

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 16, 2023**

**23-07 CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
OF FEBRUARY 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 and Matt Wenzel. 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 Potter to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on February 16, 2023.

**Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried**

**23-08 SITE PLAN REVIEW: REQUEST TO EXTEND EL BURRITO LOCO'S SITE  
PLAN APPROVAL FOR ONE YEAR.**

Planner Becker said Mariano Coronado requests a one-time, one-year extension for the special land use and site plan approval at 4720 Alpine Avenue.

Cordes made a motion, supported by Frizzell to approve the one year extension for site plan approval.

**Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried**

**23-09 DISCUSSION: MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION, CLARIFICATION OF VARIOUS  
ITEMS.**

Planner Becker and Chris Khorey with McKenna reviewed policy questions to give direction on the Master Plan. The following items were discussed:

Upgraded US 131 Connection: For many decades, the Alpine Township Master Plan has advocated for improving road connections between M-37 and US-131 between 6 Mile Road and Sparta, to take pressure off the M-37/I-96/US-131 interchange.

Cordes said to put in a ramp at 7 Mile Road, especially for truck traffic.

4 Mile Road Zoning Coordination with Walker. Previous plans have envisioned Alpine Township and the City of Walker working together to develop consistent zoning for both sides of 4 Mile Road.

Griswold said with all the growth and development planned on 4 Mile Road, working with Walker on zoning may be beneficial. He is concerned about all the traffic on 4 Mile Road. Cordes said if a traffic light goes in at Walker Avenue and 4 Mile Road, that will help with traffic concerns. Becker said North Ridge Drive in the City of Walker also helps minimize some congestion issues.

The Commissioners decided to leave as is.

Future Non-Motorized Pathways: McKenna developed a map of future Non-Motorized Pathways and these pathways should be treated similarly to the future road connections. They will be implemented as developments warrants and funds become available.

Frizzell said to tie in pathways to Wahlfield Park. Khorey said a path could be on the shoulder of roads to make a pathway possible to Wahlfield Park.

MPUDs on Land not Master Planned for MPUD: McKenna is suggesting that the Master Plan state that MPUDs can be approved on land that is not Master Planned MPUD, but that, if they are, the maximum dwelling units per acre should be 3.2, equal to the maximum density of Low Density Residential zoning. It would allow flexibility in zoning approval techniques while ensuring that the housing densities envisioned by the Master Plan are not exceeded.

Becker asked if that suggestion makes sense because there isn't anything planned M-PUD and the work done to the Zoning Ordinance a few years ago means nothing then? Becker said a property owner might end up having to amend the Master Plan first before seeking a rezoning.

The proposal would create a conflict between the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance since there aren't any undeveloped areas proposed to be Master Planned Use PUD. Besides, provision of infrastructure is more cost efficient with the densities as they are in the M-PUD Zoning District. A better approach would be to beef up the criteria in the Master Plan for areas not specifically planned for M-PUD uses.

The Commissioners had a discussion and all agreed to the suggestion.

Establishing a Maximum Setback in the A, Agricultural district: In order to preserve farm and orchard land, the Master Plan recommends that homes built in the Agricultural district be built along the edges of properties, rather than in the middle. One way to achieve this goal is with a maximum setback. Other communities in similar situations have established a maximum front setback that is 4 times the minimum.

Cordes said he doesn't agree with it and doesn't like the idea of telling a property owner where they can put a house on their property.

All Commissioners agreed not to add this suggestion.

Planned Shopping Center Node at Bristol Avenue and Lamoreaux Drive extension: The 2021 Future Land Use Map included a small shopping center node at the corner of Bristol Avenue and the Lamoreaux Drive/5 Mile extension to serve the planned residential neighborhoods in that area.

All Commissioners agreed to keep this suggestion off the Future Land Use Map.

Future Transit Service: McKenna has developed a map of potential future transit service in the Township, which could be implemented through revising the Township's existing contract with the Rapid. The Rapid is undergoing a Master Plan update of its own in the coming months, so articulating the Township's position is valuable.

