

BLAIR TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED

Minutes

May 17, 2017

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Heim called to order the meeting of the Blair Township Planning Commission at 6:00 pm.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

C. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Dennis Fitzpatrick, George Lombard, Lori Trailer, and Jerry Heim, Chairman, Andy Nickerson, Bob Boeve

Members Excused: Lori LaBonte

Staff Present: Lindsey Wolf, Zoning Administrator, and Lisa Guerrieri, Acting Recording Secretary

Approximately 30 guests in attendance.

D. PUBLIC INPUT

Chairman Heim stated the rules for public input. Resident of Sawyer rd. Linda Redli stated speeding on this road has caused several accidents. Asked the Commission to post a speed limit sign. Chairman Heim stated that is GT Road Commission issue and this Board does not have the authority to post speed limit signs.

E. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Fitzpatrick, supported by Lombard to approve the Agenda. 6 Ayes / 0 Nays, **Approved**

F. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None stated.

G. MINUTES

The following changes/corrections to the April 19, 2017 were noted:

page #2 under New Business in motion to deny – to add the stated reasons under item #1

1. That the proposed use will not be detrimental to the adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood, including properties located in adjacent municipalities.

development would be detrimental to surrounding areas due to the amount of traffic and concern over the amount of septic systems due to the amount of lots in a concentrated area.

Additionally, the roll call vote was recorded incorrectly and should read as follows:

Yea: Lombard, Trailer, LaBonte, Fitzpatrick,

Nay: Boeve, Nickerson, Heim,

Motion passed.

Motion by Lombard, supported by Nickerson to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2017 Blair Township Planning Commission meeting as amended. 6 Ayes / 0 Nays Approved

H. CORRESPONDENCE

The Zoning Administrator stated several letters of correspondence had been submitted regarding both items on the agenda, all were opposed to the items with the exception of David Rowe, the developers attorney. (see attached list) In addition there was a letter stating there was a large amount of trash and junk on Narrow dr.

I. PRESENTATIONS

None.

J. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

K. NEW BUSINESS

1.) Site Plan Review 17-05-01 04-02 Wistrand Woods Site Condominium:

Chairman Heim outlined the process being, presentation by the applicant followed by presentation from staff, commissioner questions, public comment, applicant rebuttal, if necessary, concluding with action.

Bill Crain of Crain Engineering ~~gave a presentation outlining the proposed amendment by the applicant,~~ **presented the site plan on behalf of** Eastwood Custom Homes for 281 unit Site Condominium. Stick built single family homes with private septic systems and private roads to be maintained by the Condominium association with four access points, two off of Blair Townhall Rd and two off of Sawyer rd. Stormwater control is to be managed with ditch systems along the interior private roads. Crain indicated that necessary review/approvals had been received from the Health Department, Soil Erosion, Road Commission and Fire and noted the extension of the water main. The request is for approval of the entire 281 unit development, with the first phase consisting of 38 units in the Northwest area of the property.

Discussion: Lombard questioned deed for each unit, and Trailer questioned if homes were stick built. Crain answered yes to both. Board members discussed the lack of open space and concerns over possible septic system issues, lot size and large increase in traffic.

Administrator Wolf gave verbal report, roads met the Blair ordinance standards and the most recently submitted site plan shows corrected roads. Wolf then gave the steps for the land use permit process stating each unit would require Health dept., Twp water, and soil erosion permits before issuance.

Trailer discussed correspondence, Heim summarized correspondence, all against, and stated a letter from applicant's attorney was included in the correspondence regarding the Commission Site Plan review process and referred to items in the ordinance under Section 6 and stated the site plan could be approved by the zoning administrator. Administrator Wolf stated historically the review process for Site Condominiums has been at the Planning Commission level.

Public Input was heard;

*Glenn Bennetts of Sawyer rd – barrier with trees along Blair Townhall rd and Sawyer rd to be left- Crain stated some trees will have to be removed for road and home construction. Bennetts questioned on water system and taxes, will existing homes be required to connect to water system, Crain explained the water ordinance requirements and taxes of existing homes should not increase due to development.

*Kevin Chouinard of Blair Townhall rd. asked of lot and home size, Crain stated lots would be between 0.20 and 0.50 acres with homes ranging from 1200 to 1500 square feet depending on layout. Chouinard also commented on lack of open space and added traffic.

*Rick Barck of Manorwood dr. asked on staff recommendations and standards for layout of homes, questioning if homes were pre-purchased or all spec homes. Also stated concerns over concentration of septic systems.

*Rich Lorenz of Sawyer rd questioned if each unit has to take care of their property and the association dues for roads, lights coming from access points coming out shining into opposite homes, heavy traffic going north and south a big issue.

*Donna Lovell of Sawyer rd asked if they will be bringing natural gas to area or to be propane or electric – Crain stated all utilities will be underground.

*Audience statements/questions as to exact location of development and crime and safety as a factor with the addition of large increase of homes/people.

*Diane Avery stated retired up north for the natural beauty and open spaces, trees and wildlife, to give some thought to neighbors in regards to leaving trees for wildlife and beauty.

*Brian Barbary of Sawyer rd agrees with comments.

Commissioner Lombard explained the lack of lot size regulation in ordinance is a problem and wished we had lot size requirements.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick commented on trees as a natural barrier and lights of traffic exiting roads should not be shining into opposite homes.

Administrator Wolf stated concern over lack of lot size regulations in ordinance, thanked audience for input. She also stated could not contact Twp Attorney and recommends tabling item until clarification is received from attorney.

Motion by Lombard seconded by Trailer to table case #17-05-01– ~~04-02~~ until contact is made with Twp attorney for clarification on Site Plan Review process.

