

THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting, January 22, 2024

1. Call to Order:

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tom Kilgore 7:00 p.m. at Thornapple Township located at 200 E. Main St. Middleville, MI 49333.
- b. Present: Linda Gasper, Tom Kilgore, Sandra Rairigh, Bryan Finkbeiner, Elaine Denton, Liz Hansson, and Craig Wandrie. Also Present: Phil Gensterblum, Cindy Ordway, Mike VanLaan, Diana VanLaan, and Jordan Terrell.

2. Approval of Agenda:

MOTION by Gasper **SUPPORT** by Finkbeiner to approve the agenda as presented.
MOTION CARRIED with 7 yes voice votes.

3. Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Rairigh **SUPPORT** by Finkbeiner to approve the Minutes from the November 27, 2023, Meeting Minutes as presented. **MOTION CARRIED** with 7 yes voice votes.

4. Citizen Comments: None

5. Public Hearings:

- a. Special Use #165 – 6476 Patterson Rd.- Accessory building closer to the road than the house.
 - i. Staff Introduction – Gensterblum explained that VanLaan’s would like to build an accessory building on their property but there is a high-tension power line running east and west through the middle of the property. There is some space to the north of the property they plan to use for animal crops. There is a portion of wooded property behind their house that slopes down. They feel the proposed location in front of the home is the most logical place.
 - ii. Applicant Presentation – Included in the board packet.
 - iii. Public Comments – None.

PUBLIC HEARING: Open: 7:03 P.M. No Comments. Closed: 7:03 P.M.
 - iv. Commission Questions and Deliberations – Rairigh asked if any neighbors had concerns or questions. Gensterblum said no, he was not contacted. Kilgore said he drove by the property and there is a line of trees which act as a screen, so the property isn’t visible. Denton asked if there are neighbors next door. Gensterblum said there is a trail to the north and Mr. VanLaan said that his sister-in-law lives directly to the south. Mr. VanLaan said the neighbor who lives behind them is in favor of the location. Finkbeiner feels the proposed location makes sense. Gasper asked what the building would look like in relation to the

house. They plan to use LP siding in tan or black. The house has black and tan trim so that they will complement each other.

MOTION by Finkbeiner, **SUPPORT** by Rairigh to approve Special Use #165 6476 Patterson Rd.- Accessory building closer to the road than the house.

Roll Call Vote: Finkbeiner: yes, Denton: yes, Gasper: yes, Hansson: yes, Kilgore: yes, Rairigh: yes, Wandrie: yes. **MOTION CARRIED** with 7 yes voice votes.

b. Special Use #166 - 3689 Havens Way Ct. – Accessory building closer to the road than the house.

- i. Staff Introduction – Gensterblum explained that the Terrell’s would like to build an accessory building in the front/side yard. They have some limitations as to where they can build because their drain field is located to the north of the house. There is also a slope down to the south side behind the home so it couldn’t be placed there. There is also a well back there. They would like to build it in the front south side yard 12.5 feet from the property line. The minimum side yard is 10 feet so well within the limit. The proposed location is the only logical location.
- ii. Applicant Presentation – Included in the board packet. Mr. Terrell also stated they plan to build the exterior to match their house’s style. There will be shaker style siding in the pitch of the garage and the windows will be trimmed to match the house. They might do wainscoting as well in metal to make it look a little nicer. They recently started a business with a food truck/trailer which is why they want to build the accessory building. The neighbor said he understands wanting to store it inside.
- v. Public Comments - None.
PUBLIC HEARING: Open: 7:13 P.M. No Comments. Closed: 7:13 P.M.
- iii. Commission Questions and Deliberations – Finkbeiner agreed that the location is the only place to build, based on the property. This is the second homeowner in the area who has had this request. The Koning also had this situation. Gasper asked about the purpose of the building and if it was for business. Mr. Terrell answered that there would be no business out of the location but would be strictly for storage.

MOTION by Finkbeiner, **SUPPORT** by Rairigh to approve Special Use #166 - 3689 Havens Way Ct. – Accessory building closer to the road than the house.