Khorey discussed options for potential transit services. The Rapid's Route 9 currently serves York Creek, Wal-Mart, Menard's and nearby areas. The plan envisions it being expanded north to terminate at The Range at Alpine to serve additional businesses and residents.

The Rapid has examined the feasibility of a North Side Crosstown Route, utilizing some combination of Northridge Drive, 3 Mile Road, 4 Mile Road and North Park Street and such a route would likely run through Alpine Township on 4 Mile Road between Alpine Avenue and West River Drive.

The Rapid recently started offering on-demand, app-based service to a portion in the City of Walker. Rapid vans circulate in the area, operating in a similar manner to Uber but with a limited service area and lower price. If this service was extended to the developed portion of Alpine Township, Alpine residents could use it to get to work in the Walker industrial corridor.

Becker said she gets requests for industrial businesses to have service extended north to 7 Mile Road. The businesses have employees who do not have personal transportation and would benefit from the service route being extended. She also gets requests from the mobile home park residents for additional services.

Frizzell said she thinks the Rapid will decide where and when services need to extend.

Cordes said the Rapid is not a cheap service for the Township to provide. Until the demand is there from businesses, he doesn't see the need for an extension.

Khorey said the Commissioners could say the Township will be responsive to the needs of the business community and will communicate with the Rapid's future needs.

Commissioners agreed to consider options if any are presented to the Township.

Water Service Boundary revision: The current planned extent of public water service included Bristol Avenue between 6 and 7 Mile Roads. The area is planned for Agricultural Preservation on the Future Land Use Map.

Becker said the Water Service Boundary goes into Agricultural zoned area on 7 Mile Road near Alpine Avenue. It is not advisable to have water service in an area Master Planned for Agricultural uses. A discussion needs to happen with Plainfield Township because it is their water system and has to be a mutually agreed upon service boundary.

Commissioners agreed to leave the Water Service Boundary as is.

Property-owner requested Future Land Use Revision: Representatives of a property located within the Bristol – Cordes Preserve Zone had property changed from Low Density Residential to Agricultural Preservation. They are requesting their property be left as Low Density Residential on the Future Land Use Map.

Becker reviewed an email of the corporate officers of Ross Roy Enterprises located on 1425 and 1473 4 Mile Road that they would like the Planning Commission to leave the property zoned Low Density Residential with two master planned east – west roads bisecting the property.

Bill Stouten, 2926 Cascade Road said he cousin owns land in the Preserve Zone and he would like the property to stay zoned Low Density Residential.

Commissioners agreed to leave the properties in question zoned Low Density Residential.

Engineering Report on Lamoreaux Drive Extension: The engineering report on the Lamoreaux Drive Extension has been completed.

Becker reviewed an email from Pete Lamourie, Traffic Engineer at Progressive AE. He states the extension to Cordes Avenue is sound planning for the long term. We can't see how successful this overall area may be in the future, so it would seem short-sided to remove this potential connection from the Master Plan altogether. He understands how the few residents living along Cordes Avenue now don't want to lose the current rural feel to this section of Cordes Avenue, but development changes over time and the connection in the future may become deemed a real positive addition to the network.

Frizzell said she would like to see a more realistic route for the extension.

Cordes said the concept for the extension should stay.

Thome said to leave the current extension concept in the Master Plan with the realization there will be challenges going forward with it.

**23-10 PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Niewiek, 4300 Cordes Avenue asked if the proposed City Center idea is still in the plans and Becker answered no. Mr. Niewiek said if the City Center is longer in the Master Plan then is it necessary to have an Lamoreaux Drive extension to Cordes Avenue. He said proposed bike paths on the Lamoreaux Drive extension would take even more property to develop.

**23-11 COMMISSIONER AND STAFF UPDATES**

Becker reviewed available training opportunities with the Commissioners and the start of CIP will be on the April agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Cordes motioned, supported by Griswold to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM.

**Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried**

  
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Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary

  
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Barb Griswold, Recording Secretary