

MINUTES
MECOSTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Mecosta County Services Building

April 6, 2023

I. Roll Call

Chair, Ethan Ray called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Present for roll call were; Richard Hatkowski, Gary Lambrix, Glenn Norton, Bill Routley, Lorie Behrens, Bill Stanek, Annette Coles, Zoning Administrator, & Kim Straley, Recording Secretary.

II. Matters Pertaining to the Public

1. Chair Ray asked if there was anyone who wished to address the Commission regarding any subject that wasn't on the agenda. There was no response.
2. Chair Ray then asked if there was anyone who wished to be on the next agenda. There was no response.

IV. Public Hearings on the agenda

1. Special Use Request #PPC23-005 – Cliff Youngs, 144 Mill St, Paris, Green Township; Parcel #01 891 007 000. Property is zoned R-3. Request to rezone to LR Lake and River Resort.

Ethan Ray read the request into the record. The applicant, Cliff Youngs, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- Unique characteristics: parcel is adjacent to and parallel with the Muskegon River, split by the White Pine Trail with Paris Creek access off from Mill Street.
- Single residence or duplex-only option as currently zoned.
- Applicant believes that zoning to LR allows for future use.
- If easement changes are made, the applicant will lose use and have limited future options.

No one else spoke in favor of the petition.,

Kenneth DeVroy spoke against the petition.

- Believes the petitioner wants to change to LR for the intent of having multiple cabins which will result in noise and traffic issues.
- There are no other nearby LR, Lake and River Resort zoned properties.

No one else to speak for or against the petition. Chair closed the public portion of the meeting and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

Approved

- If constructing home/cabin on property, would make referral to Board of Commissioners.
- On this date, strictly a zoning issue.
- Due to proximity to river, there may be erosion/environmental health concerns.
- Applicant has an easement from the railroad for access from Northland Dr.
- If applicant comes back with special use, board will deal with issues at that time.
- Access to property on the other side of river will require a bridge.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Gary Lambrix and supported by Glenn Norton to approve a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for Map Amendment Request #PPC23-005 – Cliff Youngs, 144 Mill St, Paris, Green Township; Parcel #01 891 007 000. Property is zoned R-3. Request to rezone to LR Lake and River Resort.

Roll Call Vote – 6 Yeas – 1 Nays, Motion approved.

2. Special Use Request/Site Plan Review #PPC23-006 – Verizon Wireless/Faulk & Foster Real Estate, 10373 19 Mile Rd, Chippewa Lake, Chippewa Township; Parcel #03 032 002 500. Property is zoned C-1. Site Plan Review to allow a wireless communication tower.

Ethan Ray read the request into the record. The applicant representative, Ralph Winegarder, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- Went over petition in length.
- No other towers in area.
- Tower will serve the residents of the area and those who travel through the area.
- Benefit to the township and their sewage drain system.
- Improve the 911/emergency response and coverage zone.

Additional members in favor were area residents, Julie Austin, and Kristen Lytle and township supervisor, Brian Roels, Township Sewer Operator, Scott Rice, Fire Chief Martiny/Chippewa Township, Carl Kerns.

- Will help with emergency services, GPS locating, elderly life alert systems, and area residents in general.
- drain system has automation signals, which are hard to receive. Tower will help with response times and allow for signals to be received to locate issues quicker.

Two emails were received by staff to speak in favor of the petition.

Those present to speak against were none, however, staff received one call with concerns and questions. The caller was not present.

Approved

No one else to speak for or against the petition. Chair closed the public portion of the meeting and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

- Service is needed for the area.
- Will help emergency services.
- Tower allows for future service upgrades and other providers to share tower.
- Great need for the area.
- Received variance from Zoning Board of Appeals for location.
- No other viable location.
- Does not site within 500 feet of residential homes or development area.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Rick Hatkowski and supported by Bill Stanek to approve Site Plan Review #PPC23-006 – Verizon Wireless/Faulk & Foster Real Estate, 10373 19 Mile Rd, Chippewa Lake, Chippewa Township; Parcel #03 032 002 500. Property is zoned C-1. Site plan review to allow a wireless communication tower.

Roll Call Vote – 7 Yeas – 0 Nays, Motion approved.

3. Special Use Request #PPC23-009 – Torie & Matthew Carlson, 14006 Percy Dr, Mecosta, Martiny Township; Parcel #07 022 087 000. Property is zoned LR. Request to allow an oversized accessory structure in sq ft and height.

Chair Ray read the request into the record. The applicants, Torie and Matt Carlson were present to speak in favor of the application.

- Looking for a structure to allow for storage of personal property.

Additional members in favor were none.

Those present to speak against were neighboring property owner, Dale Vandershaf.

