

Vergennes Township Planning Commission Minutes

Monday, February 2, 2009

Approved 3-2-09

A meeting of the Vergennes Township Planning Commission was held Monday February 2, 2009 at the Vergennes Township offices. Scott Jernberg called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Also present were Commissioners Makuski, Baird, Post, Gillett, Medendorp and Mastrovito. Assisting the Commissioners was Ryan Kilpatrick of Williams and Works.

Approval of the October 27, 2008 (November meeting) minutes: Motion to approve by Gillette, seconded by Medendorp. Carried 7-0.

Approval or changes to agenda: There were a few changes to the meeting agenda. Vandersloot indicated more time was needed on Private Road amendment. It is postponed to the March meeting. Per Jernberg, 2009 meeting dates need changes and appointment of officers is still pending. Motion to amend agenda to remove private road discussion and add meeting dates and officer elections to agenda by Jernberg, seconded by Medendorp. Motion carried.

Murray Lake Marina – Dave Steinbrecher showed layout of property and where he plans to put boat storage. He also discussed screening. The orchard is young and he has no plans to cut it down at the present time. He feels there is another 20 years left in it. There are no plans to light the area after dark. He indicated no one would be going in there after dark. It is storage only and activity would take place during the day. Only he and his employees are in the storage area. No plans to tear down existing house. It is current source of water for property. Fencing will be erected around storage area, mostly along the front where someone could drive up to it. There is potential storage for 200 – 250 boats. They will be stored in such a way that they are all accessible at any time. He recently purchased 3 acres on corner from Chris Kropf and will be closing on it in a couple weeks.

Ryan Kilpatrick – Marina is considered special use in RA district. It meets all standards and is allowed. He questions site plan, particularly the parking layout. It should be separate from Alden Nash. There is no defining curb/driveway area. If the Kent County Road Commission is ok with it, then he has no problem either. Concern also about buffering. What will public see if orchard is removed. Should be noted that some type of buffering should be between properties at all times. Lighting should be referenced on site plan, even if it doesn't change. Next step is to set a public hearing.

Scott opened floor to comments by Commission members. Medendorp agreed there should be vegetation/buffer between properties. He had concern about fence to south of property. Understands owner wants to keep line of sight from road since there will be boats for sale there. He would prefer that the fencing blend into landscape better. Instead of a regular chain link fence, maybe it could be one of the colored versions, i.e. black or green. Steinbrecher did not have a problem with that. Medendorp also did not like continued access from road. Should be defined entrance/curb. Per Steinbrecher, 70% of boats will be towed in by Marina, not boat owners. They go right into storage. Additionally, lighting needs to follow new ordinance since property is changing use. Dave will update as improvements are made. It should be made condition of use and put in final plan.

Jernberg – school is completely fenced off from property. Yes.

Makuski – Lighting can be done in phases as use indicates. Kilpatrick agreed.

Gillette – would like record of current lighting and any changes made for township records.

Ryan – check with Road Commission on curbing. Since this is an RA district, there should be no parking between building and road. There is plenty of room on property to make the parking work. Make sure Rossien has copy of ordinance before final site plan is done.

Post – will there be a sign? Nothing now. May have one on the building eventually with name and address. Most customers don't come there, not much need for a sign.

Gillette – motion to move ahead with public hearing. Stipulations to correct location of parking, install black coated vinyl fence, inventory of lighting and updates and if orchard is removed, property must be screened with some sort of vegetation. Medendorp seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting Dates for 2009 – Current meeting dates have September 7 scheduled, which is Labor Day. Move back one week to August 31. Also, April 6 is Spring Break. Change to March 30. Makuski is not available March 2 (March meeting). Motion to change April meeting to March 30 and September meeting to August 31 by Gillette. Seconded by Mastrovito. Motion carried.

Appointment of officers – Currently Jernberg is Chairperson, Gillette is vice-chair and Mastrovito is secretary. Medendorp moved to keep officers as they are, seconded by Post. Motion carried.

Public comment –

Discussion on lighting at 1100 Parnell - Per Vandersloot, homeowner will probably not comply with ordinance. They feel light is far off road and they need to see out to wood stove, etc... Ordinance states there cannot be glare from light seen from road or neighbors property. If no compliance soon, ZBA will get it. If homeowner appeals decision and ZBA agrees with zoning officer, they have to comply.

Sports complex proposal – Gillette read Ryan's comments in memo. Address given in memo is Gillette's address, not property in question. Please correct. Did Kilpatrick walk the site or just do drive-by? Just a drive-by but questions have been answered regarding open space/wetlands etc... Has "sports club" definition been answered? Kilpatrick handed out supplemental memo with regard to issue of use. There is no definition in current ordinance for sports club/private facility. This would be considered commercial recreational use, not private. Doesn't fit ordinance language. Gillette had concerns that the uses were not definitive enough. Food, massages, spa, sports club, etc...

Access roads need to be addressed, Two Mile, McCabe, Three Mile. If they come from Forest Hills/Ada area, they would probably come down Knapp. Majority of population would be from West. Site plan presented to Township Board is not complete. Needs much more detail if this proceeds. Gillette was concerned about economy and what happens if this gets half built and then money runs out, etc... Kilpatrick indicated a performance bond could be secured prior to construction to ensure building is either completed or could be removed without cost to Township. Makuski questioned use – if not in our ordinance. Kilpatrick stated we could use industry standards. Should have township attorney look at definitions for clarification. Assume for profit, commercial use. Sports clubs as defined in ordinance refer to golf courses and shooting ranges. Use proposed is more than current ordinance allows. Should hear from applicant before further decisions are made.

Paul Leblanc was in audience and spoke on behalf of Backyard Dreams. They believe it is a permitted use and are committed to moving forward. The applicant is very serious about this project. Applicant has done a traffic study since this seems to be a big issue. Applicant will be at March meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm, Motion by Post, seconded by Medendorp. Carried 7-0.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2009

Respectfully submitted,
Janine Mork, Recorder