

**Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.  
Meeting held in person & via Zoom  
Saugatuck Township Hall**

**Call to Order:** Chair Ihle called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Dave Ihle, Denise Webster, Cindy Osman, Steve McFadden

Absent: Jackie Ground, Ken Butler, Gordon Stannis

Also Present: Planning and Zoning Administrator Lynee Wells, Recording Secretary Morgan Coulston, Marcia Tucker, Arthur Rossof, Kristine Rossof, Kaye Clements, Lance Kuhn, Lowrie Kuhn, Eric Murch, Rose Ford, Fay Tanner, Mary Voss, Peter Buys, Annie VanDyke, Kim Copeland, Mary Ihle, Mike Baker, Maria Belmonte, Tom Rautenberg, Glenn Shook, Lynn Kirkaldy, Doug Manning, Char Manning, Sue Fencel, Nancy Bonham, Heather Lipschutz, Bruce Burg, Claudia Burg, Kelly Lewis, JJ Bay, Beth Demski, Garry Demski, Bev Daitch, Mike Daitch, Deborah Pennell, Cristy Freese, Andrew Milauckas, Tim Locker, Deb Locker, Mary Clark, Peter Keith, Kat Needham, Kelly Hugget, Jerry Longerot, Ann Longerot, Joe Milauckas, Ruth Tozer.

**Approval of Agenda**

Ihle introduced the agenda.

A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Osman. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes from the February 11, 2025 were reviewed.

A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2024 meeting as amended. Supported by Osman. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comments:**

Ihle opened the floor for Public Comment.

- Andrew Milauckas expressed overall support for the Lakeside Overlay ordinance but voiced concerns about land management and repairs to existing structures.
- Nicole Lewis raised concerns about the Blue Star Bend LLC site plan, emphasizing her family's commitment to maintaining a full-time residential community. She cited issues with the project's industrial use designation, proposed accessory building, parking capacity, and setback requirements.
- Peter Buys echoed Lewis's concerns regarding the Blue Star Bend LLC site plan, particularly its zoning and industrial use designation.
- Glenn Shook criticized the land clearing conducted for Blue Star Bend LLC's proposed office.
- Kaye Clements appreciated the efforts behind the Lakeside Overlay ordinance and highlighted housing density as a key issue along the lakeshore.
- Char Manning strongly supported the Lakeside Overlay ordinance, sharing that excessive excavation had previously jeopardized her property and expressing hope that the ordinance would prevent similar situations.

- Kelly Hugget supported the Lakeside Overlay ordinance, emphasizing the importance of preserving the community's character and expressing disappointment with current development trends.
  - Jim Sullivan favored the Lakeside Overlay ordinance but questioned the use of Lakeshore Drive as the overlay boundary.
  - Ann Longerot commended the Lakeside Overlay ordinance, describing it as a necessary measure.
- Ihle closed Public Comment.

#### **New Business:**

1. Public hearing and consideration of a zoning ordinance text amendment and zoning ordinance map change to include the Lakeside Overlay and associated zoning standards in Section 5.20, 7.120, 11.90, 22.10, and Table 2.20 B.

Wells gave an overview of the history of the Lakeside Overlay ordinance and its purpose.

Ihle opened the Public Hearing at 6:32 PM.

- Sue Fencil thanked the Planning Commission for their work on the ordinance, emphasizing its importance in preserving the area's unique characteristics and protecting the land.
- Peter Keith questioned how the ordinance would be enforced, expressing concern that without proper enforcement, it would be ineffective.
- Ruth Tozer shared the history of her property and voiced concern that recent changes in the area were threatening trees, wildlife, beaches, dunes, and residents.
- Joe Milauckas raised concerns about terminology related to permits, specifically the distinction between building and zoning permits, and noted a minor error.

Ihle closed the Public Hearing at 6:41 PM.

Webster inquired about enforcement, and Wells explained that the Township's Code Enforcement Officer is responsible for enforcing the entire ordinance, including the Zoning Ordinance. Webster also questioned the use of Lakeshore Drive as a boundary, which Wells noted was recommended by the Township attorney.

