

Almont Township Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

February 14, 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: Corey Mabery, P.E., Davis Land Surveying & Engineering, P.C.

Present: 5 guests

Minutes: Planning Commission Goals and Objectives for 2024 were modified from the Jan 2024 meeting and presented. It was the consensus of the Planners to include the modified Goals and Objectives for 2024 in the Feb 2024 minutes. Moved by R. Dodge and supported by T. Pewinski to approve the minutes from January 10, 2024, meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Goals and Objectives for 2024

1. Follow Parliamentary Procedures.
 - a. Rowe offers this type of workshop. Need to schedule this workshop for a regular PC Meeting.
2. Complete the 5-year review of the Master Plan.
3. Review the definition and submission requirements for temporary structures and temporary use.
4. Review and update ordinance 39.22, Article 2, section 2.31 Commercial Solar Energy Collector System. Also review wind energy.
5. Review the 3 Commercial Zoning Classification for potential to combining to one commercial zoning.
6. Conduct a review of Goals and Objectives every 6 months.
7. Conduct a review of zoning classifications.
8. Establish a syllabus for training and a matrix to track. It was noted that the By-Laws require Commissioners to attend one training session per year.

9. Review and update Ordinance definitions as required.

Correspondence: MI Planner Magazine and Upcoming Training

Public Comments: None

Late Agenda Item: None

Introduction: Kristina Rehfus, Recording Secretary

Public Hearing: SLU 23-01-Jimmy's Storage - self storage.

Chairman Bara provided an overview of the procedures for conducting the public hearing. All questions/comments are to be directed to the chair. SPL for Jimmy's Storage is a 25.7-acre site that is being proposed to be developed for self-storage units in two phases located at the northwest corner of M53/Van Dyke and Dryden Roads. Phase 1 will be the initial development followed by Phase 2 at a later date to be determined. Phase 1 will have 16 storage units with a combined square foot of 114,000. Phase 2 will have 15 units for a combined floor space of 138,600 square feet.

Chairman Bara invited Mr. Maybery of Davis Land Surveying & Engineering to review his findings in accordance with his letter dated December 18, 2023. Mr. Maybery discussed his findings relative to Zoning Ordinance 39 as amended and highlighted the following:

1. Lighting had been added to the drawings with detail but still required the intensity to be noted.
2. Dumpster and enclosure were required unless an alternate method of trash management was approved by the Planning Commission. The applicant indicated this was a liability but would address the requirement.
3. Landscape plan was included on page 10 however, the Planning Commission should consider additional plantings adjacent to Dryden Road given Ag/Residential Zoning to the south. Existing vegetation along the west half of the north property line which also abuts Ag/Residential Zoning may not be adequate. Section 7.2 requires a green belt with a wall, berm, and/or landscape screening when the current zoning district abuts a less intensive district.
4. A gate is proposed for M53/Van Dyke however no gate is proposed for the Dryden Road entrance and no perimeter security fencing is proposed.
5. The gate location off M53/Van Dyke may present a vehicle stacking issue in the event more than one vehicle enters at the same time or if one vehicle with a trailer followed by a second vehicle.

Mr. Maybery discussed his findings relative to Engineering requirements:

1. Mr. Maybery noted the soil boring findings and indicated that if sufficiently drained soils are not present during construction the applicant may have to modify the storm water detention design.
2. Mr. Maybery noted the retention area was fenced however the fence location needed to be revised to provide adequate space for maintenance.
3. Mr. Maybery noted that permits from the Lapeer County Road Commission and MDOT were required for the proposed access drives.

Chairman Bara invited Mr. Alex Hritcu from Rowe Professional Services to review his findings as provided in his letter dated December 21, 2023.

Mr. Hritcu highlighted section 4.2.B.10.f regarding the trash receptacle location, loading stops and screening requirement indicating the applicant considered a dumpster a liability but were willing to provide one.

Mr. Hritcu highlighted the need for separate drawings required for the sign noting a monument sign had been shown in the site plan.

For zoning compliance Mr. Hritcu identified Section 2.4 Appearance regarding building façade materials indicating some details were provided on page 10 however it wasn't clear as to the material for the storage doors, areas between the doors and the color of the building.

