

**BROOKS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
September 26, 2011
Approved**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ruthann Brunsting, Mike Bouwer, Billie Deater, Jim Dutkiewicz, Phil Knape, Mike McHugh, and Mark Pitzer

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

PUBLIC PRESENT: Warren Bender and six public present

Chairman Pitzer called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was properly posted and a quorum of the Brooks Township Planning Commission was present. These minutes are not a transcription and comments have been summarized for brevity and clarity.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Moved by McHugh, **Seconded** by Brunsting to accept the agenda as presented.

Ayes - All

Nays – None

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Moved by Deater, **Seconded** by Knape to accept the minutes of the August 22, 2011 meeting as amended.

Yeas – All in favor

Nays – None

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Pitzer said he received notice the Newaygo County Building Department had a change of hours beginning September 16. They will be closed on Fridays but will have emergency inspections on Fridays when necessary. They will be open Monday to Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- There will be a planning conference in Grand Rapids in October. They will also have a high intensity Citizen Planner program for those interested.
- An email notice was sent regarding Great Lakes Echo from MRWA from Gary Nobel. Topics might be of interest to some PC members. The web site can give more information.
- Pitzer said he noticed the email said Michigan On Site Waste Water Systems lack state oversight. Michigan is one of a very few states that doesn't require regular pumping and doesn't have some sort of system in place to be sure that systems function properly.

- Brunsting said the Newaygo County Summit will be held on October 29 in White Cloud. You must RSVP by October 14.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Echo Housing Concept:

- The ZA received a memo from LSL Planners regarding Echo Housing. They laid out a foundation stating experiences LSL Planners have had regarding this. They said if Brooks Township wishes to deal with this in rural areas as a starting point, it is a possibility. But then they recommended the township does not allow accessory dwellings in the overlay district at this time. That is an area where our population density already is higher.
- They do not recommend allowing accessory dwelling units in the resort areas on lots less than two acres. So they are discouraging it in areas along the Lake District and RTO. They said a Special Use Process would be the way to handle this. But on the last page of their report it contains some of the common conditions and will assist Brooks Township if we want to deal with this.
- Pitzer opened up the topic for PC members.
- Deater said it stated it is their opinion it could be allowed on larger lots in the R1 and R2. They don't want to take away from the family character. However, she said it is different when a family member moves in with you.
- Knape thought if we dealt with this that we should do it slowly as it could get out of hand.
- LSL said this is not limited to relatives and monitoring what is going on would be difficult. The planner brings out ramifications in residential areas.
- Brunsting said she looked into this and in other cities around the nation and they were in favor of it and didn't require two acres. They called them a mother-in-law house or granny flats. She said it met a need in their communities. The state of Washington does it and Portland, Oregon.
- Dutkiewicz said he didn't see a need here. There are a lot of foreclosed houses that could be used and you could get a decent price on them. He talked to some people who were not in favor of it.
- Bower didn't see this as a good fit for our area.
- Deater said you don't see the large homes in our areas like you see in the cities.
- After more discussion it was decided to take no action at this time.

2. Ordinance Review: The ZA said he didn't have anything tonight. He will check on reviews for next month.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Site Plan Review – Alpha Family Center: The ZA introduced representatives from the Alpha Family Center.

