

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
April 20, 2023**

**23-12 CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF MARCH 16, 2023.**

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on February 16, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Avenue NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Present: Chair Steve Thome, Vice Chair Tom Griswold, Secretary Lisa Frizzell, Gary Potter, Ron Cordes Dawn Swafford (arrived at 7:05). Matt Wenzel was absent. Planner Susan Becker and recording secretary Barb Griswold were also present. Thome called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Frizzell moved, with support from Cordes to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on March 16, 2023.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

**23-13 PUBLIC HEARING: REQUEST FROM ANNA VANAGTAEI TO REZONE
PORTION OF 7296 VINTON AVENUE FROM A, AGRICULTURAL TO RA,
RURAL AGRICULTURAL.**

Planner Becker gave her review of the rezoning request. Applicant Anna VanAgtmael, with permission from property owners/her parents Jon and Sue Weiss, is requesting to rezone a 12-acre portion of property addressed 7296 Vinton Avenue from A, Agricultural to RA, Rural Agricultural. The overall acreage of 7296 Vinton Avenue is 40 acres. The portion requested to be rezoned is a northern strip 66-foot wide and the northeast corner. The request stems from the applicant's desire to create a lot on Mead Lake to build a house.

The property is occupied by the home and barns of the applicant's parents. The balance of the property is orchard managed by the applicant's uncle; who also farms the orchard to the south. A portion of the orchard on the east end of 7296 Vinton Avenue was removed in 2020-2021 because the grade was too steep for equipment to safely traverse.

Becker said the request to rezone the property to RA, Rural Agricultural is in conformance with the Alpine Township Master Plan's future land use designation of RE, Rural Estate. The "RE" future land use designation is analogous to the RA zoning district.

The applicant is proposing to rezone a 66-foot wide strip 1,345-feet long (west to east) for a private road and a lot 330-feet wide and 1,320-feet long (west to east) at the northeast corner of the property addressed 7296 Vinton Avenue. All surrounding properties are planned for RE, Rural Estate and are zoned Agricultural or R-1, and used for farmland and houses.

Becker explained the RA, Rural Agricultural Zoning District name is somewhat of a misnomer as the district is a large-lot residential district that also allows farming. Within the district, a private road for one lot is allowed; one house with an attached garage is allowed; home occupations within living spaces of a house (not accessory buildings) are allowed; for lots over 2-acre in size,

one 1,200-square foot detached accessory building with a maximum height at the peak of 20 feet is allowed; and a principal building (house) is required to be built prior to an accessory building.

A new private road creates new road frontage for existing buildings. The future private road will create a corner lot for the home at 7418 Vinton Avenue to the north. The front yard setback on a corner lot is 60 feet. A private road to serve one house has fewer regulations regarding contents of professional drawings, road construction standards and regulated agreements.

Applicant Anna VanAgmael, 1820 E 88th Street, Newaygo said she is requesting a split of her parent's 40 acres property, as well as the 66-foot wide private road easement on the north edge to be re-zoned rural agricultural to allow her to build a house.

Motion made to open public comment by Frizzell, supported by Cordes.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Phil Schwallier, 1185 9 Mile Road, Uncle of Applicant said he supports his family and their request for the rezoning.

Motion made to close public comment by Cordes supported by Griswold.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

MOTION: ANNA VANAGTMAEL REQUEST TO REZONE A PORTION OF 7296 VINTON AVENUE FROM A, AGRICULTURAL TO RA, RURAL AGRICULTURAL

Frizzell made a motion, supported by Potter to recommend to the Alpine Township Board to *approve* the requested rezoning for the 12-acre portion of the property addressed 7296 Vinton Ave. (PP# 41-09-12-200-025) as publicly noticed from A, Agricultural to RA. Rural Agricultural.

Findings of Fact:

Based upon representations made by the applicant during rezoning review and upon the standards found in Chapter 6 and 24 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance and the Alpine Township Master Plan, we find that the proposed rezoning:

- 1) Is consistent with the RE, Rural Estate future land use recommendation of the Alpine Township Master Plan.
- 2) Does ensure compatibility with adjoining land uses and zoning types.
- 3) Is consistent with the allowed uses of the RA, Rural Agricultural zoning district.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

23-14 PUBLIC HEARING: ROGER DEMEESTER OF THE 4 MILE SHOWPLACE HAS REQUESTED A TEXT AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 1, DEFINITION AND CHAPTER 20, SIGNS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ALLOW FOR ADDITIONAL PORTABLE SIGNS FOR EVENT CENTER BUSINESSES.