McFadden expressed mixed feelings about using Lakeshore Drive as the boundary but acknowledged he was unsure of a better alternative. Osman supported the boundary choice, emphasizing that split lots are more difficult to manage, even with an overlay.

Ihle asked about repairs and maintenance, and Wells confirmed they were permitted as outlined in the draft ordinance.

Discussed issue of repair of existing structures and mechanical room size.

A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the recommendation to the Township Board for a zoning ordinance text amendment and zoning ordinance map change to include the Lakeside Overlay and associated zoning standards in Section 5.20, 7.120, 11.90, 22.10, and Table 2.20 B. with the two noted changes. Supported by McFadden.

#### **Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Ihle, Webster, Osman, McFadden

**No:**

Discussion: None

Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

2. Preliminary Site Plan Discussion, Blue Star Bend, LLC, 5500 sf. office building, parcel 20-003-039-00 on a 2.19 acre lot in the C-1 district. Applicant: Andrew Murch, Agent: Nederveld

Ihle clarified that no decisions, actions, or votes would occur at the meeting as the applicant sought only feedback from the Planning Commission and community. The project's agent, Nederveld, presented an overview of the project and plans, addressing previous public comments. Wells

summarized her memo, emphasizing the need to clarify the building's use, define the purpose of the accessory structure, and address parking requirements.

Eric Murch, the applicant, responded to Wells' concerns and provided background on the business. He explained that the space would be used for office purposes related to sales and finance, with no products stored on-site. The garage would be used for winter parking and storing trade show booths, while the accessory building would house outdoor patio furniture in the off-season and snowplowing equipment when not in use.

Webster questioned the necessity of the accessory building, raised concerns about the driveway cuts onto Blue Star Hwy, and the safety of having all parking behind the building. McFadden noted that the building appeared industrial with an office component, questioned its intended use, and suggested a different orientation for the structure.

The Planning Commission deliberated on the building's use, parking layout, retention ponds retention ponds, building orientation, and the need for the accessory structure.

**Old Business:** None.

### **Communications**

- A. Correspondence: Letters were received from several residents (all on file) and Wells shared a letter that she received from Valley Twp and a letter from the City of the Village of Douglas.
- B. Commission Comments:  
Webster inquired about reviewing the Planning Commission bylaws and the Township's plan to collaborate with the Tri-Community on the Master Plan now that Douglas has developed their own. Suggest using Oasis rather than AutoCamp in future discussions.
- C. Township Board Report: Osman gave a brief overview of the Township Board meeting.
- D. Staff Updates: No updates were provided on Blue Star Brewery (approved October 15, 2024) or Best Buds (extension granted until May 20, 2025). AutoCamp received a demolition permit for part of the hotel, and the first building permit for Barno on Warner Drive was issued.

### **Public Comments:**

Ihle opened the floor for Public Comment.

- Peter Buys emphasized that the key question regarding the Blue Star Bend LLC site plan was the spirit of the zoned use, with other concerns deferred until that was addressed.
- Maria Belmonte raised concerns about the accessory building's footprint and intent, the frequency of garbage truck traffic, and the HVAC unit's location.
- Mike Daitch inquired about the ordinance regarding distinctions between storage and office space use.
- Annie VanDyke expressed concerns about the parking behind the building and the building's appearance and construction materials.

Ihle closed Public Comment.

### **Adjourn:**

A **Motion** was made by Webster to adjourn at 8:21 PM. Supported by McFadden. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

## MOTIONS

1. A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Osman. Motion carried unanimously.
2. A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2024 meeting as amended. Supported by Osman. Motion carried unanimously.
3. A **Motion** was made by Webster to approve the recommendation to the Township Board for a zoning ordinance text amendment and zoning ordinance map change to include the Lakeside Overlay and associated zoning standards in Section 5.20, 7.120, 11.90, 22.10, and Table 2.20 B. with the two noted changes. Supported by McFadden.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Ihle, Webster, Osman, McFadden

**No:**

Discussion: None

Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

4. A **Motion** was made by Webster to adjourn at 8:21 PM. Supported by McFadden. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully,

*Morgan Coulston, Recording Secretary*