



## **Planning Commission Minutes 10/25/21**

The Saugatuck Township Planning Commission met October 25, 2021.

### **1) Call to Order** at 6:01 p.m. by Chairperson Israels.

Israels read Zoom instructions for public participation. All votes should be taken via roll call. Please say your name before speaking. Mute yourself when you are not speaking. This meeting is being recorded. Please do not interrupt. If any public member is disruptive in a way that interferes with the board conducting their business, they will be blocked. Also highlighted that if there are any individuals that would like to participate, but need special accommodations, we will do our best to make those adjustments. Please do not click on any links on Zoom.

### **2) Roll Call**

Present: D. Ihle, R. Israels, J. Helmrich, D. DeFranco, D. Webster, M. Wurth, J. Ground  
Also present: L. Wells, Zoning Administrator

Israels welcomed Commissioners Ground and Wurth to the Planning Commission. Israels asked all commissioners to introduce themselves.

### **3) Approval of Agenda**

Israels added under New Business, item B. Discussion of possibility of PC meetings being held in person. Helmrich noted that holding future meetings in person would be a matter determined by the Board. Israels added under Old Business in item A. the inclusion of a Summary of the Chair Meeting of the Special Committees, item D. Discussion of date of next PC meeting, and item E. Proposal of book reading for further education.

A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Wurth. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

### **4) Approval of Minutes:** PC Meeting 8/30/21

- Page 1: “No Public Comment” added under item 5. Public Comment
- Page 4: change “Mcilwaine” to “McIlwaine” on line 4
- Page 5: add “Commissioners discussed dissolving BSH Safety Committee” under “item D. Select Liaison to ZBA”
- Commissioners agreed that specific conditions for approvals should be included in future minutes



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A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the minutes of 8/30/21 as amended. Seconded by Wurth. The Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

## 5) Public Comment:

No Public Comment

**Public Comment Closed**

## 6) New Business

### A. Site Plan Review from Grant Venue LLC, agent Nederveld, for a 6600 sf Event Center at unaddressed parcels on Blue Star Highway, parcels as follows: · 20-010-037-10 · 20-010-037-00 · 20-010-035-30

Wells reviewed staff analysis of site plan and noted that the applicant and project engineer were present. Wells relayed that the applicant requested that some landscape requirements be waived. Wells stated that the site in question was wooded and paved surfaces have been minimized, and recommended that the site plan should be updated to indicate trees and wooded areas that are to be protected if the PC were to waive landscaping requirements. Wells called attention to the existing tree protection overlay district along Blue Star Highway and emphasized that the applicant should adhere to it. Wells stated that driveways should be reviewed and approved by Allegan County Roads Commission. Wells asked that the applicant submit a pedestrian circulation plan and that the engineer should elaborate on how pedestrians would circulate on site and in the proposed building. Wells noted that the site lighting photometrics plan indicated that lumens per lamp were 4445, and suggested that the PC inquire as to whether the applicant would go with less lumens per lamp for a warmer light.

Webster pointed out that the site plan did not include location of a septic tank. Ihle asked if separate municipal water sources were required to all buildings on site. Ihle inquired about the Fire Dept. notes regarding the distance of the building from the nearest fire hydrant. Ihle asked about the applicant's plan for landscaping around the storm water retention area and expressed preference for keeping the area natural. Wells stated that she had shared the site plan with the adjacent property owner to the east.

Jack Barr of Nederveld Inc., 217 Grandville Ave SW Grand Rapids, explained that the current landscaping plan for the storm water retention area and septic field was to restore with top soil and seed. Noted that the Event Center and front two buildings would be connected to water service and that the Event Center would have a sprinkler system. Barr noted that the well-demo would be subject to state requirements and health dept. code. Barr expressed applicant's preference for an easement for future sidewalk in lieu of the immediate construction of a five ft.



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wide sidewalk along site's frontage on BSH. Barr could not speak to the lighting levels in the lighting photometrics plan. Barr said that there would be a sidewalk connecting the parking to the Event Center on the west side of the building. Applicant clarified that the occupancy is set at 299, not 300.

Israels asked commissioners if they preferred the applicant construct a sidewalk or agree to a 10ft easement on the site's BSH frontage. Commissioners preferred the 10ft easement. Ground inquired about the lack of parking islands on the site plan, which were required by TWP ordinance. Ground noted that the north façade of the Event Center did not comply with Sec. 40-662- Building design and architectural standards for specified uses of the TWP Zoning Ordinance. Ground asked whether the applicants could include additional architectural details on the north façade. Applicants said that they had not considered it and were being careful with where they spent their money given the large financial investment required by the project. Wurth and DeFranco thought parking islands were not necessary. Helmrich was in favor of including parking islands. Wells inquired about the height of the light poles. Max Nykerk, applicant's architect, said that pole height would be 20ft and that the light levels proposed were 5,000k. Commissioners discussed landscaping requirements for parking lot and agreed to waive the requirement for parking islands. Commissioners discussed reducing light levels from 5,000k to 3,300k. Helmrich asked if the commissioners waived the landscaping requirement in the parking areas whether the PC should address landscaping in the peripheral areas. Wells concurred with Helmrich, and recommended that staff walk the property with applicant and mark preexisting trees and wooded areas as "do not disturb" areas.

