

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 19, 2021**

In Person and by Electronic Remote Access

21-35 CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 15, 2021, APPROVAL OF SITE PLAN REVIEW MINUTES OF JULY 29, 2021 AND THE / PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS.

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on August 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Avenue NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321 in person and by Electronic Remote Access via Zoom. Present: Chair Mike O'Malley, Ron Cordes, Steve Thome, Dawn Swafford, Luke Arends and Gary Potter. Lisa Frizzell was absent. Planner Susan Becker and recording secretary Barb Griswold were also present. Chair O'Malley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Arends moved, with support from Potter to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on July 15, 2021.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Cordes moved, with support from O'Malley to approve the minutes of the Site Plan Review Committee Meeting on July 29, 2021.

Ayes: 2 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Chair O'Malley opened the meeting up for Public Comment on any non-agenda items. No comments were received.

21-36 PUBLIC HEARING: SPECIAL LAND USE AND SITE PLAN REVIEW REQUEST BY MARK TOMASIK OF INNOVATIVE DESIGN TO ALLOW FOR A DRIVE-THROUGH DRY CLEANING SERVICE AND LAUNDROMAT AT 3909 ALPINE AVENUE.

Planner Becker gave her review of the request for a special land use and site plan approval to allow for a laundromat and drive-through dry-cleaning business to be known as *The Laundry Room*. The property is a half-acre in size, is zoned C-2, Commercial. Surrounding properties are planned, zoned and used for commercial purposes. The vacant property was formerly a Pier 1 Imports retail store.

Becker said drive-through properties are special land uses in the C-2 district. The dry-cleaning portion of the business will have a drive-up door for customers. This location is a drop-off and pick-up location for dry cleaning and the actual dry cleaning takes place at another facility. The business also includes a wash and fold service for the laundromat.

The laundromat area has indoor seating for 70 people and vending machines stocked with drinks and snacks. In addition, there are 16 outdoor seats at the southeast corner of the building near the proposed fireplace mounted on the wall. The hours of operation will be Monday through Saturday 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Becker reviewed the six standards of Section 21.02(h) of the Zoning Ordinance for the requested Special Land Use for the Planning Commission. Staff has reviewed the site plan and finds that it does meet the standards set forth by the Zoning Ordinance.

Becker stated the building is connected to public water and sanitary sewer and the applicant is aware that water service will need to be expanded to accommodate the use. The east side of the building will get additional windows and a see-through fire place, a new customer door and windows will be added on the north side. The architectural changes to the south side make it obvious that the new entrance is for customers. The existing driveway configuration will be retained. Public sidewalk exists along Alpine Avenue and traffic flow will be counter-clockwise only along the north side of the building with directional signage installed.

There are 53 existing parking spaces and 3 of the parking spaces are proposed to have electric vehicle charging stations. Laundromats require 1 space per 3 washing machines; 58 washing machines are proposed, which requires 19 parking spaces. Per 19.07(d)(15) dry cleaners require 2 spaces per 1,000 square foot of gross floor area with a minimum of 6 spaces, which requires 6 parking spaces. Therefore 25 parking spaces are required.

The block dumpster enclosure doors are missing the wood slats (the metal gate frames remain). Prior to building occupancy, the dumpster enclosure must have operational opaque doors installed. The applicant has stated the mature landscaping will be retained and staff recommends selective light pruning of the mature trees. The provided exterior building illustration (south and east sides) do not illustrate the existing wall lights; however the applicant has stated no changes to the existing exterior lighting will be made other than the addition of soffit lights in the new canopies.

Applicant Mark Tomasik, Architect with Innovative Design stated Sheldon Cleaners opened their first Laundry Room in Kentwood 5 years ago and the concept was to create areas with washers, dryers and seating rather than lines of washers and dryers as you see in a typical laundromat. It is an upscale laundromat and has become a popular place to do laundry and gather socially.

Mr. Tomasik stated Sheldon Cleaners would like to bring the same concept to Alpine Avenue and repurpose the existing building as The Laundry Room. Along with the washers and dryers there will be wash-and-fold and dry-cleaning services. The dry-cleaning service customers have the option to walk-in and drop-off and pick-up their laundry or drive up to the curb side service located on the north side of the building.

Motion made to open for public comments by Arends, supported by Thome.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

No comments received.