Roll Call Vote: Finkbeiner: yes, Denton: yes, Gasper: yes, Hansson: yes, Kilgore: yes, Rairigh: yes, Wandrie: yes. **MOTION CARRIED** with 7 yes voice votes.

6. New Business:

- a. Election of Officers
 - i. Chair: Tom Kilgore
 - ii. Vice-chair: Linda Gasper
 - iii. Secretary: Sandy Rairigh

MOTION by Denton, **SUPPORT** by Hansson to keep the current slate of officers for another year (Chair: Kilgore, Vice-chair: Gasper, Secretary: Rairigh). **MOTION CARRIED** with 7 yes voice votes.

- b. Meeting Schedule for 2024 – Gensterblum explained that he would like to keep meetings on the fourth Monday of each month except for February 26, due to the election and May 27, due to Memorial Day and December 23, due to Christmas. There was some discussion as to whether February 19 would work as an alternative, but it was decided the best option would be to delay until March if possible. The May meeting will be moved to May 20 and the December meeting will be moved to December 16 if necessary.

MOTION by Gasper, **SUPPORT** by Finkbeiner to approve the 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule as amended with no February meeting, May 20 instead of May 27, and December 16 instead of December 23, with all other meetings to be held the fourth Monday of each month.

7. Unfinished Business: Discussion of Williams & Works review of Peace Church project. Kilgore explained there were only two items brought up, number of trees and height of light poles. Gensterblum said they do have the required number of canopy trees in and around the parking area. It's just that some of the islands have light poles rather than trees. Kilgore said the Thornapple Township ordinance said the light poles maximum is 15 feet where it abuts to residential zoning. However, Kilgore consulted with the Caledonia Township Zoning Administrator who explained that all new LED meet the dark sky requirement. Also, for better lighting dispersal in parking lots, 20 feet is a better height. Kilgore recommends the Ordinance Committee review and modify the current ordinance because it was written before LED lighting had become the standard. Kilgore feels the ordinance could be amended before Peace Church installs the light poles. Rairigh stated that the fire chief had some recommendations. Gensterblum said the Fire Chief wanted to be sure the ladder fire truck from Caledonia Township could make the turn into the lot from M-37. The Chief also asked whether there will be a sprinkler system installed. Also, he asked about the possibility of another set of double doors on the southeast side. Kilgore and Gensterblum both agreed these last two would be recommendations and not requirements. Todd Boerman had sent an email to Gensterblum and Todd Stubbe to confirm the containment of the flow of rainwater in the final site plan. Todd Stubbe did confirm that the final plan addresses this matter.

8. Committee Reports:

- a. Ordinance Committee – Kilgore said he would work on scheduling a meeting to work on the lighting ordinance. Also, they plan on looking at food trucks and special land use ordinances.
- b. Site Plan Committee – None.
- c. Joint Planning Committee – None.

9. Administrator's Report:

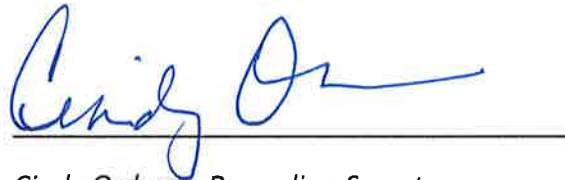
- a. Zoning - There are two Special Land Use permit requests in process. The first is the one discussed earlier regarding home-based business for reptile feed and the second one is regarding a possible land division.
- b. Code Enforcement Report - Gensterblum attempted to approach a home, but they had dogs out, so he was unsuccessful. The Granger issue was also discussed.
- c. Commissioner Comments: Commissioner discussed the importance of an ordinance audit and how it could be accomplished within the budgetary constraints.

10. Adjournment:

MOTION by Gasper, **SUPPORT** by Denton, to adjourn at 7:51 p.m., **MOTION CARRIED** with 7 yes voice votes.



Sandra Rairigh, Secretary



Cindy Ordway, Recording Secretary

Approved 3/25/2024