

MINUTES
MECOSTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Mecosta County Services Building

March 7, 2024

I. Roll Call

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

II. Chair Stanek asked if there was any person desiring to present matter(s) to the Planning Commission for the next meeting. There was no response.

III. Public Hearings

1. Site Plan Review Petition #PPC24-001 – Fischer Investments Properties LLC, 19342 Northland Dr., Big Rapids, Green Township; Parcel #01 027 017 210. Property is zoned C-2. Review for storage units on a C-2 zoned property.

The Chair read the request into the record. The applicant's representative, Abe Lapp, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- Is available for any questions the board may have.
- The plan does not have any lighting for the storage area.
- Does not allow a trash receptacle due unknow dumping of patron's personal items.
- No fencing is presented for this use.
- Will be putting in crushed gravel for the drive and roadway areas.

There were no additional members present who were in favor of the petition.

There were no members present who were against the petition.

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 issues in the conformity of the plan.
- Is a use by right, only reviewing site plan.
- Easement is recorded in the Register of Deeds and allowed as presented due to date of establishment.
- The easement is a shared driveway.
- Should use cut limestone type of product for driving and road areas for water runoff.
- Good fit to the area. Is a use by right.
- Trash receptacles are not required.

Un-Approved

- No lighting was presented therefore, not a concern to the board.
- ADA requirements are not met without a paved driveway.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Gary Lambrix and supported by Lorie Behrens to approve site plan review petition #PPC24-001, review of storage units on a C-2 zoned property. The property is located at 19342 Northland Dr., Big Rapids, Green Township; Parcel #01 027 017 210.

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

2. Site Plan Review Petition #PPC24-002 – Naaman C Huffman. 21369 30th Ave., Barryton, Fork Township; Parcel #04 016 019 500. Property is zoned C-2. Review for expansion of warehouse space for welding and fabrication business on a C-2 zoned property.

The Chair read the request into the record. The applicant's son, Michael Huffman, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- They have been in business for over 20 years.
- Available to answer any questions the board may have.
- Wants the addition to allow for storage of product that is in the way of the production areas.
- New addition will be cold storage.

No other persons were present to speak in favor or against the petition.

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.

- Clarified that the space is for warehouse – cold storage only.
- Several board members made comments about the additional space making sense and allowing for product to be stored in a manner that will keep the area clean.
- Some board members believe the drawings had some issues and could have been clearer and presented in a different manner.
- Compliance is an issue for the storage outside. The new addition should help mitigate the storage issues.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Marilyn Bradstrom and supported by Gary Lambrix to approve site plan review petition #PPC24-002, review for expansion of warehouse space for welding and fabrication business on a C-2 zoned property. The property is located at 21369 30th Ave., Barryton, Fork Township; Parcel #04 016 019 500.

Roll call vote – 7 Yeas, 0 Nays, motion approved.

Un-Approved

3. Site Plan Review Petition #PPC24-003 – Tamara LeVeque. 307 S Sheridan, Remus, Wheatland Township; Parcel #12 084 011 000. Property is zoned C-2. Review for change of use from a church to a daycare facility on a C-2 zoned property.

The Chair read the request into the record. The applicant, Tamara LeVeque, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- Licensed for up to 60 children through the State of Michigan.
- Has several other locations.
- Is able to use the park down the road as part of the playground to meet state regulations.
- Believes there is a need for a daycare facility in the area.

No other persons were present to speak in favor or against the petition.

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.

- Appears the handicap ramp is being removed – this is a concern with ADA compliance.
- Staff was asked questions on ADA compliance.
- Staff Coles clarified that ADA will be covered through building permits once plans are submitted for building alterations being conducted on the property and through the state certification.
- There is a need for the community.
- Fencing will allow for the safety of the kids and limit parking on the property.
- Parking is a concern with space being limited to neighboring property.
- Staff Coles clarified a mistake she made in the staff report; parking will be in the public parking lot to the north, not south as stated, which is owned by the township, on the roadside and at the rear, east side, of the property.
- A letter of approved use of the parking lot owned by the township could be made as a stipulation with any motion.
- good use of the structure.
- Has received state licensing.
- Some of the issues will be addressed by the state compliance and through the building permit process.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Ethan Ray and supported by Rick Hatkowski to approve with stipulations that a written letter be obtained for use of parking lot and all ADA compliance be addressed by the building department at time of building permits, for site plan review, petition #PPC24-001, review for change of use from a church to a daycare facility on a C-2 zoned property. The property is located at 307 S Sheridan, Remus, Wheatland Township; Parcel #12 084 011 000.

Un-Approved

Roll call vote – 7 Yeas, 0 Nays, motion approved with stipulations that a written statement from the township be given to staff before permits are issued and all ADA compliance be addressed through the building permit process.

4. Special Use Permit Petition #PPC24-005 – Norman Browning and David Moore, 8730 125th Ave., Stanwood, Austin Township; Parcel #10 024 004 003. Property is zoned LR. Special use to allow a duplex on a LR zoned property.

The Chair read the request into the record. The applicant, Norman Browning, was present to speak in favor of the application.

- The home will be sold with stipulations and bylaws on what is allowed.
- The home will be limited to how many vehicles and people will be allowed to occupy the home at any time.
- Each unit of the duplex will be limited to 1200 square feet for home and garage space.
- Available to answer any questions the board may have.
- Wishes there was a time for rebuttal from applicant after negative comments are made about petition or uses of property from those who are against.

No other persons were present to speak in favor of the petition.

Those present to speak against the petition were; Gene Maloziek, Kristin Malloy, Randy Bayless, & Joe McCormick.

