

MINUTES
CASCO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2017

Present Members: Joe Stevens, Keith Teltow, Stan Pankiewicz, Cynthia Goulston, Jim Edwards, Kyle Robertson.

Members Absent: Gerald Keller.

Also present: Supervisor Ruemenapp, Planner Mark Lloyd, Wayne Baumgarten, Henry Vanreyendam, Sr., John Monte, Henry Vanreyendam, Jr., Mark Haggerty, Randy Arnold.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Teltow.

2. THE PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge to the flag was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Member Pankiewicz, supported by Member Edwards to approve the May 16, 2017 minutes as presented.

Ayes: Members Robertson, Pankiewicz, Edwards, Stevens, Teltow, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Member Edwards, supported by Member Goulston to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: Members Robertson, Pankiewicz, Edwards, Stevens, Teltow, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

6. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

None.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

None.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) SITE PLAN REVIEW – HENRY VANREYENDAM – TOOL AND MACHINE RENTAL/WHOLESALE BUSINESS

Planner Lloyd reviewed the site plan as presented, includes approximately 7,000 sq. foot building. Also included is applicant's responses to issues brought up at the May 16, 2017 meeting. Trash dumpster has been moved. There were questions regarding wholesale activities, and Planner Lloyd

indicated that was labeled incorrectly, it's more of a retail business. Planner Lloyd said the site is 100% in compliance. Other outstanding issue is application made to ZBA to address the gravel area. Planner Lloyd indicated applicant responded to issued identified such as issue of parking or display area in the back and applicant is addressing that with the ZBA.

Member Goulston wanted clarification regarding wholesale business. Henry Vanreyendam, Jr. has a business in the metro Detroit area supplying parts to other businesses and phone repair which is a business he plans to run out of a room located at this site. The parts need a secure place to be stored. That business is not a retail business, but online service to competitors. He currently services schools such as Fraser Schools, servicing their laptops, iPads. The business as proposed is the main business and it's rental with current plans to name it Richmond Rent-all. They rent concrete equipment, carpet cleaning, hi-los, log splitters, chippers, etc. Equipment will be stored in rear of building.

Planner Lloyd wants to know exactly how big of an area is intended to be "wholesale", maximum amount of floor area dedicated to wholesale use or storage and put that on the site plan, and then applicant is legally bound to behave that way. Planner Lloyd recommended that applicant update the plan to reflect whatever that number is. Applicant indicated it will be 400 sq. ft. space.

Supervisor Ruemenapp asked about an employee working on site in the cellular business. She will get orders ready and handle inventory, answer phones. The cellular business will be supplying retail stores out of this business. Planner Lloyd discussed with John Monte issues regarding labels of wholesale business.

Member Pankiewicz stated he would like to see the square footage of that intended area stated on the site plan and limited to that area.

Henry Vanreyendam, Jr. stated this is not retail, more of a storage and distribution center for his retail stores. He has an employee that answers the phone calls and maintains a small website, and it's not a big operation. He's currently paying rent somewhere else and will move that into this business.

Chairman Teltow suggested a motion may be appropriate subject to ZBA approval regarding the gravel lot in the rear of the building.

Member Stevens asked that the letter presented by Planner Lloyd to the Planning Commission state May 16th rather than April 16th.

Planner Lloyd recommended that the plan be updated by the type of business to be located on site and approved subject to ZBA approval of having the gravel in the storage area. Planner Lloyd indicated there's a distinction because if applicant decides to pave that area it wouldn't require ZBA approval, so that the Planning Commission's approval need not be contingent upon that, but it's the use of gravel for the parking area that is contingent on ZBA approval. There will be approximately an acre gravel area.

A motion was made by Member Stevens, supported by Member Pankiewicz to approve the site plan of Henry Vanreyendam – Tool and Machine Rental located on Gratiot subject to updating the site plan to specify the type of business, including floor size, and subject to ZBA approval of use of gravel in the storage site.

Ayes: Members Robertson, Pankiewicz, Edwards, Stevens, Teltow, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Ruemenapp requested Mr. Monte send four copies of the updated site plan to Planner Lloyd. They are working on the drainage plan and a building permit cannot be issued until that's approved.

