

**Springfield Township
Planning Commission – Business Meeting
Minutes of February 16, 2004**

Call to Order: Chairperson Roger Lamont called the February 16, 2004 Business Meeting of the Springfield Township Planning Commission to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Rd., Davisburg, MI 48350.

Attendance:

Commissioners Present

Roger Lamont
John Steckling
Paul Rabaut
Gail Mann-Bowser
Chris Moore

Commissioner(s) Absent

Dennis Vallad

Consultants Present

Randy Ford
Dick Carlisle

Staff Present

Collin Walls
Mary Blundy

Approval of Agenda:

Chairperson Lamont noted that we do not have February 5th Workshop Meeting minutes and should be deleted from the agenda.

Under Unfinished Business, the Private Roads Policy is not ready per Dick Carlisle and should be deleted from the agenda.

Chairperson Lamont asked to present New Business first and Unfinished Business second. The Planning Commission unanimously agreed to the change.

Commissioner Rabaut asked to have five minutes of the Commissions' time under Other Business.

Chairperson Lamont asked to add to Other Business, Springfield Town Square.

The Planning Commission had no objections to the changes.

Approval of Minutes: January 19, 2004, Business Meeting

- **Commissioner Rabaut moved to approve the Planning Commission Business Meeting minutes of January 19, 2004, as submitted. Commissioner Moore supported the motion. Yes: Lamont, Steckling, Rabaut, Mann-Bowser and Moore; No: none; Absent: Vallad. The motion carried by a 5 to 0 vote.**

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Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

Public Hearing: None

New Business:

1. Randy Hosler - Storage

Mr. Randy Ford of HRC summarized his review dated January 26, 2004. He noted that the site drains to the south, and there is a substantial ditch section along the south property line. Because it will be an unpaved lot, Mr. Ford has no concerns with the ditch. He does recommend shallow drainage swales be installed on both sides of the parking lot to direct runoff to the rear ditch. Regarding the fence, he recommends relocation due to the existing encroachment. The soil erosion control permit has been provided. The Road Commission has provided a permit for the driveway off of Enterprise Drive, but Mr. Ford suggests raising the thickness of the asphalt to be in compliance with Township Standards.

Mr. Dick Carlisle summarized Carlisle/Wortman's review dated January 22, 2004. He does question how vehicles will be delivered to the property, as it was not indicated where the truck or car haulers will park. One major issue with the plan is the fact that there are many mature trees on the property. He believes that many of these trees can be saved since this is simply a storage lot. No pedestrian access is required on this lot. Mr. Carlisle said the addition of some type of landscape screening would help screen the lot from the roadway.

Mr. Jim Scharl of Kieft Engineering said all vehicles will be driven by porters/employees of Randy Hosler Pontiac, there will be no car haulers. Regarding the saving of trees, Mr. Scharl does not believe new vehicles should be parked under trees, as they could be damaged by falline limbs and/or sap drippings and feels the trees should be removed but he will attempt to save some. He explained that they have no problem adding landscaping for purposes of screening the roadway.

Commissioner Rabaut commented that he agrees with HRC's recommendations and agrees that we should waive the site retention pond, sidewalks and trees in the parking lot requirement. Commissioner Rabaut said he is not sure the existing trees would survive and believes the cars should not be parked under trees therefore, does not agree with keeping the existing trees. He does agree with the screening recommendations.

Commissioner Moore commented that he concurs with the comments made by Commissioner Rabaut.

Commissioner Steckling asked regarding the drainage, will there be anything done on the southwest corner to ensure that water does not run off into the back of the adjoining parcel? Mr. Scharl said the intent is to sheetflow it directly south. Commissioner Steckling asked why the

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applicant needs a sign as he believes this could be a nuisance. Mr. Scharl said he doesn't know why a sign is requestee and would talk to Mr. Hosler about it. Commissioner Steckling commented that he agrees trees should not be on the lot as it could create more problems.

Chairperson Lamont commented that he agrees with many comments made by the Planning Commissioners. He agrees trees should be added for screening and should be a condition of approval.

Mr. Carlisle commented that the trees are partly a function of the ordinance and feels that cars can be arranged around the trees. He did not imply that every tree should be saved, merely some of them and storage space would not be lost. He cautioned that if this was a parking lot the Planning Commission would require trees. Commissioner Steckling commented that this is a light industrial work area, and saving the trees is not necessarily worthwhile.

Chairperson Lamont asked the consultants how they feel the proposed removal of the asphalt by the applicant would help the absorption of the site? Mr. Carlisle said it would be better if the asphalt is removed.

