

ALAMO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
HELD AT  
ALAMO FIRE BARN  
7840 N. 6<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
KALAMAZOO, MI 49009  
May 3, 2016

**Meeting Called to Order:** Chairman Patrick Studabaker called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00PM.

**Roll Call of Commissioners:** Chairman Patrick Studabaker, Vice Chair Pauline Keiser, Commissioner Dick Bennett, Commissioner John Kennedy, Commissioner Don Porter, Commissioner David Veenstra, and Secretary Belden Smith. All present.

**Others Present:** Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kalkman.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Dick Bennett motioned to approve the minutes. John Kennedy supported the motion. The motion was carried without objection.

**CITIZEN MEETING REQUEST**

**A. Mr. Henry Kalkman** asked the Commission for an extension of time to complete contouring of an excavated hill side behind his shop at J. & K. Machining (5955 West D Avenue) required as a condition of approval of a Site Plan provisionally approved in June of 2014. The resulting profile is to achieve a one foot rise to a three foot run (1:3) slope. After some discussion of the intent of the provision - that is, to prevent a potentially hazardous collapse of the excavated face of the hillside - and after discussion of the unlikely reality of such an event, it was **moved by D. Bennett** to give J&K an additional two (2) years to remove dirt and, if not completed by that time, to come back to the Planning Commission with a plan. (Note that the motion explicitly omitted the 1:3 slope requirement.) **Supported by P. Studabaker** the motion **failed on a roll call vote. The commissioners voted as follows**

B. Smith	No
D. Porter	No
D. Bennett	Yes
P. Keiser	No
P. Studabaker	Yes
J. Kennedy	No
D. Veenstra	No

**Motion was then made by P. Keiser** to extent the original condition, including the 1:3 final slope requirement, with work to be completed by May 2018. **Supported by D. Bennett** the motion **passed on a roll call vote. The commissioners voted as follows.**

D. Veenstra	Yes
J. Kennedy	Yes
P. Keiser	Yes
P. Studabaker	Yes
D. Bennett	Yes
D. Porter	Yes
B. Smith	No

No fee was charged for this reconsideration of Site Plan Approval.

**B. Mr. Brad Gohr**, regarding a replacement sign at the campground on C Avenue. Neither Mr. Gohr nor any other representative from the campground or Outdoor Adventures Inc. were present at the meeting and therefore the issue was tabled.

Discussion turned to sign provisions in general and the question of whether there has been any progress on a model ordinance from the Michigan Townships Association or the Michigan State University Extension service or any other authoritative source. Chair Studabaker will ask Attorney Kaufman.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**A, Section 8.1 - Parking of Motor Vehicles, discussion**

There having been no communication in the last month between the Planning Commission and Attorney Kaufman, questions raised at last months meeting regarding her interpretation of a certain paragraph have not been asked yet. Chair Studabaker will ask her about Section 8.1 (4) (m) "Parking facilities for any one of the above uses shall not be considered as providing the required parking facilities for any other use." He will also ask what, if any regulatory authority, townships have over local school districts, particularly in regards to Site Plan Review and conditioning.

**B. Section 5.9 - C-2 District - Special Use (c), discussion**

"(c) Manufacturing, compounding, assembling, or treatment of articles or merchandise, where all work is carried on within an enclosed building, and where any outdoor storage is limited to not more than ten (10%) per cent of the lot area and is maintained within the rear yard area, and which does not emanate noise, vibration, odor, smoke, liquid wastes, or light to such an extent as to be objectionable to surrounding properties. "

Questions to the Township from a potential buyer of Commercially Zoned property (5675 West D Avenue) raised the issue of whether outdoor storage could include storage (parking) of excavating equipment, and whether this limitation might be eased by ordinance amendment or by a Variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals, to allow for more than the current 10%

**A motion to remove the ten percent (10%) limitation altogether from Section 5.9, Special Exception Uses (c) was made by P. Studabaker and seconded by J. Kennedy.**

After some discussion about whether to drop the "within the rear yard area" language and then about compatibility with permitted uses in the C-2 district, **the motion was defeated on a roll call vote. The commissioners voted as follows**

P. Studabaker	Yes
D. Bennett	Yes
P. Keiser	No
J. Kennedy	Yes
D. Porter	No
B. Smith	No
D. Veenstra	No

**C. The search for documentation justifying Zoning Ordinance provisions;** Three or more Commissioners (working separately) continue to sort, file and archive old documents, accumulated in the storage room, in part to better prepare the Township to address requests resulting from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); and in part for our own understanding of the history of the Zoning Ordinance in particular, of other township ordinances, and the history of governance here in Alamo in general.

**D. Master Plan Update:** The last Master Plan Update was done in 2013, so the next one is not due until 2018 at the earliest. This will push work on the next update back into budget year 2017. A question remains for next meeting as to whether the five-year interval for Master Plan Review is actually mandated by State Statute or merely suggested as a good practice.

**New Business and Commissioner Comments:**

Commissioner and Town Board Liaison J. Kennedy brought up the topic of blight in the township and suggested that the Commission examine Ordinance 41-M, known and referred to as the Alamo Township Litter Ordinance. He expects that there will be more focus on this issue in the near future.

**Citizen Comments:** There were no citizens other than Planning Commissioners remaining by this segment of the meeting.

**Adjourn:** Patrick Studabaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pauline Keiser supported the motion. The motion was carried without objection. The meeting ended by 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Belden Smith, Secretary

DRAFT