

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
October 19, 2023**

**23-42 CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF JULY 20, 2023.**

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on October 19, 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, Ron Cordes, Lisa Frizzell, Paul Dunneback, Gary Potter and Dawn Swafford. Planner Susan Becker and Twp. Engineer Mike Oezer were also present. Thome called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW PLANNING COMMISSIONER

Chair Thome introduced new Planning Commissioner Paul Dunneback.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Potter moved, with support from Cordes to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on August 17, 2023.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

23-43 PUBLIC HEARING: DRAFT 2023 ALPINE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN.

Chris Khorey from McKenna Associates spoke about the draft Master Plan: He stated it preserves more agricultural land than the previous master plan, takes into account decades of past planning efforts the Township has done, while also being market responsive. Current market data has been translated into land use policy. Chris reviewed the draft Future Land Use Map.

Frizzell asked a question about the state's push for state control of siting and regulating solar and wind farms. How strong is our agricultural preservation district? Chris Khorey answered if the state takes control over solar and wind farms, then local units of government do not have control. However, the agricultural protection district provides strong protection for rezoning for other land uses the Township does have control over.

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

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

No comments received.

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

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

MOTION: 2023 DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Griswold made a motion, supported by Cordes, to recommend to the Alpine Township Board to approve the proposed draft 2023 Alpine Township Master Plan dated October 19, 2023.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Becker stated the draft Master Plan will be on the Township Board November 20th agenda for approval.

- 23-44 FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Howie Hehrer requests Final Development Plan approval for Phase 1 of the single-family site condominiums within *The Range at Alpine* M-PUD.**
- 23-45 FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Howie Hehrer requests Final Development Plan approval for the duplex condominiums within *The Range at Alpine* M-PUD.**

Engineer Rick Pulaski, of Nederveld introduced the development.

Becker stated the proposed Final Development Plans are consistent with the approved preliminary plans of Oct. 2021. The requests do not include the site condominium process; which is handled by the Twp. Board. The 66-foot wide road stub to the north is ok with the KCRC. Signs indicating temporary road ends are needed along with sidewalks poured through driveways. The timing of sidewalk construction on Alpine Church St. needs to be tied to something. A school bus stop location with benches is shown on the plans along with street lights, street trees and mailbox banks. The proposed landscaping along Alpine Church St. will need to be pulled back from the entrance road so that there is clear site distance.

15-foot tree preservation and enhancement strip along north lot line and 6-foot fence. North of the tree strip. Wood shadow box fence. Entrance signage in the future.

Twp. Engineer Mike Oezer stated the Kent County Road Commission needs to review yet and there are minor storm water changes required. The applicant needs to provide an access path to the storm water pond for pond maintenance. There needs to be a flat bench around the top of the pond to allow for maintenance vehicles to access it. In addition, an increase in elevation of the pond is needed. These changes need to be resubmitted for engineering review.

Griswold said he heard a rumor that there were problems with water during grading. Oezer confirmed that there is a clay lens and natural spring.

Cordes asked how the required fence along the north and west development lines will be maintained over time. Pulaski stated the condominium association has to repair and maintain the fence over time and there will be a mechanism for seed funding for such in the Master Deed.

Frizzell asked what the material of the fence would be. Pulaski explained a wood dog-eared fence would stop dust and since it's a style that has been around a long time, it would be easy to obtain replacement components when needed. Cordes thought a chain link with slats would be best for dust control and low maintenance. Thome thought it would be a composite fence. Ron stated styles of composite fence changes over time.

Howie stated the fence will be located on the lot line and south of that would be 15-foot wide tree preservation and enhancement area. The merits of wood and chain link fences were discussed. Cordes acknowledged that chain link with slats is a huge expenses, but it's the way to go. Good fences make good neighbors. Becker reminded the applicant that any fencing must be installed across the two public road stubs to the north. Cordes stated that slats (fiberglass or plastic) do fade, but that's ok. The Commission collectively discussed 6-foot tall chain link fence with slats and decided that was the way to go.

When will the Alpine Church St. sidewalk be constructed? Per Pulaski, at time of internal road construction. Howie Hehrer suggested that Alpine Church St. sidewalk construction will occur before the issuance of the first home building permit.

Frizzell reminded the applicants that sidewalks poured through driveways need to be 6-inches thick in depth.

Frizzell clarified that the road for the duplexes is a private road. Becker added that physical road construction standards (3.5 inches in depth with 2 lifts) are the same as for public roads and although not indicated clearly on the plans, there will be 5-foot wide sidewalks poured through the driveways at 6-inches of depth through the driveways. A road cross section profile for the private road must be provided.