Mrs. Zona Sommers, 10730 Clark Rd., commented to the Commissioners that they should be concerned with the height of the trees as well.

Supervisor Walls asked what the height of the lightpoles are since the site plan and illumination plan differ? Mr. Scharl said they are 27 feet total height and will not exceed the standards of the Township.

➤ **Commissioner Rabaut moved to approve the Randy Hosler Storage facility based on plans date stamped by the Township January 8, 2004 based on the following:**

- 1) The shallow drainage swales and/or berm be installed based on the recommendations of HRC's letter of January 26, 2004, and be approved administratively.**
- 2) The applicant coordinate the fence installation and existing pavement removal with the neighborhood owner.**
- 3) The driveway construction be upgraded to meet the Township's Design and Construction Standards.**
- 4) Screening be added along the fence on the street side and to be handled administratively between the applicant and the planner.**
- 5) The landscape maintenance provisions to provide different materials and be handled administratively between the applicant and the planner to achieve a desirable plant mix.**

In addition, the following are waived:

- 1) The requirement for on-site retention on the basis that the lot is not paved.**
- 2) The requirement for sidewalks be waived on the basis that no pedestrian traffic is anticipated.**

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- 3) The requirement for parking lot trees be waived because this is not a parking lot, it is a storage facility.
- 4) The deceleration lane be waived.
 - Commissioner Steckling supported the motion. Vote on the motion. Yes: Steckling, Rabaut, Mann-Bowser and Moore; No: Lamont; Absent: Vallad. The motion carried by a 4 to 1 vote.

Unfinished Business:

1. Screening Between Land Uses

Mr. Carlisle explained the several proposed changes to the ordinance. Language has been added at the request of the Commissioners to provide even screening with gaps filled-in with other plant material. Also added was a phrase encouraging the use of native plant species in screening. A statement has been added that states the Township Body responsible for site plan approval will determine which screening alternative is appropriate. Mr. Carlisle did make minor changes to the landscape screening schedule.

Chairperson Lamont commented that, in his view, the current Township ordinance on screening is vague. He believes these proposed changes to the ordinance, with some fine tuning, would help protect land values and maintain natural characteristics of Springfield Township.

Commissioner Steckling asked for clarification on the General Provisions Section and the use of the word "difference" versus "distance". Mr. Carlisle explained that, as written, it does not say exactly what is meant and the idea is that the requirements are based on specific characteristics of the use and the adjacent land use. Mr. Carlisle said he would revise the wording. In regard to filling in of gaps, there are minor word changes Mr. Carlisle suggested that he would make.

Supervisor Walls commented that he believes the Planning Commission is losing sight of what the real problem is. The problem is for new commercial and industrial businesses that are moving in next to residential. The concern is not what it will be like in the future, the concern is right now. He does not find the 80% opacity and six-foot requirement to be a big problem, the problem is in three years. He is concerned about dealing with trees at 50 years maturity and believes there is not the immediate screening that we are trying to achieve. Mr. Carlisle suggested we need to increase the minimum height requirement at the time of planting, currently the ordinance only requires trees to be 5 to 6 feet in height. Supervisor Walls suggested as an option, rather than requiring so much expensive landscaping from a developer, utilizing a stockade-type fence on the inside. As the fence deteriorates and the landscaping grows, it would fill in. Mr. Carlisle suggested that we also need to require more material and increase the required size of trees at the time of planting.

Chairperson Lamont said proposed changes do not mention opacity or size of trees required. Opacity is a year-round issue, not just a summertime issue. He believes at the bottom of page two of the ordinance may be the opportunity to suggest to a developer exactly what to plant. Chairperson Lamont said he is comfortable with the latitude these changes provide to the

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Township. Supervisor Walls noted that an 8-foot tree would create a world of difference for screening versus a 5-foot or 6-foot tree. The Planning Commissioners agreed with requiring 8-foot trees.

Mr. Carlisle said he would make the appropriate revisions and resubmit the proposed changes to the Planning Commission.

2. Zoning Review By Sub-Area

Mr. Carlisle noted that the two remaining areas that were in question by the Planning Commission were Sub-Area 3, parcel 4 and Sub-Area 5, parcel 6. They are both zoned C-1 and Master Planned for Office/Service. Mr. Carlisle suggested leaving both areas as currently zoned and Master Planned. He explained that there are not significant differences between C-1 and OS, and he does not believe it is worth creating a major difficulty by trying to rezone both sites to conform with the Master Plan. The Planning Commissioners agreed with Mr. Carlisle's suggestion.