A motion was made by Member Stevens, supported by Member Pankiewicz to recommend to Casco Township Zoning Board of Appeals the approval of the use of gravel in the storage yard.

Ayes: Members Robertson, Pankiewicz, Edwards, Stevens, Teltow, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a) SITE PLAN REVIEW: ROBERT KEHRIG – PROPOSED STORAGE BUILDING FOR EXISTING ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING BUSINESS

Planner Lloyd indicated this is located at the site formerly known as McKenzie Electric. Applicant is in the process of constructing a recently-approved identical building as the existing building which will be used for cold storage. All storage is equipment used on site and in conjunction with the business only known as Kehrig Steel. Planner Lloyd recommends the applicant indicate on the site plan that the property is to be used by the owner exclusively and not rented or used for storage. Site plan proposes the required number of parking spaces, using some gravel areas in back for maneuvering and parking of some vehicles adjacent to the building which was previously approved. Planner Lloyd would like to check with applicant that the line of existing vegetation can stay, so no additional buffers would be required. John Monte indicated he's not going to put it on the site plan that it will remain. Building sits back off of Marine City Highway. Planner Lloyd indicated the issue is screening for the buildings and landscape around the buildings. John Monte indicated application's intent is to leave that buffer, but it's not identified on the site plan currently.

Planner Lloyd indicated that are no outstanding issues, all setbacks are met, square footage is appropriate, applicant is expanding his business. In the future if the owner wishes to change the intent of the use he will have to come in and ask for it to change and go through that process. A drainage plan was completed for the entire site previously.

Member Stevens indicated there are seven total spaces for parking and asked if that's an issue. Planner Lloyd stated it doesn't appear to be. Planner Lloyd recommends it be stated on the site plan this will be used exclusively for cold storage, and if there's any change of use in the future it will require Planning Commission approval.

John Monte stated they've never done that on prior site plans, and if the applicant changes their use the township would then have an issue with the owner. Mr. Monte believes what's stated is what it's going to be used for, they have the proposed appropriate parking and they're not changing the operation to something different. Planner Lloyd said the site plan only indicates cold storage on the new building. Mr. Monte indicated he would make that change that all activities on site are limited to cold storage.

b) A motion was made by Member Stevens, supported by Member Goulston to approve the Site Plan for Robert Kehrig located at 9222 Marine City Highway for cold storage.

Ayes: Members Robertson, Pankiewicz, Edwards, Stevens, Teltow, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Mr. Monte will make changes to the site plan and send copies to Planner Lloyd. Mr. Monte made a request of the Planning Commission to reconsider the ordinance on gravel parking so that it's clear.

c) P.C. REVIEW: CLIFF CRABTREE – SOLAR ARRAY

Planner Lloyd indicated he has received a layout and information from Michigan Solar Solutions which very clearly shows how far off the roadway that the solar panel is proposed, including separation from other nearby property owners. Planner Lloyd indicated it does a good job showing where and how the panel is going to be situated on this site, that the setbacks are appropriate and the requirements in the ordinance are met. Application was made for 3652 Church Road, residential district and all properties around it are zoned R2. Solar panel will be 6 ft. x 27.5 ft. solar energy array, 8 ft. high. Planner Lloyd indicated recent concerns with solar panels he's heard discussed is snow pack and weeds growing up and blocking the panels. Mr. Haggerty and Mr. Arnold from Michigan Solar Solutions indicated that the panels produce 100% of what is needed in spring, summer and fall, and use the majority of what's stored in fall, winter and spring. Energy is pulled off the grid as needed.

Planner Lloyd indicated the setback is over 500' and there are no outstanding issues. Member Stevens indicated due to the proposed location it likely won't be seen from the road, it will be directly west of the homeowner's barn. The panel will be set up at a 30 degree angle, facing south.

Chairman Teltow inquired about solar glare for the neighbors and whether that is a concern. Mr. Haggerty indicated glare is wasted power and the panel has an anti-reflective coating. Panels are prevalent at the Denver Airport and if there was a glare they wouldn't use them at an airport. Planner Lloyd indicated if there is a problem with glare into a window or vehicle, the township retains the authority to have it adjusted or ask it to be moved.

