

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
July 19, 2018**

**18-35 CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF
JUNE 21, 2018, AND THE / PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on July 19, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Ave., NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Present: Chair Bruce Lee, Vice Chair Mike O'Malley, Secretary Lisa Frizzell, Chuck Jakems, Ron Cordes (arrived at 7:05) Steve Thome and Dawn Swafford. Planner Susan Becker and Recording Secretary Barb Griswold were also present. Chair Bruce Lee called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

O'Malley moved, with support from Frizzell to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on May 17, 2018. Thome recused himself due to not being at the June meeting and Cordes had not arrived yet.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

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

**18-36 PUBLIC HEARING: A SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST BY CARTER
LUMBER FOR A RETAIL LUMBER YARD AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A
STORAGE BUILDING AT 7474 ALPINE AVENUE IN THE C-3, COMMERCIAL
DISTRICT**

Planner Becker reviewed the request from Carter Lumber for a special land use and site plan approval to allow for a retail lumberyard and the construction of an 11,985-square foot lumber storage building. The property is planned and zoned for commercial purposes and in the C-3 zoning district, retail lumberyards are a special land use. Carter Lumber chose this site to build their facility in 1974 because they needed a railroad siding.

Becker said the C-3 zone is intended to provide for which, although commercial in nature, exhibit a number of industrial characteristics in their operation. Development standards must be applied to ensure uses do not have a negative impact on nearby neighbors and existing brush adjacent to the north lot line is intended to remain. Including the additional site cleaning to the east, the site will comply with the 150-foot distance requirement. The nearest home at 7510 Alpine Avenue is 175 feet from a truck travel lane on site.

The lumberyard is located on a high spot, and storm water is proposed to be routed to a new storm water pond at the southeast corner that will outlet through piping to an existing small pond in the southwest corner. The Township Engineer requested the following information be submitted to complete a review on the proposed design: Storm piping sizes should be labeled, catch basins and manholes should be labeled, invert elevations should be listed, storm water runoff areas should be shown and acreage listed and details of the Reservoir Report should be explained and correlated to the drawings.

Becker stated Carter Lumber is working towards reactivating the 1,200-foot railroad spur for additional access. In the lumberyard, the customers are escorted by employees beyond the two retail buildings up front. There is ample room to maneuver around the lumber and materials stored outside.

The proposed accessory building will store windows, doors and other specialty products. The 24-foot high building will have a loading dock that will accommodate 4 trailers, with two 20-foot high overhead doors facing west. In addition, Carter Lumber may include an overhead door at each gable end (north and south).

The property is to be cleared and graveled to the east property line for outdoor lumber and material storage. A 25-foot wide greenbelt is required to the north as a buffer to the RA, Rural Agricultural district. The existing perimeter 6-foot chain link fence with 3 strands of barbed wire is proposed to extend east once the remaining acreage is cleared.

Lee asked Becker if there will be water or sewer in the proposed building, and Becker answered no, it will be strictly for storage.

Chuck Price, Vice President of Development for Carter Lumber thanked Becker for her review. He stated this location has been in business since 1974 and business has grown since then. The property has approximately 14.46 acres and 6 acres of the eastern part of the property is undeveloped and has an old rail spur which was disconnected from the main line several years ago.

Mr. Price said Carter Lumber is planning to reactivate the spur due to increased sales and future expansion plans. They are also planning to develop the eastern 6 acres of the site to increase outside material storage areas as well as planning to build the storage building. The building will be used to store doors, windows, and special order products. The building will be 24 feet high with 4 docks and two 20 overhead doors, all facing the front of the store. The proposed building will not have any public or showroom areas. Mr. Price added the store would keep the same business hours and hire 4-8 new employees.

Cordes asked if Carter Lumber was really anticipating using the old rail spur and Mr. Price said yes, they plan on moving forward with it. He said they have already made contact with the railroad and once the site is cleared, they want to reactivate the switch and put it in. Cordes asked how many rail cars does Carter Lumber plan on using for deliveries and Mr. Price said 3 to 4 a month and will cut down on the amount of semi-truck deliveries then. Cordes also asked if they have any experience using rail cars and Mr. Price answered stores in the Detroit area use rail cars.

O'Malley asked if the rail deliveries will be at night and Mr. Price said that will be finalized with the railroad company. Mr. Price added the 3-4 cars a month will be during peak times and less in the winter.

Becker asked when the last time the rail was used was and Mr. Price said he would guess 10-12 years ago. Cordes added he thought it was closer to 18-20 years ago.

Motion made to open the Public Hearing by Jakems, supported by O'Malley.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

No comments received.

Motion made to close the Public Hearing by O'Malley, supported by Thome.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Lee asked Mr. Price if they had reviewed the Township's Engineers question regarding the storm water and Mr. Price said yes and they can accommodate the requested items. Lee also asked if there will be any increase in parking, and Mr. Price said no.

Becker asked the Planning Commission if they were comfortable with the green space for the neighbors and the Commission agreed they were. O'Malley asked if the neighbor's had been sent a notice regarding the meeting and Becker answered yes.