Applicants state that they planned to have a trash enclosure that satisfied TWP requirements, and would include trash enclosure on updated site plan. DeFranco inquired about recycling.

A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the Site Plan Review from Grant Venue LLC, agent Nederveld, for a 6600 sf Event Center at unaddressed parcels on Blue Star Highway, parcels as follows: · 20-010-037-10 · 20-010-037-00 · 20-010-035-30 with the following conditions:

1. The Township Planner and project Landscape architect shall meet on site to identify trees and wooded areas to be protected and marked as "do not disturb" on site plan and determine extent of grading. Tree protection shall be as per Section 40.1113 of the Zoning Ordinance and shall be depicted in a revised landscape plan.
2. The Planning Commission shall waive the need for parking area landscaping.
3. The applicant shall include a description of trash removal and provide an enclosure for review and approval.
4. The site plan shall indicate pedestrian pathways within the site.
5. A ten (10) foot wide private easement for a future walkway across the 325 foot parcel frontage on Blue Star Highway shall be required.
6. Light pole heights shall not exceed 20ft and light temperature shall not exceed 3300k.



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7. The applicant shall adhere to the standards and conditions of the TWP Engineer and Fire District.
8. Architectural features on the north façade of the Event Center shall comply with Sec. 40-662 of the Zoning Ordinance and shall be depicted in the North elevation drawing.
9. Site plan shall include the septic area and abandonment of wells per the ACHD.
10. The applicant shall adhere to any conditions of the TWP Engineer
11. All conditions of the utility district, Allegan County Road Commission, and other applicable reviewing agencies shall be met.
12. All conditions shall be met by all reviewing parties, and all fees paid prior to issuance of building permit. It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to seek reviews and approvals from reviewing parties and furnish confirmations to the building department prior to issuance of building permit.

Seconded by Ihle. The Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

## 7) Old Business

### A. Committee Reports

- **Attainable Housing (Webster)**

#### I. Committee's Goals

· Promote housing that is achievable and reasonably priced to target buyers while attractive in partnerships with township (including the Tri-Community), builders, developers, and investors.

As of July 1, 2021, reported in Home Town Locator, Michigan Gazetteer

Median Household Income \$84,147 Median Home Value \$326,260

Average Household Income \$90,960 Average Home Value \$385,440

<https://michigan.hometownlocator.com/counties/subdivisions/index,cfips,005,c,allegan.cfm>

#### Target Buyers

o Occupants(s) pay no more than 30% of income to housing cost including utilities.  
<https://localhousingsolutions.org/housing-101-the-basics/what-is-affordable-housing/>

o Households with incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the area median income.  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/brendarichardson/2019/06/02/housing-affordability-report-outlines-challenges-solutions-for-turning-renters-into-homeowners/?sh=16e1ed583397>



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· Develop recommendations and present to Township Planning Committee to assist with the implementation of key policies identified in the Master Plan and the Township's Multi-Year Strategic Action Plan 5.2.

## II. Action Steps

1. Invite Ryan Kilpatrick to address committee, Planning Commission, Township Board, and others having interest

a. Housing Need in Township (and area)

b. Alternative dwelling types

c. Identification of possible locations to create new district or overlay within Township

2. Progress

a. Definitions

b. Considerations

o Creating new zoning district or an overlay

o Change in size of dwelling – allow smaller foot print, considering 750 sqft

o Lot area – smaller lot – considering 1 acre with water and sewer available

o Should areas in A-2 be considered where water/sewer could be extended?

o Need to overlay of current water and sewer availability onto Zoning map.

o Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU): A-1, A-2, R-1, if new district or overlay created. Need to discuss R-2, R-3, R3B