Member Robertson indicated he's installed panels where he works and they reflect less than a white roof. Mr. Arnold indicated reflective light is an antiquated term, products developed today use current technology and that's not an issue.

Chairman Teltow asked if the panel proposed is a lease or purchase and Mr. Haggerty indicated it's a purchase arrangement. Mr. Haggerty indicated the foundational poles are installed with pile drivers, 150 lb. hand-held unit run off a generator. Cement foundations often heave with the cold, so they're not used in the north. Mr. Arnold indicated it's estimated the panel will pay itself off within 6-9 years, and there's no maintenance. Michigan Solar Solutions have been in business 40 years and their research shows the panels go down ½% each year in efficiency. Solar energy is a much more mature market in other parts of the country such as Arizona, New Mexico, southern California, but panels produce more energy in cold climates than hot.

Chairman Teltow stated the ordinance requires a document regarding solar glare. Planner Lloyd indicated if the Planning Commission wants to adhere to the strict letter of the ordinance the Commission could ask the applicant to put a letter together stating it's not a problem. Mr. Haggerty indicated that he would do that with reference to the manufacturer data sheet.

A motion was made by Member Pankiewicz, supported by Member Edwards to approve the Cliff Crabtree – Solar Array, subject to receipt of a letter of assurance that there are no glare concerns pursuant to the Township ordinance.

Ayes: Members Robertson, Pankiewicz, Edwards, Stevens, Teltow, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

10) PLANNER'S REPORT

Planner Lloyd stated he spoke to Supervisor Ruemenapp about working with the Planning Commission on things like ordinances with regards to gravel, doing some research and looking at other communities and start to talk about how the Planning Commission might want to apply that and let gravel be the surface of choice as opposed to always requiring concrete. Chairman Teltow suggested that if it's zoned industrial that possibly that may be looked at it differently. Supervisor Ruemenapp also suggested possibly looking at parking areas. Supervisor Ruemenapp also suggested a review of the solar panel ordinance. What's requested tonight is no bigger than a vehicle, that that may be more appropriately handled administratively. Planner Lloyd will do research on these areas and report back.

11) REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

Supervisor Ruemenapp had a meeting with the Economic Development Alliance of SCC, Quintin Bishop. Supervisor Ruemenapp invited Chairman Teltow in for the meeting and Chairman Teltow found in of interest to hear what he had to say about Casco Township. He may be someone to have come to a meeting and give a short overview of what's going on in St. Clair County.

Supervisor Ruemenapp said the township is looking at anything they can do that wouldn't harm the township that would help economic development and that he recently talked to a gentleman about his search for property on 26 Mile Road for a high tech factory that puts a special coating on airplane wings.

Chris Ruemenapp will not be present in July and Lorraine Lomerson will record minutes.

Member Edwards inquired as to what's happening with the park property. Supervisor Ruemenapp indicated there will be a meeting in Grand Rapids with MDNR Trust Fund. They're going to come back in late summer for an update in case township wants to change the township's plan, but will find out in December about the grant. Supervisor Ruemenapp spoke to Mark Brochu regarding putting together a Parks committee since Supervisor Ruemenapp has some people interested in that. Supervisor Ruemenapp said the earliest the Township will own the property is next April, because the township applied for a grant to assist with the purchase because the township has some big positives going for them since Casco doesn't have a park, never received a grant and it's on the river which they love. Supervisor Ruemenapp is optimistic the county will match what the Township puts in and it should ultimately cost the Township \$26,000 out of \$200,000 purchase price of the property if everything goes well.

12) ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Member Robertson, supported by Member Stevens to adjourn at 8:14 p.m.

Ayes: Members Robertson, Edwards, Pankiewicz, Stevens, Teltow, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

The next regular meeting of the Casco Township Planning Commission will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at the Casco Township Hall, 4512 Meldrum Road.

Joseph F. Stevens, Secretary _____

Christine Ruemenapp, Recording Secretary _____