Mr. Carlisle said he would submit a summary analysis of all the changes in their entirety to the Planning Commission for their review.

3. Personal Fitness Facility

Mr. Carlisle explained that this issue is in response to the Curves request and an interpretation of the ordinance requirements. In his review dated February 10, 2004, he did note that we permit community recreation centers in several districts, and it is not defined. We also permit community centers in C-1 and C-2, which do not have a reference to recreation. Mr. Carlisle suggested that fitness facilities can range from small operations to large sports clubs. He recommended a distinction be made in defining the two extremes and the districts where they would be located. Mr. Carlisle noted that parking could be a challenge for larger facilities.

Chairperson Lamont said he likes the outline provided with Carlisle's memo. The definitions and permitted uses seem to be appropriate.

Commissioner Rabaut said if we are going to allow a fitness facility in Office/Service, we should look at the definition of Office/Service.

Commissioner Steckling commented that he would like to see some delineation between the definitions of Fitness Facility and Fitness/Sports Club as one is of more intense use. Mr. Carlisle said he would look into this further.

Supervisor Walls said he sees no relationship to a hospital, which would be allowed, and a typical Office/Service, that we would contemplate. It is a rather unusual group of uses and one that is consistently debated.

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Mr. Carlisle suggested that the Planning Commissioners use his provided memo and Outline of Regulations as an opportunity to review Office/Service and he would work on the fine tuning of the changes.

Other Business:

1. Comments from Commissioner Rabaut

Commissioner Rabaut commented that, at the last meeting the Commission discussed the Capital Improvements Program, and he suggested that he thought the Planning Commission had lead responsibility for developing a capital improvement plan. He was met with considerable skepticism on that point. Therefore, he went back to the Michigan Township Association Guide of 1998, and it states that the Planning Commission's responsibilities include preparing and adopting a Capital Improvement Program and reviewing and making recommendations regarding any public improvement projects. Mr. Carlisle stated that the Capital Improvements Plan is the statutory responsibility of the Planning Commission. Supervisor Walls concurred and stated that the Planning Commission's role was very important.

2. Springfield Town Square - Site Plan

Chairperson Lamont explained that the Planning Commissioners need to pay close attention to detail when reviewing site plans. A signage issue has now been raised in regard to Springfield Town Square.

Supervisor Walls noted that several items have come up during the construction of Springfield Town Square, all of which may have been caught by a more attentive look at the plans and the site by the Planning Commission and the consultants. He urged the Planning Commissioners not to rely solely on the consultant's comments. Rather than allowing a developer to wear down the Commissioners, he suggested they hold their ground and require the developer to do what is required. He noted that in regard to the signage for Springfield Town Square, Carlisle/Wortman did three reviews and all three reviews mentioned that all the building signage is not provided for. The only sign proposed was a sign for Kroger and no other tenants, consequently the tenants want signage and cannot get it according to the plans. They have to go to the ZBA, and those variances could have been granted by the Planning Commission at the review and approval stages. Supervisor Walls mentioned other items that had come up, for example, landscaping, elevations and retaining walls that might have been caught during site plan review.

Chairperson Lamont said in his opinion when we get into a handful of conditions for the approval it is time to send it back to the applicant, because it is difficult to keep track of all the conditions, and the burden should be put back on the applicant. Supervisor Walls suggested that the Commissioners come to each meeting with a motion already in mind. It may be changed, but if it is thoroughly thought out it will help a lot. Supervisor Walls commented that this is the best working group on the Planning Commission that we have had for many years. He thanked all the Commissioners for that.

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3. Priority List

Section 18.11 has been set for Public Hearing on March 15th. Section 16.23 has also been set for Public Hearing on March 15th. Section 16.06 is to be reviewed again at the March 15th meeting. Personal Fitness Facilities is set for March 15th with Office/Service designation discussion added with that category. Zoning Review By Sub-Area summary will be put together by Dick Carlisle, hopefully for March 15th. Tree Preservation Plan is to be determined. Capital Improvements Plan Update is complete. Hamlet of Davisburg discussion is to be determined. Private Road Policy/Ordinance is tentatively set for the April 1st meeting. Township Attorney Briefing is tentatively set for the April 1st meeting.

Adjournment:

Hearing no other business, Chairperson Lamont closed the meeting at 10:35 p.m.

Susan Weaver, Recording Secretary