

Almont Township Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

March 13, 2024

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

Members Present: Andrea Bara, Rick Dodge, Brian Blumline, Traci Pewinski, Dennis Sweers, Kevin Vallelunga, and Nick Giacalone.

Members Absent: NONE

Professional Services: Mr. Alex Hritcu, Senior Planner, Rowe Professional Services

Township Engineer: Cory Mabery, P.E., Davis Land Surveying & Engineering, P.C.

Present: 4 guests

Minutes: All Planning Commission members reviewed and approved the Jan 2024 meeting minutes. **Moved by R. Dodge and supported by D. Sweers to approve the minutes from February 12, 2024, meeting as presented. Motion carried.**

Correspondence: None

Public Comments: None

Late Agenda Item: None

Introduction: None

Public Hearing: SLU 24-01 – SMJ International – Beranek Communication Tower (3600 Glover Road)

Chairman Bara opened the Special Land Use SLU 24-01 public hearing at 7:01 PM and provided an overview of the procedures for conducting the public hearing. All questions/comments are to be directed to the chair. It should be noted that the drawings are dated March 2024 while the reviews by the Township Engineer are dated January 24, 2024 and the Planner is dated February 5, 2024.

Alex Hritcu, Senior Planner, provided an overview in his review dated Feb 5, 2024, on application for land use SLU 24-01 and has provided a site plan checklist as well as a

summary of their findings and have included informational and Zoning compliance items that are outstanding. Missing information includes:

1. Gross and net acreage for the site needs to be shown on the drawings.
2. Existing agriculture use already on site
3. Soil borings, locations, and summary. It was noted the soil boring information is shown on sheet C-3.1. However, location on site was not noted.
4. Surface drainage; drainage for site, no calculations.

*Engineer to refer to gradings on site

5. Zoning Compliance:

a. Screening on site: Existing vegetation on site; borders residential use on the west. No screening proposed toward the street.

b. Parking requirements: No space or size requirements provided.

c. Proposed barbed wire on top of fence, reference sheet C-3, is a prohibited material per section 2.11 unless waived by Planning Commission.

d. Per section 7.2, Screening Requirements, need to install green belt, wall or landscape berm abutting residential parcel. Planning Commission to determine if this is necessary.

6. Telecommunications section 2.22: collocation for communication tower on the site. Will this be offered to other providers for cellular communication?

Cory Mabery, P.E discussed his review dated January 24, 2024. Main engineering concern is the proximity to the county drain and the need for the 100-foot-wide easement, either a clearance from the drain office, that they are outside that area or that the drainage flows toward that direction is not a concern from the drainage office. Also, the need for permits from Lapeer County for Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control, and access drive permits. Mr. Mabery discussed zoning ordinance requirements relative to security lighting, dumpster and enclosure, one parking stall, landscaping and fence with barbed wire.

They did modify the plans that include a stone filter that would address water quality, it is not a major impact because of surface material and size, but it does flow to the west, which is a county drain.

Alex Hritcu, requested the chairman to highlight:

Standard for a Special Land Use A, B, C, D & E, under section 5.5 CONDITIONS must be met in order to approve the use of a communication tower on the site. A copy has been included in today's packet for review.

Additional questions and discussion followed with Alex Hritcu and Cory Mabery.

General discussion:

D. Sweers requested clarification on the review process relative to dealing with the SLU and Site Plan separately or combined.

R. Dodge height requirements regarding the need for a variance.

No additional questions for Alex Hritcu and Cory Mabery.

7:22 pm: Chairman invites applicant, Aaron Adelman (colleague of Drew) with SMJ International forward.

Aaron provided a brief summary:

Proposing a 225 ft self-support Tower at 3600 Glover, this tower will accommodate 3 carriers. Currently Verizon wireless is the only one contracted, so two future carriers could co-locate and be added to the contract. The tower profile on TE-1, tower elevation, Verizon is being placed 250 feet and the two future antennas at 235 ft and 220 ft. Regarding the base and screening, we plan to propose a fence and will be open to landscaping options. Aaron states the Geotech is underway and once ready, will be able to provide. Applicant reassures they would not construct on unstable grounds and will request reports for review. Refers to S-1, second page on plans to discuss possible gross acreage. Aaron will request the actual gross acreage to be printed on the site plans.

Reminder given to Chairman: The planning commission that the building department is going to be needing the soil borings, please defer to the building department because they cannot build without the engineering seal. The seal will ensure that it will support the height and weight of the tower.

Clarification needed:

The drawing shows an address of 3664 Glover, which is a residential home. Open discussion of home and surrounding. Ida confirmed that SMJ International did apply and has been approved for address 3600 Glover Rd.

