

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 16, 2018**

**18-40 CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF
JULY 19, 2018, AND THE / PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on August 16, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Ave., NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Present: Vice Chair Mike O'Malley, Secretary Lisa Frizzell, Chuck Jakems and Steve Thome. Chair Bruce Lee, Dawn Swafford and Ron Cordes were absent and excused. Planner Susan Becker and Recording Secretary Barb Griswold were also present. Vice Chair O'Malley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jakems moved, with support from Frizzell to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on July 19, 2018.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

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

**18-41 PUBLIC HEARING: A SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST BY SUANNE
SHOEMAKER AND STEPHANIE GINSBERG FOR THE RENTAL OF FARM
FACILITIES FOR WEDDINGS, RECEPTIONS, PARTIES AND SIMILAR
EVENTS AT 5167, 4991 AND 4903 PEACH RIDGE AVENUE IN THE A,
AGRICULTURAL ZONING DISTRICT.**

Applicant Suanne Dunneback Shoemaker of 3025 6 Mile Road spoke first and gave a brief history of the farm. Her Grandpa, Edwin Dunneback started the farm in 1925. The existing farm market was used for crops as well as Dunneback Hall. The Hall hosted weddings, square dances and parties where local bands performed. Many people will stop in to share their memories of events they had in the Hall, and messages written on the walls date back to the 1940's. The original stage with the piano that was used for events is still on display at the back of the current market.

Mrs. Shoemaker said the farm hosted an event called the Apple Smorgasbord and had then Senator Jerry Ford, who became an U.S. President, speak on the front lawn. They also hosted the annual Alpine Township Fireman's Ball and appreciation dinner for all the staff and volunteers.

One of the last parties held was for Mrs. Shoemaker's brother as he was headed out to serve in the army during the Vietnam War, but then times started to change and liability and insurance became an issue. The family decided then to stop the entertainment and focus on farming.

Mrs. Shoemaker stated she has run the family farm for some time now and again the family farm dynamic is changing. The farm has been successful in the U-Pick orchard business over the past 10 years and the bakery has been a big hit with customers.

Growing hops were the newest adventure that started 6 years ago and they work with Perrin Brewing to promote local hops and beer. Mrs. Shoemaker said they would like the opportunity to work more with the hops they grow and with local breweries. Special events like farm-to-table dinners, paired with beer made from their hops are something they are excited to try. Corporate parties are another event the farm would like to try. Local businesses could hold dinners at the farm as a customer appreciation event or for employee team building. Mrs. Shoemaker stated these events would help their family farm keep moving forward for the next generation.

Planner Becker gave her review for the proposed special land use and site plan request. The requests include 5167, 4991 and 4903 Peach Ridge Avenue and all are zoned for agricultural purposes. The applicants operate the Dunneback and Girls Farm Market at 5167 Peach Ridge Avenue which customers access the property off 6 Mile Road. Along with produce for sale, the market has a bakery and gift shop. Farmers have the option of following the Generally Acceptable Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMP's) for farm markets associated with the Right to Farm Act.

Becker stated the applicants operate a corn maze each fall. Corn mazes are administratively approved, and until recently have been approved annually. This past year the corn maze was moved onto the recently acquired property addressed 4991 Peach Ridge Avenue. A bridge over Indian Mill Creek was replaced to accommodate customer foot traffic to the new maze location. The applicants are working on obtaining the necessary DEQ permit for such. Since the corn maze is located on property under consideration for a special land use, the site plan will also serve the purpose for the administratively-approved corn maze. The intention is to approve the corn maze once and not have an annual renewal.

Becker reviewed the uses allowed for special land use conditions in the Agricultural district and standards of approval in Chapters 5 and 21 for the Planning Commission. She stated the hours of operation are proposed to be primarily daylight hours and all events must conclude by 11 p.m. per the applicants. The main entrance would continue to be the 6 Mile Road farm market entrance or the driveway immediately to the west of the farm market.

The applicants state they have space for 200 patrons (34 spaces are illustrated on the site plan) and they do not intend to exceed that number of cars. Parking in the road right-of-way is not allowed. They are also aware that farming practices of neighboring farmers may impact their special events (slow tractors on the road, spraying, equipment noise). Conversely, special event traffic could impact farm and residential traffic in the area.