o Mixed Use Residential/Commercial Building in C-2

o Live/Work Units (LWU) in C-2, I-1

- **Economic Development (Helmrich)**



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1. Parking Ordinance. Review current ones and consider amending to deal with shared parking areas, responsibility for expanding and maintenance. Deal with the loophole that grandfather's parcels that become a larger business, but do not need to increase number of spaces.
  2. Blue Star Overlays. Identify for us where they currently exist and what this actually means and consider amending.
  3. Highway Interchanges. Identify who owns the land at the two highway exits...does TWP own any of the land? Consider an ordinance to upgrade their appearance and ways to better 'brand' the tri-community area with better signage.
  4. Ordinance 40:102. Explain the language regarding 'adult businesses' and 'truck stops.' Are they currently allowed? If so, can we remove these approved uses? Review if additional business types need to be addressed in this and other ordinances (miniature golf, marijuana retail, event centers, wineries, etc.)
  5. EV Stations. Do we need a new ordinance to cover EV charging stations? Current ones are not considered a business. As their presence will be growing, we need to address particulars.
  6. New Business Details. Create a check-list of conditions or restrictions to use even when a use is 'by right.'
  7. Agro-tourism. Address the business of agro-tourism.
  8. Solar Power. Review existing ordinances and consider changes, incentives, encouragement, etc.
- **Rural Character and Conservation (DeFranco)**
  - **Tree Ordinance**- Compare TWP tree ordinance with tree ordinances in other municipalities to determine what we would like to include in an update of the TWP ordinance. Recommend adding street tree protections on Old Allegan Rd, Riverside Rd, Lakeshore Drive, and I-196.

In developing a tree ordinance, consider working on educational pieces, explaining to the public the value in preserving mature trees. These educational pieces need not cite the new tree ordinance explicitly, but make the public aware of the importance of preserving trees and wooded areas, how to preserve mature trees/maintain a healthy wooded area, and what are the TWP's rules regarding tree preservation. We could have these educational pieces be included in the quarterly TWP newsletter and/or publish them in the commercial record. Recommend a spring roll-out for these educational pieces, perhaps get them to coincide with Arbor Day.

- **Dark Skies/Lighting Ordinance**- The TWP presently has an ordinance regulating outdoor lighting design (Sec. 40-649. - Outdoor *Lighting* Design Standards), but it can be strengthened and possibly extended to residential uses as well. We should discuss if we want it extended to all residential or just new builds. Create an educational piece explaining to the public the importance of dark skies regulations. Again, this does not



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have to cite any ordinance changes, but is something to make the public aware of the topic

- **Green Infrastructure-** Green infrastructure pertains to water management, i.e. an approach to water management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. Identify options for green infrastructure that we could present to developers. “Green infrastructure” need not be a requirement, but we could encourage developers to integrate green infrastructure by offering something in return, such as giving a density bonus in the development of a property if the project integrated green infrastructure. Begin by contacting the Allegan County Drain Commission and Dana Burd, TWP Engineer, to see if they have any information on green infrastructure or if green infrastructure was compliant with county standards. We may also wish to reconnect with the ODC for further guidance.
- **Update Conservation requirements with PUD Approval-** currently the TWP requires that 25% of the property for a proposed PUD be conserved, however, there are no guidelines regulating how that property ought to be conserved. Research additional requirements we would like to add. One suggestion was to require that a certain percentage of the conserved area include “up-land” area; often developers will cite wetland area as part of the 25% of the land being conserved, but wetland area must be preserved by state law regardless. By requiring that a certain percentage of up-land area compose the 25% of conserved land, we are guaranteeing that land that can be used for recreation/trails is included in the 25% conservation requirement. Also consider adding width and depth requirements to any conserved area and possibly adding a condition that there must be public access to the conserved land.
- **Trail Easement Conditions with PUD Approval-** Proposal is a “text change” as opposed to the creation of a new ordinance. We can add to PUD requirements that “if a PUD is adjacent to a public trail that an easement with public access be required to continue or connect with other public trails.”
- **Chicken Ordinance-** We are fortunate to have a chicken ordinance from Douglas to work with. We can review the ordinance, recommend any additions or deletions, and pass it along to staff. Consider creating/finding a FAQ piece on chickens that might preempt public concern.
- **Historic District-** The Board has requested that we create a pro and con sheet for pursuing a historic district commission ordinance. The TWP is in possession of an ethnographic report compiled by Algonquin Consultants that explains how the entire



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stretch of the Kalamazoo River in the TWP constitutes traditional cultural property and satisfies the criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

