural resources with a corresponding 7 tasks. This discussion resulted in the potential need to add a goal, strategy, or task to review the Zoning Ordinance regarding hazardous materials to ensure compliance with state requirements. Clearly, several areas of the Zoning Ordinance will need review and potential updates to meet some of the strategies as defined by the various tasks.

Mr. Dodge left the meeting at 8:15 and returned at 8:21.

Discussion continued regarding the goal of providing recreation and open spaces for residents and the tasks identified with these goals. The tasks identified seemed to be adequate.

The next goal discussed was the preservation of agricultural land for farm use. This discussion included two strategies and their associated tasks. Survey results seemed to support this goal.

The next goal was changed from provide quality housing opportunity to maintain quality housing opportunities that meet the needs of new and long-term residents. Discussion included site condominiums, duplex's, multi-family housing and allowable property splits. It was suggested to strike strategies 1 and 2 with their associated tasks.

Summary of follow-on action items:

1. Review quality housing opportunities for discussion at the next Planning Commission meeting.
2. Review the remaining goals, strategies, and tasks for discussion at the next Planning Commission meeting.
3. The Zoning Administrator to get with the tax assessor and supervisor to update the current land use map based on tax classification to improve accuracy.

Reports:

Planner: Covered the Master Plan Update.

Engineer: No report provided as the engineer was not present.

Zoning Board of Appeals: N/A

Zoning & Building:

Efforts Jimmy's Storage on the Northwest corner of Dryden Road and Van Dyke continue to move forward.

4260 Van Dyke (old Century 21 plaza) has been sold with the new owner retaining current renters and adding a WWII museum.

Planning Commission General Comments:

Commissioner Vallelunga noted that some work had begun on the Mr. Iacobacci's outdoor storage facility.

Moved by Vallelunga supported by Dodge to adjourn at 9:17 PM. Motion carried.

Submitted by Dennis Sweers Planning Commission Secretary.

Dennis Sweers 13 Dec 2023