Motion made to close for public comments by Arends, supported by Potter.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

MOTION: THE LAUNDRY ROOM SPECIAL LAND USE AT 3909 ALPINE AVENUE

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Arends made a motion, supported by Cordes to *approve* the Special Land Use permit requested for a drive-through dry cleaners and laundromat at 3909 Alpine Ave. (PP# 41-09-35-426-035) as it *does* meet the standards set forth in Chapter 21 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance.

Findings of Fact:

1. It will be harmonious with the character and use of the immediate vicinity and was designed in such a manner as to mitigate any negative effects.
2. The special use will not be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors.
3. The proposed use is consistent with Master Plan and the intent and purpose of the zoning district.
4. The proposed use will not set a precedent for development which could adversely affect the long term plans and policies of the Township since drive-through facilities are special land uses in the commercial district

MOTION: THE LAUNDRY ROOM SITE PLAN AT 3909 ALPINE AVENUE

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Thome make a motion, supported by Swafford to *approve* the site plan, elevation illustration and floor plans dated June 25, 2021 drawn by Innovative Design, for a laundromat and drycleaners at 3909 Alpine Ave. (PP# 41-09-35-426-035) as the request *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 12, 18 and 19 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance with the following conditions of approval:

Conditions of Approval:

1. Prior to building occupancy, the dumpster enclosure must have operational opaque doors installed.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

21-37 PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING REQUEST BY RENEE AND BEN LINSKOTT OF LEADERSHIP INTERNATIONAL TRAINING EMBASSY (LITE) TO REZONE 3940 FRUIT RIDGE AVENUE FROM A, AGRICULTURAL TO O-S, OFFICE SERVICE / OR CONDITIONAL REZONING.

Planner Becker gave her review of the rezoning request from A, Agricultural to O-S, Office Service / CR, Conditional Rezoning at property addressed 3940 Fruit Ridge Avenue. The property is 4.77-acres and the applicants want to be able to utilize the former public school building for a non-profit service entity that provides worship space, life-skills training, an community garden and art instruction.

The former two-room public school building was occupied by Forgotten Man Ministries from 1978 until recently. Forgotten Man Ministries is a non-profit jailhouse ministry and obtained a Use Variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals in 1978 to allow the building to be used for their administrative offices and no other uses.

The Zoning Ordinance no longer has provisions for Use Variances and the proposed use doesn't fit into the 1978 Use Variance since the proposed use is in the opposite; it draws people to the site and is not simply an administrative building. Therefore, the applicants have requested a conditional rezoning to suit their needs.

Becker explained Conditional Rezoning is a tool that permits an applicant at the time of a rezoning to voluntarily offer conditions regarding their property that are more strict than what the Zoning Ordinance requires.

The Conditional Rezoning (CR) is memorialized in a CR Agreement and CR Plan between the Township and the Applicant that runs with the land. If the proposed development (and presumably conditions of approval) has not been established within 2 years, the zoning automatically reverts to the previous zoning classification.

The applicants are voluntarily requesting a Conditional Rezoning at 3940 Fruit Ridge Avenue to limit the permitted uses by right and special land uses in the O-S zoning district to only the following uses: Administrative Offices and Services, Schools and Vocational Training, Worship Services and Seasonal Social Community Events. The applicants also must show the CR request enhances the project area and such enhancement would be unlikely to be achieved or not assured without the use of conditional rezoning and that it is in the public's interest to grant the CR request.

Becker said the lot meets the lot width requirement in the O-S district. The applicants will be connecting to public water and sanitary sewer and the existing 3 septic tanks and drainfield will be removed. The existing well will be used to maintain the community garden.

The former public school was not built to commercial construction code requirements. The applicants are aware they must have an architect prove the existing buildings meet current code and make any necessary modifications prior to occupying the space. It is known the restrooms will need to be modified. The 2-stall garage will be used for storage of lawn and garden equipment and a garbage bin.

The former school building meets the setback requirements and with the exception of the north side setback for the garage, it does too. The applicants may request as part of the Conditional Rezoning Plan that the existing setbacks of the garage be accepted as is. The existing two driveways will be signed for one-way traffic flow.

The proposed parking setbacks, space size and aisle widths all meet ordinance requirements. Staff concurs with the applicant's parking calculations of 18 spaces total required. The parking spaces must be striped and the parking bumpers are needed.

The applicants have had an aerial photograph history of the property compiled back to 1938 to ascertain whether or not the property was ever an orchard and none was detected. The proposed landscaping along Fruit Ridge Avenue is acceptable. Irrigation should be extended from the well to the front landscaping. The rear of the property will continue to be leased by a farmer. If rezoned, farming will become a non-conforming use.

