

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN
PLANNING COMMISSION - VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM
February 24, 2021
MINUTES**

Prior to the start of the meeting, the public was given instructions on how to take part in the meeting.

Chairperson Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Franzoi, Jahr, Cullin, Kelley, Atchinson, Budd and Thompson.

Excused: None.

Staff: Director Power, Director Best and Secretary Harman.

Planning Representatives: McKenna Associate, Vidya Krishnan.

Applicant(s) in Attendance: Jim Jacobs on behalf of Neapco.

Audience: Three (3).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion Jahr, Budd second to approve the agenda of February 24, 2021 as presented.

Roll Call:

Yeas: Cullin, Kelley, Atchinson, Budd, Jahr, Franzoi and Thompson.

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion Kelley, Jahr second to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 10, 2021 as presented.

Roll Call:

Yeas: Budd, Atchinson, Kelley, Cullin, Jahr, Franzoi and Thompson.

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEM #1: DISCUSSION: LOT COVERAGE ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS THAT WOULD REVISE THE DEFINITIONS OF LOT COVERAGE UNDER SECTION 2.102 (DEFINITIONS) AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO LOT COVERAGE UNDER SECTION 4.103 (FOOTNOTES TO SCHEDULE OF - REGULATIONS) OF THE VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE IN ORDER

TO RELAX LOT COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO UNENCLOSED ROOFED STRUCTURES.

Director Power gave the presentation. The Van Buren Township Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) requested a postponement of their decision to allow Neapco Drivelines to propose up to +/- 35.9% of their parcel to be covered by roofed structures, contrary to a 35% lot coverage limit in the M-1, light industrial zoning district. The BZA requested the applicant seek an appropriate course of action through the Planning Commission to review and consider an alternative remedy for the issue. The intent of the lot coverage limits in the Van Buren Township Zoning Ordinance is to limit the over-building of sites, with respect to preservation of open space, stormwater runoff, and overall use intensity. The Planning Commission was asked to consider a Zoning Ordinance text amendment which maintains a mechanism for avoiding over-building of sites while providing a reasonable means of covering existing impervious areas that have been authorized through lawful means by unenclosed roofed structures. The Township Principal Planner has researched how comparable communities in the region address this issue and has prepared recommendations.

Vidya Krishnan of McKenna Associates presented her review letter dated 2-19-21 and discussed her review of zoning ordinance regulations from comparable communities, the communities comparable by size and large swaths of industrial area. The comparable communities included Lyon Township, Canton Township, Plymouth Township and Northville Township. McKenna Associates offered the following possible solutions which will support industrial developments, while meeting the intent of the Ordinance and sound planning principles:

- Revise the definition of lot coverage in Section 2.02 to include: "For industrially zoned parcels, lot coverage shall not include unenclosed roofed structures that provide shelter over existing paved surfaces";
- Add a footnote to the schedule of regulations for industrial districts detailing that unenclosed covered roof structures on existing impervious surface areas shall not exceed 10% of total lot area up to a maximum of 20,000 square feet.

Commissioners provided the following questions and comments:

1. Commissioner liked the idea of the amendment to help address some of the issues in industrial zoned areas.
2. Commissioner inquired if the amendment will allow for a parking garage with solar panels, possibly a shelter of an existing paved surface area with a mini solar farm to help run the company. Vidya Krishnan and Director Power informed the Commission that solar panels could be a possibility and that any roofed structure that is otherwise permitted would be able to capture this additional credit.
3. Commissioner concerned the proposal seems like it is adding a limitation with the footnote on the area that could be constructed with roofing. Vidya Krisnan informed that the intent of the footnote is to be in addition to the 35% lot coverage, adding up to 10% of the total lot area up to a maximum of 20,000 square feet.
4. Commissioner liked the comment on the solar panel and roof coverings and identified that changes may allow for more than just a waiver for industrial outdoor storage area

coverage, it may allow for a wider set of changes to the industrial code and merits further discussion.

5. Commissioner concerned that the proposed changes may open up additional unintended consequences. Vidya Krishnan mentioned possibly adding a clarification to specify the amendment is for industrially zoned parcels and lot coverage shall not include unenclosed roof structures that provide shelter over existing paved surfaced approved for outdoor storage.
6. Commissioner inquired about green roofs for additional coverage and whether or not they would be allowed? Director Power informed that green roofs are an innovative solution to stormwater, but in the interest of enforceability and overall building intensity they would still be lumped in with roofs. Vidya Krishnan added that green roofs are green building initiatives and language could be added to cover them.

Director Power mentioned that the Neapco project and vast majority of other projects where this standard is going to be reviewed on industrial sites, will still need to come before the Planning Commission for site plan review.

Jim Jacobs the architect for Neapco thanked the Planning Commissioner for their review. The language that is presented will address Neapco's needs and they are in support of the text amendment.

Commissioner asked for clarification on the text amendment, does this only take place on approved outdoor storage areas in industrial zoning. Yes, the ordinance amendment is only for industrially zoned parcels. Vidya Krishnan will change the text amendment to clarify that 10% of the up to 20,000 sq. ft. is above the 35% lot coverage already allowed and only for approved outdoor storage areas and will bring the revised text amendment back to the Commission for review.

Director Power explained the review process for the text amendment and asked the Planning commission to consider having the Township Principle Planner make the discussed changes to the text amendment and schedule a public hearing.

Motion Kelley, Cullin second to schedule a public hearing for the lot coverage zoning ordinance text amendment on March 24, 2021.

Roll Call:

Yeas: Budd, Atchinson, Kelley, Cullin, Jahr, Franzoi and Thompson.

Nays: None.

Absent: None.

Motion Carried.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Director Power reminded the Commission of upcoming risk management training through the Michigan Planning Association on March 9, 2021. The meeting is the same night as the

Recreation Committee, which is being recorded and will be available on the Township website. The Michigan Association of Planning is also recording all of their workshops. There is also upcoming site plan review training on March 10th and 11th and a training series on master planning on March 30th and 31st.

Commissioner asked for an update on housing developments within the Township including the Huron River Drive property and lakefront properties. Director Power informed that there is no formal update for the lakefront development on Huron River Drive, there currently is a pending conditional rezoning application at this time. The Victoria Estates condos are in phase II of construction with permits going out, the third phase of development for Cobblestone Creek has not picked up yet. There have been a lot of single family home permits, with more single family dwelling permits issued in 2020 than 2019 and there are more permits processed this year than at the same time last year.

Commissioner asked for an update on senior living developments in the Township. Director Power informed that the Hampton Manor development on Morton Taylor Road, the building permit application is concurrent with the final site plan application, they are currently awaiting final Wayne County engineering approval. The Clover Development project on Belleville Road had interpretation granted by the BZA for usable floor area for dwelling unit requirements, they are currently working on resubmitting their design for review.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion Atchinson, Jahr second to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Harman
Recording Secretary