

ALAMO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD AT
THE ALAMO TOWNSHIP HALL
7901 N. 6TH ST.
KALAMAZOO, MI 49009
JUNE 7, 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: Former Planning Commission Chairperson Al Sweitzer, Outdoor Adventures Inc. representative Rob Sieckmann, Township Supervisor Tony Hyet

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Patrick Studabaker motioned to approve the minutes with one spelling correction. Pauline Keiser supported the motion. The motion was carried without objection.

CITIZEN MEETING REQUEST

Outdoor Adventures Inc.

Section 8.9 - Special Exceptions, part (10) which applies to Campgrounds, Paragraph (i) of the Alamo Township Zoning Ordinance, states that "The Township Planning Commission may impose conditions on any signage seen from adjacent properties or a public road." With respect for this provision the new owners of a commercial campground in the eight thousand block of C Avenue, Township Section 9, have sent their representative, Mr. Rob Sieckmann to discuss and seek approval for a new sign, as a revision of, and amendment to the Special Exception Use Permit within the Limited Development District that they operate under in Alamo Township. Mr. Sieckmann presented a graphic representation of their proposed sign as well as copies of color photographs of similar signs at two other of their eight locations around the State. Mr. Sieckmann said that the proposed sign on C Avenue would most closely resemble the sign for the Mt. Peasant resort. P. Keiser provided fellow Commissioners with measurements and observations she made earlier at the site, and compared the proposed sign to the existing sign left by former owners of the campground. B. Smith questioned the manner of illumination of the proposed sign, and asserted that in previous considerations of signs, the Township preferred no illumination of signs in the non-business districts, and that where signs are illuminated they be illuminated from above in order to minimize light pollution.

P. Keiser made a motion to accept the proposed twelve and one half (12.5) square foot additional graphic area (bringing the total allowed to forty-seven and one half (47.5) square feet of graphic area); to require the sign setback to be thirty-five (35) feet from the center of C Avenue; and to require that any illumination be from above. **The Motion was seconded by B. Smith.** In discussion, commissioners and Mr. Sieckmann agreed to separate the illumination issue from the dimensional issues, pending further investigation. Mr. Sieckmann said he would attend the July Planning Commission meeting with a more considered proposal regarding illumination. The agreed upon **revised motion then was** to accept the proposed twelve and one half (12.5) square foot additional graphic area (bringing the total allowed to forty-seven and one half (47.5) square feet of graphic area); to require the sign setback to be thirty-five (35) feet from the center of C Avenue. **The motion was carried on a voice vote without opposition.**

OLD BUSINESS:

A, Discussion of items of May 17, 2016 Catherine Kaufman email

1. Attorney Kaufman advised the Commission, through the May 17 (and the follow up June 6) email to Chairman Studabaker (copy available on file, labeled email2016June-01) that she will be participating in an effort by the Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys to draft a model sign ordinance.

2. Regarding Section 8.1 - Parking of Motor Vehicles: (4) Minimum Required Parking Spaces, (k) Schools; which states "Private or Public Elementary and Junior High Schools - One parking space for each employee normally engaged in or about the building or grounds.

Senior High Schools and Institutions of Higher Learning - One parking space for each employee normally engaged in or about the building or grounds and one additional space for each five students enrolled in the institution."

Attorney Kaufman advised Chair Studabaker "The Township generally does not have the authority to regulate/require site plan review or specific parking standards for public elementary, public middle or public high schools under the authority of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

P. Studabaker then made the motion to recommend removal of the entire paragraph (k) from Section 8.1(4) However, the motion failed for lack of a second.

B. Smith then moved to simply remove the word "Public" from the above cited language. **The motion was seconded by P. Studabaker and was passed on a voice vote without opposition.**

3. Regarding Section 8.1 - Parking of Motor Vehicles: (4) Minimum Required Parking Spaces, (m) which states "Parking facilities for any one of the above uses shall not be considered as providing the required parking facilities for any other use." Attorney Kaufman advised Chairman Studabaker "Section 8.14 (sic) [8.1(4)] (m) means that if you have 2 uses on one site (ie., restaurant and separate store) parking must be calculated for each use. Total parking required on site would be the total of the requirements for each use on site."

In discussion It was noted that Attorney Kaufman went on to say "The PC may want to consider allowing some sharing of parking, especially when 2 uses share the same site (ie., daycare center during the week, church services on Sunday)." And, in an earlier communication from Consultant Lee Adams (Regional Director of the Southcentral Michigan Planning Council. (Labeled DOC2016Feb-01 – see copy on file)) he also said "This may have the unintended consequence of forcing commercial or industrial business to construct larger parking lots than needed."

P. Studabaker then made the motion to recommend removal of the entire paragraph (m) from Section 8.1(4)

P. Keiser seconded the motion and the motion was passed on a voice vote without opposition.

New Business

A. Brode Zoning Compliance Application

This agenda item is being competently handled by the building department. The completed application form was distributed to commissioners for their general information only.

B. Blight Ordinance Discussion

Commissioners and meeting attendees engaged in an informal and wide ranging discussion of Township issues centering on a few properties where items have collected in outdoor accumulations which detract from both the value and the enjoyment of neighboring property, and present a hazard to health, safety and welfare of the general community. Although it was the consensus in the room that ordinance provisions and regulation alone will do little to address what is perceived to be the underlying problem of poverty, insecurity and hoarding, never the less having regulations "on the books" which are contemporary with current case law and coordinated with surrounding communities must be accomplished in the overall effort to address the issue. Commissioners are to discover and

study the regulatory provisions of neighboring communities, and gather input for further discussion and analysis where ever possible before the July meeting.

Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Smith took the opportunity to alert Supervisor Hyet as well as fellow commissioners to the fact that language, adopted in August of 2003 as a part of amending Ordinance 46-51 appears to be missing from the version of the Zoning Ordinance which appears on the Township web site.

Commissioner Bennett expressed his appreciation to Commissioners Kennedy and Keiser for their individual voluntary efforts on behalf of the community on recent projects beyond the Planning Commission. The extent of volunteerism so often determines the success of a small community.

Commissioner and Town Board Liaison J. Kennedy, as the result of the loss of a longtime friend in a recent tragic accident, reminded all to be careful in any activity involving chain saws.

Citizen Comments: There were no citizen comments

Adjourn: Patrick Studabaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Belden Smith supported the motion. The motion was carried without objection. The meeting ended by 8:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Belden Smith, Secretary

DRAFT