The natural tree line along the southern property line must be retained as the required greenbelt abutting a residential zoning district. The applicants may request as part of the Conditional Rezoning that no greenbelt be required to be installed along the northern and eastern property lines abutting the R-A and R-4 zoning districts.

Applicant Renee Linscott said her mother-in-law started the LITE foundation 15 years ago and have out grown their current location at 11260 8th Avenue, Grand Rapids. The proposed location on Fruit Ridge Avenue will offer the opportunity to grow and expand their training and mission. The current location on 8th Avenue will still house their day care operation.

Mrs. Linscott stated their mission is to help children and young adults reach their full potential. They provide affordable classes for all children and young adults in the community with a mission to bring neighbors together, build relationships, teach responsible citizenry and provide a fun and safe environment for learning.

The members of LITE are trained and certified teachers, business owners, medical doctors, fitness trainers, bakery owners and entrepreneurs. Each staff member has the knowledge to teach the younger generations with passion and inspiration which helps them to discover their real potential and abilities.

Mrs. Linscott said the property offers them the opportunity to have a neighborhood garden with a particular outreach to the adjoining Alpine Meadows Community. The main goal would be to teach young children where food comes from with seed planting to maintaining and eventually harvesting and selling food. They hope to have Fall/Halloween parties, Christmas musical show, summer picnic with ice cream social and a Cinco De Mayo event. They will also have a church service on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m.

Motion made to open for public comments by Thome, supported by Arends.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

No comments received.

Motion made to close for public comments by Arends, supported by Cordes.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Thome asked the applicant if they are prepared to move in the Agricultural district with spraying and the smells that come from farming and Mrs. Linscott answered she is aware of those things and they are good with it.

Thome asked Becker how far the sanitary sewer lines go on Fruit Ridge Avenue and Becker answered they go north to the old Creekside Nursery property.

**MOTION: O-S / CONDITIONAL REZONING FOR PROPERTY ADDRESSED 3940 FRUIT
RIDGE AVENUE**

Arends made a motion, supported by Cordes to recommend to the Alpine Township Board to *approve* the requested rezoning of property addressed 3940 Fruit Ridge Avenue (PP# 41-09-32-300-014) as publicly noticed from A, Agricultural to O-S, Office-Service / CR, Conditional Rezoning.

Findings of Fact:

Based upon representations made by the applicant during the rezoning review, including the narrative received July 21, 2021 and upon the standards found in Chapters 15 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 *Social, Cultural & Institutional* future land use recommendation of the Alpine Township Master Plan.
2. The request *is* consistent with the intent and purpose of the O-S zone.
3. The location *is* appropriate for all the uses in the O-S, Office-Service zoning district as amended by the proposed Conditional Rezoning.
4. The request *is* designed to ensure compatibility with adjoining land uses.
5. The CR request *does* enhance the project area, and such enhancement would be unlikely to be achieved or not assured without the use of conditional rezoning.
6. The applicant *has* shown that it is in the public's interest (benefits outweigh the detriments) to grant the CR request.

Conditional Rezoning Conditions of Approval:

1. The applicant is voluntarily requesting within the Conditional Rezoning to only allow the uses listed below and to allow the site conditions listed below:
 - Administrative Offices and Services, Section 15.02(a)
 - Schools and Vocational Training, Section 15.02(n)
 - Worship Services, Section 15.09(b) – special land use
 - Seasonal Social Community Events.
 - To utilize the existing garage as it is located with its current setbacks.
 - To allow for no greenbelt along the northern and eastern lots lines since most of this area is actively farmed.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

21-38 PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING REQUEST FROM MIKE HOUSEMAN OF RANGE AT ALPINE TO REZONE 65 ACRES FROM A, AGRICULTURAL AND O-S, OFFICE SERVICE TO MIXED USE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT ON PROPERTIES ADDRESSED 841 AND 1007 ALPINE CHURCH STREET.

Becker gave her review for the rezoning request on 64.56-acre property addressed 1007 Alpine Church Street from A, Agricultural and O-S, Office-Service to M-PUD, Mixed Use Planned Unit Development and rezoning request property on 1.25-acre addressed at 841 Alpine Church Street (Fire Station #1 property) from O-S, Office and Service to M-PUD. The property owner also requests Preliminary Project Plan approval for four Condominium projects within the 65 acres.