The current events spaces are the 8-acre corn maze, the 2-acre u-pick orchard and a 1-acre open field. The applicants have stated existing buildings will not be rented for parties or other special events. They have stated that all events will be open-air or under tents, and are aware building permits are required for event tents. Any future outside lighting fixtures must be cut-off fixtures as described in the Zoning Ordinance.

Becker said the Kent County Road Commission controls access management on all public roads, and as the volume of traffic changes from farm to retail/event traffic changes to the driveways are required. The Road Commission does plan to repave 6 Mile Road between Walker Avenue and Alpine Avenue in 2019. The Road Commission has indicated the 3rd driveway west of Peach Ridge Avenue must be widened to 24-feet, have increased radii and be

paved within the right-of-way. The Road Commission will enclose the ditch between the 2nd and 3rd driveways and extend the install new tile westerly through the 3rd driveway and get the 3rd driveway ready for pavement by the applicant. They have indicated the 2nd driveway west of Peach Ridge Avenue must be removed.

Becker stated 3 letters were received regarding this request and have been given to the Commission for review.

Frizzell asked about the brewery and winery request that was in the applicant's narrative statement and Becker said that is not part of the special land use request for this meeting and the applicant will have to come back at a later time for that special land use request.

Stephanie Ginsberg explained that she is part of the 4th generation of Dunnebacks and her 10th season running the farm and farm market. She left her job in corporate America to pursue her dream to live and work on the family farm. She loves to entertain and educate people what life is like on a family farm and is proud of the traditions they have established on the farm and have survived for 100 years.

Mrs. Ginsberg stated as a small farm, the trend is to offer more agriculture tourism; it is a sign of the times and completely necessary to survive in the tough industry of farming. If it wasn't for the farm market, bakery and gift shop, she doesn't believe the farm would have made it this far. The goal is to continue to grow the direct to consumer plan of u-pick fruits and vegetables and contract with a local brewer to have their own beer and wine which would be an extension of the agriculture tourism and using their own products to make another agriculture product to sell at the farm market.

Mrs. Ginsberg said farm-to-table dinners is another way to entice the public to visit the farm. Over the years they have established a relationship with Chef Jenna from Amore Restaurant on Alpine Avenue, and they have been using products grown on the farm in the menu items. It would make sense then to invite the customers to the farm to see where the food comes from and then eat a meal prepared on the farm. In return it would help support the shop local, support local agenda, which would also help benefit Alpine Township.

Last year Mrs. Ginsberg said they had the opportunity to put the original farm back together because in the late 1980's the farm was split. The three parcels listed for the special land use are now part of the Ed Dunneback and Girls Farm Market and farmland. Mrs. Ginsberg stated they do not plan on changing any entrances or exits for the Farm Market and they have plenty of parking for events. She said someone from the farm will be in contact with the Road Commission regarding the allowable number, location and dimensions of the 6 Mile Road driveways.

The farm has 8 weekends in the Fall that are busy, starting in September and going through October. The special events are listed to run from May to November and they do not plan to hold anything outside in the snow. They have applied for a small wine makers and small beer makers license through the State of Michigan and in the future would like to produce and sell their own beer and wine. They are not looking to become a brewery or winery, but a license to brew beer or wine on site. Mrs. Ginsberg said people think they want to become another Perrin Brewing but that is not their intention; what they propose doing is to contract with a brewery like Perrin to make a beer for the farm market with hops and fruits grown on the farm.

They are part of NAFDMA (North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association) for family farms all across the United States and Canada and go to meetings and travel to other farms to try to keep small family farms going. They share ideas and Mrs. Ginsberg has visited other farms to see how others have done outdoor venues and farm-to-table dinners.

Thome asked how many people do they plan on having for the farm-to-table dinners and parking for that, and Mrs. Ginsberg said they can accommodate between 150-200 cars. She stated on a busy Fall weekend, they have that many cars already coming through, so there would be no parking on the roadway or blocking any driveways. They also have local police officers that they could hire off-duty for additional traffic control if needed.

Jakems sought confirmation that the brewing aspects will not happen with the proposed special land use request, and Mrs. Ginsberg said not for this meeting and that will be a different request in the future. Jakems asked if any alcohol will be served at the special events and Mrs. Ginsberg said the customers would be able to bring in a hired licensed bar service. Jakems asked if Mrs. Ginsberg needed a permit from the State of Michigan to do that and she answered no. Becker added it would be the same if someone rented a hall for a wedding reception and hired a bar service for the event.