- **Clarifying the meaning of Zoning Ordinance Section 40-910. (h) “In no event...”:** The TWP has been accused of violating its own Zoning Ordinance in approving the N. Shore marina project. We will review the subsection h of Section 40-910 to clarify its meaning.
- **Creation of Utility and Residential Solar Ordinance-** While the TWP does not presently have a solar ordinance, residential solar use could be interpreted as allowed under our current Zoning Ordinance. However, if we want to make a statement that the TWP is in favor of residential solar use, we could codify residential solar use in an ordinance. Find a template online that we like. Same goes for utility solar; we could search online for a template that we like. Keep in mind that a solar utility ordinance can be consistent with agricultural preservation.
- **Farm Related Entertainment-** Encouraging continued agricultural use is quite a challenging prospect. The strategy we landed on is offering owners of large parcels an opportunity to monetize their property without having to sell to a developer. As of now, certain entertainment uses are not allowed in agriculturally zoned areas of the TWP, such as event spaces (barn venues), festivals, corn mazes, etc. Creating an ordinance that would allow for farm related entertainment would give large parcels owners an option to monetize their land by way of keeping it intact. There is overlap here with the Committee on Economic Development. Before proceeding, we should contact that committee, explain our intentions, and see if there is any possibility of cooperation in the effort.
- **Pursuing a public bike path/trail along the Lakeshore Drive washout easement;** The Master Plan references the creation of a public trail along the Lakeshore Drive washout. Identify the exact location of that line in the master plan and refer the issue to the Roads Commission.
- **Blue Star Safety Committee (Ihle)**
- The Blue Star Highway Committee Recommends an end to this Committee. This recommendation is made because this committee has found it has no ability to create changes to the Blue Star Highway regarding speed, signage, design changes, etc. All changes must be made by Allegan County. The committee further supports the designated Board member to be the liaison with the Allegan County Road Commission, with the additional support of the Township Manager. This commission also further recommends that the designated Board member and Township Manager work with the





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county to follow the goals outlined in the 2016 master plan to “Maintain a Safe and Effective Transportation System”.

Wurth expressed that BSH safety was an important issue and was not in favor of dissolving the committee. Israels asked Wurth if he would be interested in chairing the Blue Star Highway Safety Committee. Wurth agreed to discuss the prospect with Israels and Ihle. Helmrich recommended that Trustee Marcy attend the meeting. No motion was made.

- **Summary of Special Committee Chair Meeting**

Israels explained that the three chairs of the PC Special Committees (Webster, Helmrich, and DeFranco) met to discuss the progress of their respective committees. Israels noted that an idea that came out of the meeting was the possibility of the TWP developing their own Master Plan independent of the Tri-Community Master Plan.

## **B. Township Board Update**

**September 8 and October 13, 2021**

**Submitted by Board and PC Member Jon Helmrich**

- **The Township Board met via Zoom on September 8, 2021:**
- Public Comment was made on the proposed Manmade Waterbody (Pond) ordinance.
- The following appointments were made:
  - David Blatt to the Library Board
  - Jackie Ground to the Planning Commission
  - Holly Engel to the Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority
  - Dave Ihle as PC liaison to ZBA
  - In all, there were 11 applicants which is very encouraging
- Special Assessment District to bring water to the Van Horn properties along 66<sup>th</sup> Street was approved.
- Manmade Waterbody Ordinance was approved.
- A moratorium on pond creation was passed.
- Maintenance Agreement for the Blue Star Community Bike Trail was approved.



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- **The Township Board met via Zoom on October 13, 2021:**
- Public Comment was made on the plan to lower the Allegan County Board of Commissioners from 7 to 5 and on the Old Allegan Road property that's been cited.
- Adopted a Proposal in support of application for a Bike Trail Grant.
- Approved a bid for Building Renovation Management Services – Abonmarche
- Discussion on funding level of Township's employee pension plan.
  - **Next Board Meeting is Wednesday, November 10 at 6:00pm via Zoom.**

## C. Staff Update

Wells expressed appreciation for the work of the Special Committees

## D. Discussion of date of next PC meeting

Israels noted that she would not be able to attend the PC meeting on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2021 and asked if other commissioners would be absent. Wells noted that two public hearings were scheduled for the November 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Commissioners decided not to reschedule the November 22<sup>nd</sup> PC meeting.

## E. Proposal of book reading for further education.

Israels asked if commissioners would be interested in reading a book on leadership for further education. Israels suggested the PC read *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. Commissioners would like more time to consider an appropriate book to read.

## 8. Adjourn

A **Motion** was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 pm by Helmrich. Seconded by Wurth. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Next P.C. meeting: Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

## Motions:



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1. A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Wurth. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

2. A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the minutes of 8/30/21 as amended. Seconded by Wurth. The Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

3. A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the Site Plan Review from Grant Venue LLC, agent Nederveld, for a 6600 sf Event Center at unaddressed parcels on Blue Star Highway, parcels as follows: · 20-010-037-10 · 20-010-037-00 · 20-010-035-30 with the following conditions:

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11. All conditions of the utility district, Allegan County Road Commission, and other applicable reviewing agencies shall be met.
12. All conditions shall be met by all reviewing parties, and all fees paid prior to issuance of building permit. It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to seek reviews and approvals from reviewing parties and furnish confirmations to the building department prior to issuance of building permit.

Seconded by Ihle. The Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

4. A **Motion** was by Helmrich to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 pm. Seconded by Wurth. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Next P.C. meeting: Monday, November 22nd, 2021 at 6:00 pm.



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Respectfully,

D. DeFranco, P.C. Sec.