- The ZA said we have the site plan that AFC has been working on since March. He got the staff report and site plan last Monday. Bender went through the conditions suggested by LSL. Two out of the three have been taken care of already.
- LSL recommended strongly that the east drive be eliminated. Through discussions with Mr. Vogel he said it was very important to him to have that drive. They sat down and reached a compromise between LSL and Mr. Vogel and Mark who was in the office at the time. They will pave the east drive and allow that to be a secondary entrance and exit for that parking lot which contains approximately twenty spaces. Other than that all conditions we have been looking for have been complied with and all permits have been taken care of with the exception of the health department. They will be taking a look at it when the PC gives approval.
- Bower questioned why LSL didn't want the east drive. Bender said they thought it wasn't needed and too much wear and tear on the gravel road. They were looking at future use of the property if AFC were to move out of that building. The ZA can see the need for it. There is a loading dock at the end of the driveway. Because it will be used for loading, it makes sense to have it paved because of the slope so the gravel doesn't wash down.
- They also want to put a 10 x 14 shed at the north end of the driveway. It will be within the setbacks as required by ordinance. This doesn't show on the site plan.
- Pitzer said the LSL cover sheet mentions our ordinance 11.06 J to the greatest extent possible a proposed development shall provide access with neighboring businesses and making accommodations for future combined accesses. They went on to say there is an effort to try to limit access points on public roads.
- Pitzer said this is a private road opened to the public. There will not be substantial use. There are only three residences on Maple Ridge Road. Rather than creating a parking lot with only one entrance and exit with a 90 degree turn to the left; it seems a second drive would open the parking lot for usability and paving will keep it durable. The one requirement is a 16 foot minimum width for the drive for that area.
- The beginning is 24 feet. As long as it has a minimum of 16 feet and paved, we don't have to reduce the number of entrances. It isn't on M-37.
- Mr. George Vogel mentioned the LSL Site Plan Review of August 25. He said he would go through it backwards. He said they met the standards of 'Part D'. 'Part C' was met with conditions. The drainage plan has been approved by the drain commissioner, Pat Baker. 'Part B' was changed and should appear on the site plan.
- Mr. Vogel said the only thing left was 'Part A' that deals with the elimination of the east drive. He thought the PC touched on the ideas they have. Most of their clientele are mothers who are pregnant or mothers with small children and they would like to keep them off that part of the parking lot where there could be large vehicles.

- They get deliveries two or three times a day. Trash trucks weigh 14 to 15 tons and he would like to keep that weight off the main parking lot and drive.
- They look at this east drive as a service drive with a straight shot up into where they would have a dumpster if needed. At this point they don't have a lot of trash so will use a rolling trash can like you use at your house but if they ever need something bigger then they would have to change the location of the shed. In either case it keeps the heavy trash trucks off the parking lot.
- Their client base has increased to the male side of the female relationship and mentoring rooms are needed. They serve the entire county and some outside the county. They work closely with Love INC. They work with other groups and are basically a pregnancy care center. They have children up to three or four years old.
- Pitzer said other parts of the plan go into details. Paving and concrete have been shown on the plan along with tree planting detail. It was a very well prepared floor plan. Pitzer thought the building has a broad acceptance of materials and good looks. He thought the service road does have merit for the usability of the building and for future use.
- McHugh thought from a business point of view the east drive makes sense too.

Moved by McHugh, **Seconded** by Bouwer to approve the site plan for the Alpha Family Center with the conditions of the east drive being paved with a minimum 16 foot width.

Ayes – All

Nays – None

Motion Carried

STAFF UPDATE: (See Attached) The ZA said things picked up over this past month. He is waiting to hear from the engineer regarding the driveway for Sid Dumont.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS:

- Pitzer said he went along Croton Road and saw the extensive private road Sid Dumont had requested. It is almost completed. It is big, wide and straight. We had a question by Steve Houghton regarding the clear vision area. The ZA said there was a lot of brush and a fence that they cleared out for the clear vision area.
- Bender said we do not have anything in our ordinance regarding a clear vision area on private roads and questioned if the PC thought we should put it in the ordinance or make it a maintenance agreement issue. It makes sense to do this as we should have something about a clear vision area on private roads and that it be maintained. This will be brought up later.
- Bender was told the cul-de-sac is bigger than what we mandate in our ordinance. We had talked about increasing the size of cul-de-sacs and thought the PC might want to ride out there to see the size of the turning radius before our next meeting.

- Pitzer asked if it had an island in the middle of it. He said school buses don't go down private roads. Steve Houghton was very helpful on turning radiuses for fire trucks.
- Bower said a class he went to said an island in the middle is good in helping with drainage and run off.
- McHugh asked about the cell tower on M-82. Bender said he has talked to the property owner who is attempting to get contact information on who is controlling the cell tower. The ZA has not heard back from the property owner. There has not been any progress at this time.
- McHugh asked if we can switch Old Business and New Business on the agenda so people who come with the site plan, like tonight, don't have to sit and wait through the Old Business before their topic comes up. Sometimes the Old Business can take a lot of time.
- The ZA said our by-laws just state the topics we have to include in our agenda but doesn't say the order. It was decided to switch and have New Business first.

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved to adjourn by Dutkiewicz, **Seconded** by Knape.

Ayes – All

Nays – None

Motion Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Dutkiewicz
Planning Commission Secretary

Maureen Dutkiewicz
Recording Secretary