Planner Becker gave her review for the zoning ordinance text amendment request. The applicant operates the 4 Mile Showplace at 1025 4 Mile Road in the former grocery store building and the 4 Mile Showplace has occupied the space since late 2017. An event center is a building that essentially has a rotation of events either open to the public or not (such as a public model train show or a private wedding reception).

Becker recommended to the applicant to install a permanent digital reader board portion to the freestanding sign per Section 20.08(b) of the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant has indicated to staff that he could not make that kind of financial investment at this time. The Grand Celebration Center just to the east at 925 4 Mile Road is an event center that advertises on a digital reader board.

Becker said in 2007, the Planning Commission overhauled the entire sign chapter. At the time, business owners advocated allowing some portable signage with permits. The Planning Commission and Township Board actively discussed how many portable signs to allow, how often, for how long and at what permit cost. As part of the 2007 overhaul, the Planning Commission and Township Board also allowed for electronic reader boards for the first time. For the most part, the current regulations have worked well.

Applicant Roger DeMeester, 3549 Flamingo Avenue, Wyoming said they are an event center with various types of events ranging from trade shows, wedding receptions, birthday parties and flea markets. He would like to propose a change to the zoning ordinance Chapter 20 to allow to use a portable letter changing sign more than 3 times a year.

Mr. DeMeester said they wish to benefit their customers and help advertise their events with a portable sign. The public driving by the 4 Mile Showplace could be informed of the events happening then.

Mr. DeMeester has looked into the cost of a digital sign and doesn't think he can financially afford one at this time. He said he would not be able to pass the cost of the sign onto customers. He is waiting for more quotes for digital signs and has not ruled one out yet.

Motion made to open public comment by Cordes, supported by Potter.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

No comments received.

Motion made to close public comment by Cordes supported by Griswold.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Griswold said portable signs aren't the most attractive and wasn't sure the Township needed more of them to be allowed. Cordes said not all business owners can afford digital signs and need both options.

Thome asked the applicant if he considered a digital rolling banner on the current sign? Mr. DeMeester said he could consider adding a rolling banner to the current sign however the current sign is non-conforming in size and if something happened to the sign, he would not be able to replace it.

Griswold asked if Agricultural farm events are considered an event center and could they have additional portable sign also? The Commissioners had a discussion and decided the definition of an event center needs more clarification. Potter asked if an event center had a digital sign then do they still get to have a portable sign also?

Potter motioned, supported by Frizzell to TABLE the request.

23-15 PUBLIC HEARING: PHIL SCHWALLIER HAS REQUESTED TO REZONE 956 9 MILE ROAD FROM C-2, COMMERCIAL TO R-A, RURAL AGRICULTURAL. MR. SCHWALLIER HAS SUBSEQUENTLY REQUESTED THAT HIS REQUEST BE TABLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Cordes motioned, supported by Swafford to TABLE the request.

23-16 SITE PLAN REVIEW: GARRY HAISMA OF HAISMA HEATING AND COOLING REQUESTS SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR AN ACCESSORY STORAGE BUILDING AT 5514 ALPINE AVENUE IN THE C-2, COMMERCIAL DISTRICT.

Planner Becker gave her review of the site plan review request for Haisma Heating and Cooling at 5514 Alpine Avenue. The request is a site plan amendment to allow for the construction of a 3,072-square foot accessory storage building and associated site improvements for his business. The 3-acre property is zoned C-2, Commercial and I-2, Industrial.

In 2000, the Planning Commission granted special land use and site plan approval for a contractor's yard for the business. The lot is 99 feet wide (minimum lot width in the C-2 district is 150 feet). In 2000, the pre-existing non-conforming lot was allowed to develop as long as it met the required building setbacks for the Heating and Cooling building.

The existing building business building has office and storage portions. The building has two overhead doors in the rear (east). In addition, there is an old 360-square foot former residential garage built in the 1940s on the property, which will be removed. The business building was allowed to be built 15 feet from the southern property line because at the time, Pine Aire Mobile Home Park was zoned C-2, Commercial. Since then, Pine Aire Mobile Home Park has been rezoned to R-4, which requires a 25-foot building setback.