The 64-acre property was formerly occupied by a mini-golf and golf course driving range. It is currently occupied by a field, abandoned orchard, home and woods. Fire Station #1 occupies the intersection corner and the applicant is in the process of purchasing it from the Township.

Becker said preliminary storm water volumes were not provided at this time and a completed Traffic Impact Study has not been completed. The information on the condominium structure is incomplete and doesn't address how the purpose and intent of the PUD is satisfied and how the approval standards of Section 22.05 are met. The street and utility layout has been provided; however boundaries of and number of site condominium developments are not clear in writing or cartographically.

Becker explained the Planning Commission and the Township Board will need to determine if the building blocks have been sufficiently arranged and integrated together into a community / neighborhood as intended by the M-PUD district. In May, the Planning Commission provided feedback that it is acceptable for the western half of the property to be included in the M-PUD. Also in May, the Planning Commission expressed that so long as they can restrict most or all occupants to be 55 years and older, they were comfortable with the building being considered as a senior living facility.

The general appearance (not materials) of the senior apartment and commercial buildings has been shared. The commercial buildings have a farm barn appearance; which means there is integration on the site through complementary building design. The integrated design is important to the overall PUD and means it will not be a collection of corporate-branded building designs.

Mike Oezer, Township Engineer said this is a large development and will go in steps as the details are evolving as he works through the design. Overall there is significant grading on the site with the property being quite low near Alpine Avenue and then raises up on the west end of the property. There will be a cut-fill of approximately 15 feet; filling 15 feet on the east end and cutting 15 feet on the west end.

Overall the grading plans seem to work well and fit the site. There may be some walk-out or day-light sites available for the single-family residential homes. Storm water and drainage fits the grading plan. There is a conceptual storm water plan that splits into 2 districts; the west district is 26-acres and the east district is 37-acres and both have the right amount of volume set aside for storm water.

Mr. Oezer stated at those 2 district points there will be a release into drainage ways and Mr. Houseman will have to follow Kent County's drainage standards along with Alpine Township's drainage standards for how much detention they can create in those areas so they reduce off-site impact.

The sanitary sewer will head to the northeast section of the property where there is an existing sanitary sewer trunk main that does have capacity for the flows that will be generated from the site. The water system is covered by Plainfield Township and there is adequate water for the site.

Mr. Oezer said for the level of design submitted so far, there is enough that demonstrates the site can be served by the utilities.

Applicant Mike Houseman thanked Becker and Oezer for their reports. He said the development will have a farm-to-table style restaurant, but he is not trying to compete with the local farm markets. There will be a garden area that the restaurant can use to grow their own crops and use in the restaurant. He said there will be no drive-through businesses at this time. He stated a farm supply store may go in the development along with a gas station.

Mr. Houseman said he plans on keeping 10 feet width of tree growth and natural tree line along the northern lot line. He stated JTB Homes, who will develop the single-family house sites, will make the potential buyers sign a contract stating they understand the sites are near farms and the smells that go along it.

Mr. Houseman said he will reach out to Kenowa Hills School transportation department regarding a bus stop for the development and will reach out to the Rapid to extend bus service north from the current stop at Alpine Avenue and Lamoreaux Drive. He added he is asking to move forward at the meeting and approve the recommendation to the Township Board.

Ray Schneider with AE Com gave a summary of the traffic study they performed for the property. The M-37 (Alpine Avenue) and Alpine Church Street intersection had several movements that operate at a Level of Service of a E or F during one or more of the peak hours. The proposed *Range at Alpine* development site is projected to generate 490 new trips during the weekday morning peak-hour, 774 new trips in the weekday midday peak-hour, 337 new trips in the afternoon peak-hour and 444 new trips in the Saturday midday peak-hour.

Mr. Schneider said the median opening at Chris Lane is not configured to accommodate M-37 southbound to northbound U-turn traffic. The median opening should be widened and a truck loon constructed.

Mr. Schneider said due to poor existing traffic operations for eastbound Alpine Church Street left-turns at M-37, a signal warrant analysis should be conducted for existing conditions at the M-37 and Alpine Church Street intersection. He added if a traffic signal is not warranted under existing conditions, a signal warrant analysis should be conducted for the buildout year due to the poorly operating movements at the M-37 and Alpine Church Street intersection.

Motion made to open for public comments by Thome, supported by Arends.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Marta Brechting, 1275 6 Mile Road said this development is not for Alpine Township and it belongs somewhere like Plainfield Township. It does not preserve farm land because it puts pressure on farms and the Township doesn't need any more apartments and it should not matter if the apartments are for seniors, it is still more apartments.