MOTION: for M-PUD Final Development Plan for Phase 1, Single-Family Site Condos on property addressed 1015 Alpine Church Street

Based upon representations made by the applicant and information contained in the Planner's staff report, Griswold made a motion, supported by Cordes to *approve* the Final Development Plan for Phase 1 of the Single-Family Site Condos within *The Range at Alpine* M-PUD dated September 18, 2023 drawn by Nederveld and photometric plan dated June 13, 2023; on property addressed 1015 Alpine Church St. (PP# 41-09-26-290-011) as it *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 14B, 18 and 22 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance.

Findings of Fact:

1. The request *does* substantially conform to the approved preliminary development plan, subject to minor revisions and all conditions attached to its approval, the PUD rezoning ordinance, and the requirements of Chapter 22.
2. It *is* acceptable for Township staff to review and approve the entrance sign using Section 20.12 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Conditions of Approval:

1. This approval is contingent upon the Township Board approving *The Homes at Alpine* site condominium.
2. The applicant shall fill in vegetation gaps within the 15-foot tree preservation and enhancement strip along the northern edge of the development with understory and evergreen trees sized according to the Township's Landscaping Guidelines.
3. The 6-foot tall fence required to be installed along the northern development boundary shall be made of chain link with slats.
4. Construction of the sidewalk along Alpine Church Street must occur before the first building permit is issued.
5. Sidewalks shall be poured through driveways at 6-inches thick in depth.

6. At the time Bethpage Drive is established, the applicant shall erect a metal road sign stating "Temporary Road End" at the property line north of Bethpage Drive.
7. All conditions outlined in the Township Engineer's letter dated October 12, 2023.
8. Conformation from Twp. Engineer Mike Oezer that the natural spring issue has been addressed.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

**MOTION: Motion for M-PUD Final Development Plan for the Duplex Condos
on property addressed 1015 Alpine Church Street**

Based upon representations made by the applicant and information contained in the Planner's staff report, Frizzell made a motion, supported by Swafford to *approve* the Final Development Plan for the Duplex Condos within *The Range at Alpine* M-PUD dated September 18, 2023 drawn by Nederveld and photometric plan dated June 13, 2023; on property addressed 1015 Alpine Church St. (PP# 41-09-26-290-011) as it *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 14B, 18 and 22 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance.

Findings of Fact:

1. The request *does* substantially conform to the approved preliminary development plan, subject to minor revisions and all conditions attached to its approval, the PUD rezoning ordinance, and the requirements of Chapter 22.

Conditions of Approval:

1. This approval is contingent upon the Township Board approving *Condominiums at The Ridge* condominium.
2. The applicant shall fill in vegetation gaps within the 15-foot tree preservation and enhancement strip along the northern edge of the development with understory and evergreen trees sized according to the Township's Landscaping Guidelines.
3. The triangle-shaped open space along the southern edge of the condominium and the eastern edge of the condominium shall be landscaped with trees as illustrated on the cover sheet of the plans.
4. The 6-foot tall fence required to be installed along the northern development boundary shall be made of chain link with slats.
5. Sidewalks shall be poured through the driveways at 6-inches thick in depth and 5 feet wide.
6. All conditions outlined in the Township Engineer's letter dated October 12, 2023.
7. Conformation from Twp. Engineer Mike Oezer that the natural spring issue has been addressed.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

23-43 PUBLIC COMMENT

Margret Brechting of 1275 6 Mile Rd. NW, commented on the natural spring, didn't the detention pond overflow and there were body bags and pipes out near Alpine Avenue? Cordes responded that the detention pond was not completed yet. Twp. Engineer Oezer explained that the pond was in a temporary condition and did not have an outlet to retain silty water. They pumped water out through silt bags to lower the water level. The west detention basin has not been constructed yet.

Kathy Sanders of 2634 Schindler Dr. NW, if the "*Residents for Responsible Alpine Township Growth*" are successful in their rezoning referendum and the rezoning for the Wilders Crossing development at Gracewil Golf Course is defeated, I pray you as planners will review the standards for the R-1 zoning as you did for the OSN-PUD. The standards are similar. A massive development will cause traffic nightmares.

Ken Sanders of 2634 Schindler Dr. NW. The lesser of two evils proposition that the developer is telling us that we are going to get is a take it or else attitude. The R-1 plan can only be worse if the Commission, when you take a look at the R-1 site plan, make it worse. The Commission unanimously turned down the developer's best proposal. I don't know how the developer can possibly present an R-1 plan that somehow you should decide is better than their best plan. We understand we don't get to have public comment. These are the times that we can remind the Commission of its duty. This an important democratic moment that we can express our concerns. We love our homes, we trust you will do the right thing.

23-47 COMMISSIONER AND STAFF UPDATES

Presented an opportunity for an all-day bus tour of wind and solar facilities in Lansing.

August tornado damage to the AT&T building and other buildings was discussed. Vegetation debris clean-up effort from the tornado was discussed

ADJOURNMENT

Griswold motioned, supported by Potter to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary



Sue Becker, Planning Director