In 2000, the owner of Pine Aire Mobile Home Park wrote a letter explaining that he felt it was unnecessary to have a greenbelt between the proposed Haisma building and the mobile home park and that a chain link fence would be sufficient. This was permissible per Section 2.16 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Since then, Pine Aire Mobile Home Park has sold three times. Mr. Haisma has not secured new written approval to utilize Section 2.16 again prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

Therefore, a greenbelt is required. Also, the required landscaping and dumpster enclosure from the 2000 approval were never installed.

Becker said in January of this year, the Zoning Board of Appeals granted two variances; a building side yard setback variance from the required 25 feet to 15 feet along the south lot line and a variance from the required greenbelt width of 25 feet to 15 feet along the south lot line.

The proposed storage building is 3,072 square feet with 1 loading dock on the west end and 3 overhead doors on the north end. To keep the overhead doors and business operations to the north side of the property and further away from the residents to the south, Mr. Haisma obtained a building setback variance to allow the building to be 15 feet from the southern lot line. All other setbacks are met for the metal paneled building.

The current rear storm water facility is proposed to move to make way for the building addition. Storm water will be directed further west to a new storm water pond. The property is connected to public water and sewer.

A shared driveway provides access to the property. Within the existing Site Development Agreement (liber 5676 Page 825) are the legal descriptions of the shared driveway to the north and the required cross access to the north and south adjoining parcels.

The existing block residential garage will be removed to make way for the proposed building. The proposed landscaping materials along Alpine Avenue are appropriate and acceptable. All landscaping shall be installed in conjunction with the storage building.

Becker explained a variance has been granted for a greenbelt width of 15 feet to the south. The proposed landscaping materials along south lot line greenbelt are acceptable. The line of Norway Spruce trees are illustrated to be planted 10 feet apart. Staff recommends that the site plan be revised that the trees be planted at least 15 feet apart and moved north to be half way between the proposed building and the fence line. The greenbelt shall be in conjunction with the storage building.

The bright yellow dumpster is currently located on a concrete pad right next to the lot line. A revised site plan shall include the required dumpster enclosure, which shall be constructed in conjunction with the storage building.

Matt Cole, Engineer for the applicant, said they agree to all of the conditions Planner Becker discussed in her review. They will use PVC deck boards for the dumpster enclosure and will work with staff on for the south edge border. Mr. Cole added it will be box truck not a semi-truck that will make deliveries to the dock facility on site, so it will not create an issue on Alpine Avenue.

MOTION: HAISMA HEATING AND COOLING SERVICE SITE PLAN AMENDMENT AT 5514 ALPINE AVENUE

Based upon representations made by the applicant and the information contained in the Planner's staff report, Frizzell made a motion, supported by Cordes to *approve* the site plan dated December 8, 2023 drawn by Roosien & Associates and elevation & floor plan drawings by WLP Associates dated March 15, 2023 for an accessory building to a heating & cooling business at 5514 Alpine

Ave., PP# 41-09-24-301-005 as it *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 12, 17, 18 and 19 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance with the following conditions of approval:

Conditions of Approval:

1. The applicant shall submit two sets of revised site plans illustrating: the dumpster enclosure, any exterior lighting, moving and spacing the trees within the required 15-foot wide greenbelt, and the access easements clearly illustrated and labeled.
2. All conditions outlined in the Township Engineer's letter dated April 16, 2023.
3. A financial surety for landscaping and the dumpster enclosure.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

23-17 DISCUSSION: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Becker gave a status update of last year's CIP projects and reviewed the Master List of Planned Capital Improvements. Becker said current funding availability has not been determined yet and asked the Commissioners to evaluate and rank the projects on the Master List.

The Commissioners gave the following rankings: Township Center parking lot ranked a B; Community Room ranked an A; repair building roof at Pine Grove Cemetery ranked an A; install a columbarium at Pine Grove Cemetery ranked an A; expand bathrooms at the Sports Park ranked an A; new maintenance building at Sports Park ranked an A.

23-18 COMMISSIONER AND STAFF UPDATES

Becker gave a review from a solar provisions workshop and a shifting from wind to solar power. Becker asked the Commissioners their thoughts on changing the zoning ordinance regarding chickens for residential properties.

ADJOURNMENT

Frizzell motioned, supported by Cordes to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 PM.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried



Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary



Barb Griswold, Recording Secretary