Chad Fessenden, 920 Alpine Church Street said this development is better than the last one that was proposed. He isn't sure this development is something special though. He has concerns with storm drainage as he already has drainage issues from the apartments next to him into his underground garage. He feels there should be a traffic light at Alpine Church Street and Alpine Avenue. Will Alpine Church Street be widened?

Chris Brechting, 1100 6 Mile Road said the development doesn't belong in Alpine Township. Grading will damage the roots in the proposed 10-foot buffer to the north.

Marty Brechting, 1307 6 Mile Road said it isn't right to have that many houses so close together and he doesn't support this development.

Aaron Horrisberger, 1105 Alpine Church Street said he is a 25 year resident and this will be in his backyard. The traffic has increased by 50% since Walmart and Henze Road went in and common sense says it will get worse if approved. The Master Plan has the areas between 4 and 6 Mile Roads planned for development.

Tony Brechting, 1307 6 Mile Road said the impact from this development will impact the area for a long time. He is concerned about the wet lands and said there are already 7 gas stations on Alpine Avenue. He said he would be able to see the shingles on roofs from his back yard, even if they kept the tree line.

Jackie Alt, 1449 Alpine Church Street said this development is a better design than the previous one. She questions why the senior living apartments would need to be 3 stories and would like to see high end homes with larger lots be developed there instead. She said Alpine Church Street and Cordes Avenue is already a busy intersection and it would get worse if the development is approved and wonders if anyone has looked into that concern. She likes the playground.

Teresa Brechting, 1307 6 Mile Road said she is a traveling nurse and likes to come home to a rural setting without development. She said it looks good, but not in Alpine Township. She is skeptical of seeing so many houses in the development.

Jill Brechting, 1307 6 Mile Road said she grew up in the area and doesn't support the development. Cordes Avenue and Henze Road are already busy and traffic will only get worse and Alpine Church Street by the cemetery has so many near misses as it is.

Stephanie Ginsberg, 4959 Peach Ridge Avenue said she doesn't mind housing, but the lots need to be bigger. She said Mr. Houseman approached her to move the Dunneback and Girls Farm Market to there and doesn't want the development to be a replacement of the farm

markets not on M-37. She says the Township should protect small family businesses and this development isn't in the best interest of the community. However, she likes new ideas.

Father Chris Rouech, Holy Trinity Church 1200 Alpine Church Street said drive to Byron Center and see how the farm land has been taken away by large-lot residential development and farm land should be preserved. He is worried about light pollution and glare for the people who live in the area and also the wild life. No one will be able to see the stars at night anymore. I understand the sadness concerning change, but what will be here is not this?

Ron Atwood, 5011 Alpine Avenue wants to know where storm water is going to go and where it will drain. He owns the property just to the north and is worried about drainage onto his land.

Chris Alt, 1012 Alpine Church Street said bigger lots should be developed, more housing in the area instead of apartments and condos.

Betty Pennington, 4866 Alpine Avenue said why does there need to be another farm supply store with Tractor Supply Company already on Alpine Avenue. The traffic is already terrible with accident just waiting to happen. She said crime can go up with the addition of apartments and the whole development needs to be downscaled. She said Wolverine does do a good job, but shouldn't put the houses so close together.

Tom Keena, 1150 Alpine Church Street said he is against the development. It is a lot of people packed in a little area.

Motion made to close for public comments by Cordes, supported by Thome.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Mr. Houseman stated they aren't allowed to send water onto any other property owner's land and the apartments will be age restricted to 55 years and older. He added the goal with Ms. Ginsberg from Dunneback and Girls Farm Market was a second location and he doesn't want to hurt any of the local farm markets.

Potter asked Mr. Houseman if Alpine Church Street and Bristol Avenue area was included on the traffic study and Mr. Houseman said it wasn't included on the study by AECOM and he will check with Mr. Schneider regarding it.

O'Malley said there is a shortage of homes in Alpine Township; he lives in a condo development and it is a tight knit community. It could bring a lot of money to the Township area.

Thome said a complete traffic study is key to approving the request and making a recommendation to the Township Board. All the Planning Commissioners agreed with him.

Cordes made a motion, supported by Potter to TABLE the request.


Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

21-39 ADJOURNMENT

Thome motioned, supported by Arends to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 PM.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried


Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary


Barb Griswold, Recording Secretary