Frizzell asked would there be special events still going on after the farm market is closed for the season? Mrs. Ginsberg said probably not because most want the u-pick option to go along with the event. Frizzell said there was mention of an overflow parking area and wondered where that was and Mrs. Ginsberg said if they had to, they could have parking across the road on 6 Mile, and use wagons to bring customers to the farm. However, that is not their intention and that is not something they wish to do. Mrs. Ginsberg does not see any event needing more than 200 parking spaces either.

Becker asked during a Fall weekend, what is the peak number of cars and Mrs. Ginsberg said they will fill the parking lot, but that happens 1 or 2 Saturdays. She added they do have parking attendants and employees out by the road to direct traffic.

Frizzell asked how trash will be handled for events and Mrs. Ginsberg said they already have commercial trash bins.

O'Malley asked Mrs. Ginsberg if she understood that the buildings they have on site are not permitted for rentals or special use and she answered yes, she understands that. O'Malley asked if she foresees events going to 11:00 p.m. and Mrs. Ginsberg said no and she thinks events would conclude by 8:00 or 9:00 p.m.

Motion made to open the Public Hearing by Jakems, supported by Thome.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Beverly Vickery of 4880 Peach Ridge Avenue said she is opposed to the special land use request. She is concerned about hearing music and additional noise coming from the Dunneback Farm and the extra traffic on country roads not built for heavy traffic. She feels the value of the homes in area could be affected and go down if alcohol is being served. The addresses on the request are all Peach Ridge Avenue and she is concerned driveways for the farm market will eventually go from Peach Ridge Avenue instead of the current location on 6

Mile Road. Mrs. Vickery asked if this is something that will happen in the future and O'Malley said it would be recommended the entrance and exit would stay on 6 Mile Road and the Road Commission controls the final decision on the configuration of the 6 Mile Road driveways.

Mrs. Vickery asked if there was a noise limitation or ordinance and O'Malley answered there is a Township Ordinance on noise and if needed the Sheriff's Department would come out and address the level of the noise. Mrs. Vickery also asked if there would be another meeting scheduled if the Dunneback Farm starts making beer and wine and O'Malley said yes.

Randy Dunneback of 3142 6 Mile Road said he can hear laughter and likes watching people walk around in the corn maze. He thinks the special land use request is a great idea and he is all for it.

Suanne Dunneback Shoemaker asked if everyone who owns a farm in the Township has to get a special permit for when they have a large party and she stated there was a local party recently held with 1,200 to 1,500 people. Becker said people can hold a family wedding or a onetime special event (not continuous) on their property/farms, they are personal parties on their own property. It changes when a person starts to rent out their property for a commercial business, then a special land use permit is required.

Sarah Stoddard of 5380 Peach Ridge Avenue is the sister of Stephanie Ginsberg and daughter of Suanne Dunneback Shoemaker said she enjoys living in the rural community and while they enjoy having people come to the Farm, they want to keep it safe for their children too. She loves living in the country and they aren't trying to be a burden to the neighbors. Mrs. Stoddard said she thinks it is important to show kids today how farms are run and to buy and shop local.

Motion made to close the Public Hearing by Jakems, supported by Thome.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

MOTION: FARM SPECIAL EVENTS SPECIAL LAND USE

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Jakems made a motion, supported by Thome to *approve* the Special Land Use permit requested for Rental of Farm Facilities for Special Events at 5167, 4991 and 4903 Peach Ridge Avenue as it *does* meet the standards set forth in Chapters 5 and 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 C-3 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 Rental of Farm Facilities for Special Events is a special land use in the Agriculture district.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

MOTION: FARM SPECIAL EVENTS SITE PLAN

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Jakems made a motion, supported by Thome to *approve* the site plan dated August 7, 2018 drawn by Summit Surveying for a Rental of Farm Facilities for Special Events at 5167, 4991 and 4903 Peach Ridge Avenue as the request *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 5, 18 and 19 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance with the following conditions of approval:

Condition of Approval:

1. Rental of Farm Facilities for Special Events is limited to open-air events or the use of tents for shelter. Use of permanent buildings for rental of farm facilities is specifically not approved.
2. All Special Event traffic shall enter and exit off 6 Mile Road. The number, location and dimensions of the 6 Mile driveways must be approved by the Kent County Road Commission and implemented.
3. Rental of Farm Facilities Special Events shall conclude by 11 p.m.
4. The applicant shall submit 3 copies of a revised site plan with all Event special land use properties included, label the 2-acre u-pick area, label where the overflow parking is located, and make any changes to the driveways as required by the Kent County Road Commission.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

18-42 SITE PLAN REVIEW: A SITE PLAN REVIEW REQEUST BY FRUIT RIDGE APPLE COMPANY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A STORAGE BUILDING AND SOLAR ARRAYS AT 4110 10 MILE RD IN THE I-1, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT.

Planner Becker reviewed the request for site plan approval from Joe Rasch of Fruit Ridge Apple Company, to allow for the construction of a 2,400-square foot storage building and approximately 700 linear feet of solar panels. The proposed 6.68-acre property is zoned I-1, Light Industrial and Fruit Ridge Apple stores and packs apples at this location. The uses in the area consist of homes, farms, fruit packing and storage, sale of farm supplies and trucking.

The applicant has been approved to move his east lot line further east to encompass the current storage building and make room for the proposed storage building. The proposed storage building is setback from the existing storage building the minimum required distance of 10 feet. An area for a potential future storage building has been noted on the plans to the south of the current building request.

Seven rows of solar panels will be installed south of the main building on either side of the septic drain field. They will be about 10 feet tall maximum and the 150 kilowatt installation is expected to offset power costs by \$21,000 annually.

Becker said the additional impervious surface added by the two storage buildings necessitates enlarging the storm water detention pond. The Township Engineer stated the improvements include two storm water components: enlargement of the existing storm water detention basin and a washed gravel trench around the proposed building addition. The calculations provided for the detention basin is sized to meet the Township's requirement for storm water. The washed stone trench proposed at the new warehouse is designed to accommodate runoff from the roof of the new building. This solution is also acceptable and is a good example of alternative methods for storm water treatment.

Paved vehicular access to the property from 10 Mile Road crosses the property to the east and trucks travel clockwise around the building. There are no changes anticipated for parking, lighting and landscaping.

Joe Rasch of 305 Roosevelt Avenue, Conklin said food safety regulations have become more stringent and they are no longer able to store packaging materials outside. The packaging materials now need to be in a dry and rodent free storage area, so he needs a secure and clean environment to store packaging materials for the apple packaging plant.

MOTION: FRUIT RIDGE APPLE COMPANY SITE PLAN FOR BUILDING ADDITION AT 4110 10 MILE ROAD

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Frizzell made a motion, supported by Jakems to *approve* the site plan dated August 1, 2018 and drawn by W. L. Perry Associates for the construction of a 2,400-square foot storage building and approximately 700 linear feet of solar panels on the proposed 6.68-acre property is addressed 4110 10 Mile Road, as it *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 16, 18 and 19 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance with the following conditions of approval:

Condition of Approval:

1. All conditions outlined in the Township Engineer's letter dated August 9th, 2018.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

18-43 DISCUSSION: REVIEW OF DRAFT ZONING ORDINANCE CHAPTER 22 (PUD PROCEDURES) AND CHAPTER 14A (OPEN SPACE NEIGHBORHOOD PUD)

Andy Moore from Williams and Works reviewed the draft for Open Space Neighborhood. He explained the OSN-PUD is a zoning district for master planned residential communities in which the most important design feature is the identification and inclusion of land that is to be preserved or created as open space. Most dwellings would abut this permanently open space in order to provide views and access for residents.

They have completed a draft of revisions to Chapter 22, Section 14 of the Zoning Ordinance for review and the decision-making process by the Planning Commission and Township Board. Mr. Moore suggested a number of changes to simplify, clarify and streamline the process and to ensure conformance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. The Planning Commission reviewed the suggested changes.

18-44 COMMISSIONER AND STAFF UPDATES / ADJOURNMENT

Becker gave an update on upcoming road construction for 6 Mile Road and 7 Mile Road.

ADJOURNMENT

Thome motioned, supported by Frizzell to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Motion carried



Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary



Barb Griswold, Recording Secretary