- Understands this is a single-family residential area.
- The use is not for this area.
- The area is sparsely inhabited by homes.
- Many were opposed by a duplex being placed in the area.
- Believes this will be like a rental, uncontrollable to who lives at homes.
- Concerns to what will be allowed or what could be allowed if this use passes.
- This is a nice community and duplex will only allow less value to homes in surrounding area.
- Should only be allowed a similar use as neighboring homes.
- The remainder of the property could be developed into additional duplexes.
- Concerns with the items that may be buried in ground.
- Many have concerns for well and septic issues that could arise for neighboring property owners.
- Believes this use will break the Canadian Lakes use rule.
- Does not want to build next to a duplex home.
- Believes will reduce property values.

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.

Un-Approved

- Believe the neighboring property owners will not be satisfied with any use of this property.
- Don't see how the use would reduce property values.
- Encourage the use of the property.
- This is a better fit than the previous petition for property.
- Ownership is a good idea.
- Placing stipulations on the use when sells to new owner could help mitigate future use issues.
- Will not disrupt the surrounding area.
- Will need to have minimal road frontage issues taken care of before split is approved. This will be handled by staff.
- Big improvement to area.
- Not within the Canadian Lakes development, therefore, does not fall within their criteria for use of land.

After discussion and based on the findings of facts listed, a motion was made by Ethan Ray and supported by Marilyn Bradstrom to approve petition #PPC24-005, special use contingent on split approval by staff for a duplex home on an LR zoned property. The property is located at 8730 125th Ave., Stanwood, Austin Township; Parcel #10 024 004 003.

Roll call vote – 6 Yeas, 1 Nays, motion approved. Staff will speak with Township Assessor to make sure the road frontage is taken care of for property split.

5. Text Amendment to Zoning Ordinance – Request to amend Article III Section 3.23 Temporary and Portable Buildings, Uses, and Structures, – Language change to the ordinance to update Mecosta County's Temporary and Portable Buildings, Uses, and Structures, adding municipal sewer clearance to any temporary recreational unit.

Chair Stanek read the amendment into the record.

The board reviewed the text as presented. A motion was made by Rick Hatkowski and supported by Ethan Ray to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for approval of the text amendment to Article III Section 3.23 Temporary and Portable Buildings, Uses, and Structures adding municipal sewer clearance to any temporary recreational unit as presented.

Roll Call Vote – 7 yeas – 0 Nays, motion passed.

6. Text Amendment to Zoning Ordinance – Request to amend Article II Section 2.18 C-2 General Commercial District – Ordinance to update Mecosta County's C-2 General Commercial District, language change to include manufactured home sales as a use by right.

Chair Stanek read the amendment into the record.

The board reviewed the text as presented. A motion was made by Bill Routley and supported by Gary Lambrix to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for approval of the text amendment to Article II, Section 2.18 C-2 General Commercial District to add manufactured home sales as a use by right.

Roll Call Vote – 7 yeas – 0 Nays, motion passed.

IV. Public Comment

The chair asked if there was anyone who wished to address the board on any subject not on this agenda. There were several members who wished to make comment;

- Jason Kruse – presented staff with a letter to be handed out to the board. Discussed the letter content.
- Nancy Neve – discussed fentanyl and communism.
- Gloria Renner – tried to give her time to another member but is not allowed to per the bylaws of this Planning Commission. She is not for Gotion.
- Toyna Wright – raised her voice to the board about not being for Gotion and mentioned Green Township efforts.
- Lori Brock – made comment on corruption and that Gotion needs to be more open on their information presented to the public.
- John Holsworth – Discussed Green Township Planning board and the area of the Silver Dome.
- Brent Mason – Spoke on the new storage unit and not needing another in the area of Northland Drive.

V. Public Matters

Old Business

1. Short Term Rentals discussion

- Staff did not present new information to the board. Did not have ready due to busyness of the office and quantity of blight complaints.
- Will bring additional information to next meeting.
- Board reviewed some of the previous concerns such as addition to AG and AF
- Staff received interest from a community member to do a short-term rental on an AG zoned property and a lavender farm. This will want to be considered and looked at to be included as an area for allowance.
- Will need to present separate categories for review.
- This category should not go under home occupation.
- Short-term rentals will be in a new category within the zoning ordinance. Staff will make it a new heading within Article III as Section 3.52.
- For definition, should have statement of “for a charge, barter or trade”.
- May be possible to include as Special Use in certain districts.

New Business

1. PA116 #339 Fodor Farms LLC – 375 Truman Rd. Barryton
 - Board reviewed the petition to add the property to the Farmland Preservation
 - The board believes the property meets the requirements.

After discussion and based on findings of facts as presented a motion was made by Marilyn Bradstrom and supported by Rick Hatkowski to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for approval of the Farmland preservation for PA116 application #339. The property is located at 375 Truman Rd, Barryton, Fork Township.

2. Staff presented that a member of the community wishes to put in cabins along Muskegon River area south of Paris. The board recommends that the individual present a petition to the board for consideration.
3. Staff asked for clarification of the board’s duties in making decisions on height requirements for special use oversized accessory structures.
 - The board stated they do make those decisions and have in the past.
 - Only refer to the ZBA if there is an issue or they (PC Board) deny the request.
 - Staff agrees and will relay the discussion to a future applicant.

Approval of Minutes

Ethan Ray motioned to approve the February 4, 2024, minutes with one correction to the position Ethan Ray was appointed to, supported by Gary Lambrix, and passed unanimously. Corrected minutes will be reposted on the website.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Straley / Recording Secretary

_____, Chair
Bill Stanek
Mecosta County Planning Commission

Date Approved