

**Melrose Township Planning Commission Minutes
Melrose Township Hall
Regular Meeting of July 25, 2022**

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

- A. **Call to Order:** Chair Bart Wangeman called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.
- B. **Members present:** Bart Wangeman, Tim LaGasse, Dan Nowland, and Charley Zimmer.
- C. **Members absent:** Julie Christy (Excused).
- D. **Staff present:** Zoning Administrator Vern Goodwin and Recording Secretary Tom Mackie.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By consensus the agenda was approved as presented

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tim LaGasse motioned, Charley Zimmer seconded, to approve the June 27, 2022 meeting minutes with a correction to the second paragraph in section B replacing “.... required lighting and signage plans can be approved administratively by the Zoning Administrator...” with “...required lighting and signage plans must be approved by the Planning Commission.” All members present voted Yes, motion carried.

IV. NEW BUSINESS - None

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Rezone Application by Scott Eriksen at 00731 US131 (Property ID # 15-010-033-007-00):

Bart noted the application by Scott Eriksen to rezone a 2-acre (approximately) parcel on US131 north of School Creek Lane from FF, “Farm and Forest” to B-1, “General Business” for use as an automobile repair facility was first discussed at the June 27th meeting. At that meeting the application was tabled to allow time for the Commissioners to review Master Plan language and maps. Vern then reported no new information has become available since the June 27th meeting and any approval of this application would require a Zoning Ordinance amendment.

Owner/Applicant Scott Erikson described his plan to construct an automobile repair facility at the site, noting this will replace his existing business on M-75 South in Boyne Valley township. Scot also noted his original plan for a 100-foot wide 4-bay structure has been downsized to 80-foot wide and 3-bays. Laura Eriksen added the structure will be nice and well-landscaped.

Bart asked for any additional public comment and Sam Kosc noted he lives approximately ¼ mile south of this parcel. He suggested small businesses have a hard time finding commercially available property and an auto repair shop is a critical business for a community.

Vern indicated he recently discussed rezone procedures with Township Attorney Brian Graham who advised our Master Plan should be the major determinant in any rezone decision. Bart also noted different communities maintain their own Master Plans.

Bart noted our tabling of this application at the June 27th meeting was to allow time for the Planning Commission members to review Master Plan language and the associated land-use maps. He then asked for member comments.

Tim LaGasse stated the proposed use is not explicitly listed as an allowed use in the FF district so a rezone would appear to be the only path forward. He noted the community goals and policies of the Master Plan encourage consideration of opportunities and future needs as well as an increase in infrastructure available to residents and businesses but expressed concern over a potential precedent for more uses like this. Tim also noted chapter 7 of the Master Plan suggests business expansion Southeast of the US131/M-75 intersection but the Future Land Use Map limits this to the area near the intersection and does not extend that far south.

Dan stated his conclusions after review of the Master Plan agree with Tim's comments.

Charley stated he found nothing detrimental in the proposal.

Bart noted page 5-2 of the Master Plan states strip development is not desired by the Township and its residents. He then suggested the proposed use is not intensive but does constitute spot-zoning.

Bart then noted the Objectives and Actions delineated in chapter 6-3 require balancing public interest in sound planning while keeping rights and interest of private property owners in mind.

Bart then read the description of Farm-Forest from section 7-3 of the Master Plan and stated the proposed use is not consistent with the FF District. He also stated a rezone is not consistent with the Master Plan as it would constitute spot-zoning.

Vern noted the next step in this review process is to schedule a Public Hearing followed by a recommendation to the Township Board.

Charley Zimmer motioned, Bart Wangeman seconded, to table further consideration of this application until a Public Hearing can be scheduled, advertised, and take place with the results used to make a final decision. All eyes motion passed.

VI. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS / REPORTS** None.

VII. **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPORT**

Bart reported a recent Zoning Board of Appeals application for a height variance on third Street was denied.

VIII. **PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:** None.

IX. **CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None.

X. **NEXT MEETING:** Scheduled for Monday, August 29, 2022 at 5:30 PM {subsequently corrected to August 22}.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT:** At 6:23 PM

Prepared by

Planning Commission Approval by:

Tom Mackie, Recording Secretary

Charley Zimmer, Secretary

Copies: Melrose Township Board, Planning Commission Members, www.melrosetwp.org