MOTION: CARTER LUMBER COMPANY SPECIAL LAND USE AT 7474 ALPINE AVENUE

Based upon representations made by the applicant, O'Malley made a motion, supported by Jakems to *approve* the Special Land Use permit requested for retail lumberyard at 7474 Alpine Ave. (PP# 41-09-12- 100-020) 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 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 retail lumberyards are special land uses in the C-3 district

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

MOTION: CARTER LUMBER COMPANY SITE PLAN AT 7474 ALPINE AVENUE

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Cordes made a motion, supported by Thome to *approve* the site plan dated June 2018 drawn by Albert Avanesyan, for a retail lumberyard and approximate 12,000-sq. ft. accessory storage building at 7474 Alpine Ave. (PP# 41-09-12-100-020) as the request *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 13, 18 and 19 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance with the following conditions of approval:

Condition of Approval:

1. The existing natural vegetation along the north side of the property for a depth of 25 feet shall remain as the required greenbelt.
2. All conditions outlined in the Township Engineer's letter dated July 12, 2018.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

18-37 PUBLIC HEARING: A SPECIAL LAND USE AMENDMENT REQUEST BY PHIL BROWN WELDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BUILDING ADDITION AT 4750 8 MILE ROAD IN THE A, AGRICULTURAL ZONING DISTRICT.

Planner Becker reviewed the request from Phil Brown Welding for a special land use and site plan amendment to allow for the construction of a 10,000-sq. ft. building addition. The 13.92 acre property is zoned A, Agricultural and all surrounding properties are planned and zoned for agricultural use. Phil Brown Welding built its building in 1973 and added onto it in 1983 and 1989.

In the Agricultural zoning district, *General repair and welding of farm implements and farm machinery and Farm equipment sales, service, and repair are special land uses.* The property received approval in August 1973 from the Zoning Board of Appeals to establish a business for *General repair and welding of farm implements and farm machinery* at this location. The property also received a special land use permit in March 1989 from the Planning Commission for manufacturing of customized farm equipment.

Becker said gravel is proposed to be added to the west side of the building. Natural storm water flow is to a small pond in the southwest corner and storm water management for this large addition will be needed.

The 10,000 sq. ft. building addition will accommodate large farm equipment in for repairs and storage of steel and large machinery belonging to the business. There will be two overhead doors on the north elevation and two on the south. The largest overhead door will be 16 feet tall and 18 feet wide to accommodate large farm equipment.

There are two accessory buildings on site that were mistakenly erected recently without site plan approval or building permits. The applicant has decided to remove these two buildings from the property and the buildings must be removed prior to issuance of a building permit for the addition.

Outdoor storage is located behind the building in a fenced area. The expanded gravel area to the west includes area for 17 relocated parking spaces. There are existing trees planted along the 8 Mile Road frontage and the dumpsters are located out of view behind the existing building.

Becker said the Township Engineer states the site design doesn't include consideration for storm water improvements. Currently storm water runoff from the building drains off the roof directly onto the adjacent grass for gravel surfaces. Runoff from the gravel parking lot area drains onto adjacent grass/orchard areas and there are no formal storm water improvements on the site. He recommends that the applicant provide storm water runoff and detention facilities for the expanded area so that the new impervious area meets the Township's requirement for storm water.

The Township Engineer also added the applicant should consider making the parking 90-degree with a depth of 18-feet and a drive aisle of 24-foot width for a total of 42-feet. This will allow for employee parking that doesn't require looping through the back-of-shop area that is likely an active work zone.

Rick Dunneback, Engineer for the applicant thanked Planner Becker for her review. He said Phil Brown Welding was established in 1964 as agricultural equipment welding and repair shop. Over the years the company also began to manufacture specialized orchard-related equipment which has now grown and occupies approximately 30% of the existing facility. Farm equipment has increased in size and has become increasingly difficult to bring those large pieces of equipment into the shop for repairs. The proposed addition would be built in order to facilitate large farm equipment repairs.

Mr. Dunneback said in regards to the storm water; that is being worked on currently and doesn't see an issue with it.

Lee asked if the suggestion about parking make sense and Mr. Dunneback said the applicant will make any changes they need to do make it all work. There is plenty of room to make the suggested changes.

Motion made to open the Public Hearing by Cordes, supported by O'Malley.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Don Rasch, 6191 Stage Avenue said he supports the proposed addition and Ken Alt, 4650 8 Mile Road said he supports it as well.

Motion made to close the Public Hearing by O'Malley, supported by Cordes.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

O'Malley stated the applicant has a clean and efficient operation of business.

MOTION: BROWN WELDING CORPORATION SPECIAL LAND USE AT 4750 8 MILE ROAD

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Thome made a motion, supported by Jakems to *approve* the Special Land Use permit requested for retail business with outdoor sales of items at 4750 8 Mile Road (PP# 41-09-18-100-017) 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 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 *General repair and welding of farm implements and farm machinery and Farm equipment sales, service, and repair* are special land uses in the Agricultural district

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

MOTION: BROWN WELDING CORPORATION SITE PLAN AT 4780 8 MILE ROAD

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Thome made a motion, supported by O'Malley to *approve* the site plan dated June 19, 2018 and elevation drawings dated June 19, 2018, both drawn by WLP Associates for a 10,000-sq. ft. addition at 4750 8 Mile Road (PP# 41-09-18-100-017) 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. Removal of the two accessory buildings shall be completed prior to issuance of a building permit for the 10,000-sq. ft. addition.
2. All conditions outlined in the Township Engineer's letter dated July 12, 2018.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

18-38 DISCUSSION: OPEN SPACE NEIGHBORHOOD PUD REVIEW

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.

18-39 COMMISSIONER AND STAFF UPDATES / ADJOURNMENT

Becker gave an update on upcoming road construction and on Freddy's Restaurant, Panda Express and Planet Fitness

ADJOURNMENT

Cordes motioned, supported by O'Malley to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 PM.

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion carried



Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary



Barb Griswold, Recording Secretary