- Has concerns of water runoff from storm water.
- Concern water will flood the existing garage on his property.
- Already a water concern on site, afraid location of structure and water runoff will cause additional concerns.

No one else to speak for or against the petition. Chair closed the public portion of the meeting and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

- The board asked for clarification on side wall height. The applicant mentioned they are actually 13-foot side wall and there is a loft inside.
- The loft area is a concern.
- Will need an egress window in loft area along with a smoke detector.
- Storm water will be an issue. Will need gutters for water runoff.
- Water will need to be redirected to not flood neighboring properties.

Approved

- Will need soil erosion. This may help direct the water. Should ask the drain commissioner for advice or see if water can be redirected to the lake.
- Siding and trim to look like home or fit within the neighboring properties.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Gary Lambrix and supported by Bill Stanek to approve with stipulations of egress window in loft area, smoke detector in loft, siding and trim to match home, and storm water runoff directed away from neighboring properties, special use request #PPC23-009 – Torie & Matthew Carlson, 14006 Percy Dr, Mecosta, Martiny Township; Parcel #07 022 087 000. Property is zoned LR. Request to allow an oversized accessory structure in sq ft and height.

Roll Call Vote – 5 Yeas – 2 Nays, Motion approved.

4. Special Use Request #PPC23-010 – Andrea Thompson, 10808 Bayou Dr, Chippewa Lake, Chippewa Township; Parcel #03 051 004 000. Property is zoned LR. Request to allow a home-based business Air BnB.

Chair Ray read the request into the record. The applicant, Andrea Thompson, was present via Zoom to speak in favor of the application.

- Gave a bit of history of the property and how they use as summer get a way.
- Lives in Alaska and will have a management company help with proposed use if approved.
- Home will be used and treated as a residence.
- Will be cameras on site to monitor property. Alerts sent to phone via text messaging.
- Only used as Air BnB in fall and winter months.
- The management company will have a person within a 7-minute response to any issues on site.
- Has worked with management company in other property locations. They are well known and reputable.

Additional members in favor were area resident, Cliff Young.

- Additional income is always beneficial.
- Support of use.

Those present to speak against were Kristen Lytle, Township representative.

- Concern about management of property with owner living in Alaska.
- Questions on camera usage.
- All questions were addressed by the petitioner above.

No one else to speak for or against the petition. Chair closed the public portion of the meeting and opened the floor to the Board for discussion and decision.

- No foreseeable traffic impacts.
- Good location
- No view obstruction to neighboring properties.
- The petitioner did her homework and covered the basis of concerns.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Lorie Behrens and supported by Bill Routley to approve Special Use Request #PPC23-010 – Andrea Thompson, 10808 Bayou Dr, Chippewa Lake, Chippewa Township: Parcel #03 051 004 000. Property is zoned LR. Request to allow a home-based business Air BnB.

Roll Call Vote – 7 Yeas – 0 Nays Motion Approved.

V. Public Comment

Chair Ray asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to make a comment. Julie Austin spoke about the zoning ordinance on the usage of Air BnB's and property rentals as special use.

The board thanked Ms. Austin for her comments.

VI. Business Session

Old Business

1. Camping sewage disposal

- Many members expressed concerns about all areas of the county having issues with sewage disposal.
- Used Chippewa Township as an example.
- Staff explained the process of camping permit issuance.
- Spoke with Graham Hungerford, District 10 Health Department Sanitarian, about possible changes in approval process.
 - Sanitarian agreed compliance and regulating are difficult.
 - Believes there should be adequate proof of disposal of waste.
 - Septic systems may need to be required.
 - Proof of pump record to renew permit in future.
- The Board of Commissioners may need to look at hiring a Code Enforcement Officer.
- Staff explained how complaints are received, walk-ins, phone calls, referrals, social media, emails, letters to director, and happenstance.
- Staff recommended township approval along with health department before a permit for camping is issued.
- Open up days of allowed usage.
- Staff explained how violations to ordinance are delt with; 1st and 2nd letters sent to property owners, if no compliance tickets may be issued. Court handles any fines, and may give alternative in lieu of fine, could give additional time for compliance.

Approved

County may make decision to abate property and bring into compliance with cost added to property taxes as fines and fees.

- Property owner may lose property to state land bank if fines and fees are not paid.
- May need a language change in the ordinance.
- After discussion, the item has been tabled to come back at a later date.

New Business

- **None presented.**

Approval of Minutes

Bill Stanek motioned to approve the March 2, 2023 minutes, supported by Gary Lambrix and passed unanimously.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Straley / Recording Secretary

_____, Chair
Ethan Ray
Mecosta County Planning Commission

Date Approved