Mr. Hritcu went on to highlight Section 2.11, Fences, walls and other protective barriers, Section 2.17 regarding signs, Section 7.2 Screening Requirements, Section 7.2.B Berms, Section 7.2.C greenbelts, Section 7.3 General site landscape requirements and section 7.4 Trash Receptacles.

Mr. Hritcu also included the SLU checklist that is required to be met when approving a SLU.

Chairman Bara invited the applicant to the address the issues raised by the Engineer and Planner. Mr. Saba was joined by two representatives from LM Shink Engineering. Extensive discussion followed regarding the issues raised by the Engineer and Planner. The discussion focused primarily on establishing a clear understanding for the requirements and the reason for the need to meet the ordinance requirements. The primary focus of the discussion was for the protection of the surrounding Ag/Residential zoned property noting that the property to the north of the site is Master Planned for future Industrial as is the current property to the east of the site. The property to the west and south is currently Ag/Residential and it is clear the west is currently in the process of being developed for residential homes. The applicant was receptive to addressing the issues raised by the Engineer, Planner, and members of the Planning Commission.

Chairman Bara opened the Public Comment at 7:24 PM. Discussion continued however there was no public comment made either written or verbal. Seeing nor hearing any public comment, Chairman Bara closed the public hearing at ???.

Move by Sweers supported by Dodge to postpone the approval of Special Land Use application 23-01, and Jimmy's Storage site plan dated November 30, 2023, to allow the applicant time to address the issues discussed to include obtaining MDOT permit for M53 Van Dyke access, obtain the Lapeer County Road Commission permit for site access off Dryden Road, Almont Township ordinance requirements under Article 2, section 2.4. appearance, section 2.11, fences, walls and other protective berries, Article 4, section 4.2.B.10.e, exterior lighting requirements, section 4.2.B.10.f. trash receptacle, section 4.2.B.10.k. green belt, Article 7, section 7.2 screening requirements, section 7.2.B berms, section 7.2.C, greenbelts, section 7.3 general site landscape requirements, and reference Davis Land Surveying & Engineering, Inc review dated Dec 18, 2023 and Rowe Professional Services Company review dated Dec 21,2023.

Roll call vote was taken and the motion passes 7 to 0.

New Business: None.

Old Business: Review/Update Master Plan

Mr. Hritcu reviewed his e-mail of Jan 9, 2024, focused of the future land use (FLU) map, commercial zoning regarding one reference to commercial with no distinction for C1, C2, or C3. It was noted that the current zoning classifications based on the ordinance does not correspond to the 2018 FLU map. As for Ag/residential, large parcels are being used for residential and are not farmed thus the large number of yellow single family uses displayed on the map. The zoning plan chart was discussed with the elimination of C1, C2, and C3 with reference to only C for commercial. The R2B single family district was also eliminated at 20,000 square feet. The table of dimensional requirements was discussed with the desire to increase the Ag/residential frontage more than the current 165 feet. The table of uses was also discussed with respect to permitted uses versus special land use requirements. Clearly as the Master Plan is updated there will be a need to also update the Ordinance.

Reports:

Planner – Alex Hritcu: Zoning plan updates including, R1A and R1B reviewed increased to residential frontage from 165 feet.

Engineer – Corey Mabery: Monthly Report and Upcoming Plans: Pinecrest Homes behind Blake's will restart build in Spring 2024. Mr Maybery noted that Davis Land Surveying & Engineering has received permission to be the site plan preparer for Rodeo Homes for their Kidder Rd Condominiums.

Zoning Board of Appeals – Traci Pewinski: None

Zoning & Building Report – Ida Lloyd: Next month updates include Jimmy's Storage, Kidder Road Condominiums, Shango's Fireworks, Communication Tower

Planning Commission – General Comments- Solar Farms/Wind Energy - review sections 2.30 & 2.31 - Postponed Discussion

Moved by N. Giacalone and supported by R. Dodge to adjourn at 8:43 p.m. Motion carried.

Submitted by Kristina Rehfus, Recording Secretary