Aaron will Request an updated drawings to show the approved Special Land Use address.

D. Sweers requested clarity on drawing measurements. On sheet C-21, the drawing shows 60' x75' ft but C-2 has 75' x75'. Aaron will request drawings to be updated to correct the plan.

Chairman Bara invited anyone with questions or comments forward.

Howard Redd, owner of property to the North, stepped forward. The Redd Fam LLC on print.

He brought questions and/ concerns he feels the Planning Commission should review:

1. What is the need for another cell tower? There is one ½ mile away and another 2 miles away.
2. Why take the residential property and make special use out of it? We have land off Van Dyke that is already zoned for industrial or commercial.
3. Brings concern of land wetness. When a road is put in, where will the water go? Will you ditch around it?
 - a. Referred to the current state of property, where no ditch is present. If you look at the field tonight, you would see water standing in there.
2. How deep will the soil be?
3. How tall will the tower be?

Applicant, Aaron response: Cannot speak to current site state, as he has not been out there. He will bring back that to the owners and the tower owners' attention. Vertical Bridge brought this on behalf of Verizon wireless and cannot speak on why this location. Aaron did reassure that there are a lot of determining factors for the chosen location of 3600 Glover Rd. Aaron will request maps from Verizon that could help illustrate their before and after coverage.

Discussion continued.

Chairman Bara closed the public hearing at 7:41 PM.

Move by R. Dodge supported by A. Bara to postpone the approval of Special Land Use application SLU 24-01 – SMJ International – Beranek Communication Tower (3600 Glover Road), to allow the applicant time to address the issues discussed.

- **Revised Motion with below list for clarification.**
- **Over all acreage**
- **Noise level of generators**
- **The coverage for Verizon's need for that location on tower**
- **Address why that location is so close to the property line**
- **Clarification on the easement for the county drain**
- **Screening**
- **Fire/Emergency**
- **Fencing**

Roll call vote: Dodge – yea, Bara – yea, Sweers – yea, Pewinski – yea, Vallelunga – yea, Blumline – yea, Giacalone – yea. Motion carried 7 yeas - 0 nays

Motion Carries 7:52pm

New Business: Kidder Road Condo's – Sal Pansera Developer

Corey excused himself at 7:56 pm. He is the engineer of the project.

Sal Pansera, Developer proposed preliminary approval for new residential with 7 parcels that are going to be called Site Condo, a term used to veer away from the decision law. They will be residential homes, waterfront, right off Kidder Road. All driveways will come off Kidder Road, no extension of roads or private roads in plan. Homes will be around 2,000 sq feet, planning for walkouts to the waterfront.

Mr. Mabery was asked to discuss the approval process for the Township Engineer to work on behalf of an applicant in this case for development of the proposed site condominiums. As there are no engineering issues related to the development the approval was granted by the Township Supervisor.

Corey moved forward to clarify they need preliminary and final approvals. To step in the preliminary approvals, we need to make sure soil and water availability throughout with the health department. Testing to include wells, test wells, soil perks. A unique approval for the road commission for the driveways. Currently have preliminary approval but there is some terrain so we have limitations on where the driveways can go. In order to gain final approval, some work is needed on Kidder Rd to help level some slopes, about 10-11 inches for sight distance. Since Kidder Rd is identified as a 55 MPH road, we need to ensure these adjustments are met to meet the curves.

Alex Hritcu states no additional comments. The zoning standards have been met.

Moved by R. Dodge and supported by T. Pewinski to approve the Preliminary approval for Kidder Road Condos – Sal Pansera Developer as presented. Motion carried.

Cory returned to his seat at 8:11pm.

Old Business: Review/Update Master Plan

Mr. Hritcu reviewed his e-mail of Jan 9, 2024. Brought a focus to the new draft of the existing language map, the color palette has been matched up, much cleaner. Open discussion with the team.

Discussed R1-A. increase square foot to 1 acre. A consensus for all 7 members agrees.

Reports:

Planner – Alex Hritcu: None

Engineer – Cory Mabery: Plans an updated report for April 2024 meeting; Possible Lombardo Homes to start again.

Zoning Board of Appeals – Traci Pewinski: None

Zoning & Building Report – Ida Lloyd: April Agenda proposed items include Master Plan, Shango's Fireworks, and Communication Tower

Planning Commission – General Comments- Solar Farms/Wind Energy - review sections 2.30 & 2.31 -Plan to review ordinance at next meeting.

**Moved by T. Pewinski and supported by K. Vallelunga to adjourn at 8:43 p.m.
Motion carried.**

Submitted by Kristina Rehfus, Recording Secretary