

CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON NOVEMBER 2, 2016
APPROVED

The Planning Commission regular meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by Chairman Andrew Brown with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commission members Bill Marske, Gary Wood, Grace Rappe, Mario Zarantenello, Joseph Reed, and Andrew Brown present. Richard Carlson was absent.

Wood moved to approve the minutes of the July, August, and October meetings. Supported by Markse.

Motion carried unanimously.

Zarantenello requested that the "Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) report" be added to the agenda under the header of "New Business." Rappe requested that "Green Corridor Discussion" also be added under the "New Business" section.

Zarantenello moved to approve the agenda with amendments, supported by Marske. Motion carried.

Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

New Business

**Site Plan Review – Conversion of Coop to Condominium
15810 Center Avenue, Union Pier, MI**

Attorney Sally Taylor came forth on behalf of the property owners to present the proposed coop to condominium conversion. Taylor stated that the property currently has two existing older cottages that were built prior to current zoning. The proposed conversion would allow the property owners to only build in the current footprint.

Taylor furthered that the updating of the property to a condominium would improve health and safety for the community since it would add additional water and sewer taps. Additionally the fire chief reviewed the plan and found no safety concerns. The property is a corner lot with sufficient access. Taylor concluded that each unit will have its own tax ID number which will allow for independent taxation and one requirement for the property will be that the current building footprint must remain the same.

There was no public comment regarding the site plan review.

Rappe moved to approve the conversion of 15810 Center Avenue from a coop to a condominium with the conditions that an additional water and sewer hookups be added and the deed be updated noting that the current building footprint must be maintained. Supported by Wood. Motion carried unanimously.

Rappe expressed to the commission that she is concerned with the current ordinance governing developments in the Red Arrow green corridor taking place prior to the pending updates. She added that much previous discussion has been focused around preserving green space and

maintaining an appropriate landscape plan. She furthered that a 12 month moratorium would effectively allow for the future consultant to review the current ordinance and make required changes.

Zarantenello added that a Red Arrow Hwy. update was considered in 2004 and should be reviewed once again. He added that a revision encouraging changes that might entice visitors to stop at city centers on the highway would be an improvement. He observed that since most roads intersecting Red Arrow at a skewed angle there is a larger safety concern. Reed noted that the road commission is currently considering a future plan for Red Arrow Hwy. that would add bike trails and a possible center turn lane. He furthered that he has noticed traffic counters out on weekdays that are removed on weekends and may not be accurately assessing Red Arrow use. Reed suggested that a private traffic study be considered.

Wood confirmed that there is currently a discussion taking place within the road commission and a few members of the township about updating the 12 mile stretch of highway from New Buffalo to Bridgman. Once a more detailed engineering decision is reached the community will be invited to partake in the planning.

Tom Hackley stated that the current director of the road commission is very data driven. He furthered that it is important that the community become involved to advocate for future plans to make Red Arrow Hwy. safer.

Rappe moved to recommend to the township board that for 12 months from this day forward a moratorium be placed on all newly proposed commercial developments requiring a site plan review in the Red Arrow Hwy. green corridor. Supported by Marske.
Motion carried unanimously.

Other Communication

None

Reports

Zarantenello came forth to share a report on the recent happenings with the ZBA. He informed the board that at the October 18th meeting four cases were heard. Two were approved and two were denied. The first denial was requesting a garage in the front yard and an increase in lot coverage. The second, requesting a setback and height variance, was also denied. Zarantenello stated that the two cases that were approved involved properties encumbered by two front yards. He continued that cases involving properties with two front yards continue to be reviewed frequently and an ordinance change defining a “service yard” vs. a “recreational yard” may help solve this problem as was discussed in the past. Reed suggested that this topic be explored further by the future firm that will oversee updates to the ordinance. Wood added that an audit of cases heard by the ZBA in past years should take place to gather information prior to ordinance updates.

Old Business:

Site Plan Review for Dollar General

Property Code No.: 11-07-0010-0019016-4 & 11-07-0010-0019-18-1

Property Address: 12993 and 12995 Red Arrow Highway, Sawyer

Property Owners: Jack & Rhonda Gibson and Dennis & Isabella Weisenritter
Applicant: Midwest V, LLC

Brown informed the commission and public that at 5:26 p.m. he received an email from Rhonda Gibson informing him that the property owners withdrew their request to be on the meeting agenda due to a scheduling conflict. They would, however, like to be on the agenda for the December ZBA meeting.

Public Comments

A local resident stated that she feels the Red Arrow traffic on the north end of the township, near Warren Dunes, can be incredibly dangerous and congested. She continued that there are many times traffic on the cross road there is unable to cross.

Adjournment:

With nothing further, Wood moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 pm. Supported by Marske.
Meeting Adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,
Jess Miller, Recording Secretary
Richard Carlson
Secretary, Chikaming Township Planning Commission