Further discussion was had among Commissioners regarding Master Plan, affordable housing and concerns of lot sizes and quality of life, and the need to find a reasonable common ground between the two. A meeting between builders/developers and the Boards was suggested. Heim again read letter from developers attorney stating approval can be made by the administrator, Administrator Wolf cited section 21 of the ordinance applying to Site Condominiums.

Roll call vote.

Yea: Lombard, Trailer, Boeve, Nickerson, Fitzpatrick

Nay: Heim

5-Ayes /1-Nay Motion passed. To table SPR 17-05-01 04-02 to seek advice from Twp Attorney, will be on next month as Unfinished Business.

2.) Public Hearing 104-05-17-01 Rezoning #28-02-017-001-00 CM to RN

Chairman Heim cited section 27.01 of the ordinance and gave the rules for public input.

Chairman Heim opened the hearing at 7:10 pm

Applicant Murray presented. 10 acre parcel south side of Vance rd. currently zoned CM commercial and request to be rezoned to RN residential. Property is surrounded by residential to the North and West, with commercial to the East, self-storage units, and to the South. Murray spoke with realtors and best use of the land would be residential, speaking with neighbors they did not want to see more storage units on property. Murray has lived on property for 27 years and desires to keep the community and neighborhood feel of area. He has been working with engineer Harry Luzius on developing a site condominium for rental homes, all which would remain under Murray's possession and be rented monthly. Property has been zoned commercial since 1995. He would build stick built homes with private road and on-site septic systems, connecting to the municipal water system. Murray has a vision of affordable and nice rentals for young professionals, citing open space possible in the Consumers power line easement and a walking path.

Engineer Luzius stated tentative approval from the GT Road Comm. For a private road on East side of property, citing site distance is an issue, but RC stated they would try to work with Murray and the possibility of a 3 lane entrance.

Administrator Wolf cited the Zoning Act 184 of 1934 and the 2006 MI Zoning Enabling Act and the steps that need to be followed for a rezoning that conflicts with the future land use map in the current Master Plan. The Act states that advice of Twp legal counsel is strongly suggested.

Rezoning of Property: Michigan Zoning Enabling Act

If proposed rezoning is inconsistent with Township land use plan, consideration of amendment of land use plan may be necessary before or at the same time as approval of the requested rezoning, and any such proposed amendment of land use plan must be processed in accordance with applicable legal requirements (would require a public hearing and notice to the other townships).

Consult Township Attorney

Board Discussion – Road Comm and site distance is an issue and questioned the applicant on RC approval. Additionally stating that no development could happen until this approval is given. Future Land Use map in current Master Plan shows property as zoned CM Commercial.

Administrator Wolf stated could not contact attorney and not sure if Board could act on hearing until future land use map is amended, also stated both issues could be acted upon at next meeting concurrently.

Public Input is heard:

*Tom Krause of Hearthside stated in support, he is ready to put in medium sized storage units on property and thinks this would be a good transition from commercial to medium density residential.

*Kyle Kobylski of Cumberland dr. in support commenting on uses allowed in the ordinance under commercial and residential, and this would be preferred.

*Mason Allard of Woodcock Ln spoke against, does not feel duplexes would suit area and cutting the trees would give line of site to porn shop and run down fire building. Wants to see a plan. Also stating applicant could do a “bait and switch” trees and wildlife a big draw to area.

Administrator Wolf cited the ordinance requires a buffer be between commercial and residential zoning.

*Gus Spriet of Woodcock Ln agreed with previous comments.

* Jenna and Chad North stated against, agree with Allard and not knowing what applicant intends, citing trees and wildlife important to area and quality of life and sense of community.

*Tom Krause stated community should get together and purchase Murray's property for park.

Applicant Murray stated he does not intend to rape and pillage the property that he has owned for 27 years, wants to keep the community and neighborhood feel, but to maximize the use of his property. His vision is not low income, but affordable housing.

Commissioner Heim made comment to the zoning petition, stating three from original petition that were in agreement have now stated opposition.. Does this give enough signatures for the petition.
Public Hearing was closed at 7:42.

Administrator Wolf stated the Board should wait until contact was made with the Twp Attorney for clarification.

Applicant Murray stated that he had submitted the application over a month ago, why is he just now hearing of this step.

Board Discussion;

Boeve – uncertainty, big factor appears public input leans to residential Fitzpatrick-Road Comm approval, cannot do anything without it.

Board agrees that appears to be enough support for residential to seek legal counsel on next step/action.

Motion by Fitzpatrick, supported by Nickerson to table Rezoning # 104-05-17-01 until Twp Attorney opinion has been received on moving forward with amended future land use map.

Roll Call Vote:

Yea: Lombard, Trailer, Boeve, Nickerson, Fitzpatrick, Heim

Nay: None

6-Ayes /0-Nay Motion passed. To table Rezoning #104-05-17-01 to seek advice from Twp Attorney.

L. REPORTS

Zoning Administrator:

Zoning Administrator Wolf reported that she had meeting with the Twp. Supervisor and Twp. Sherriff regarding the issues of junk violations and the need to strengthen our Twp. Junk ordinance and have more enforcement power; Administrator Wolf then presented the Commission with a sample 'Blight Ordinance' for consideration which would give more enforcement power and add the ability to place a tax lien on the violating property. She requested that a subcommittee be created to address this problem and come up with a 'Blight Ordinance' for the Township. Commissioners Nickerson and Fitzpatrick agreed to be on the subcommittee. Additionally, the next Commission meeting would be reviewing the Capital Improvement Plan and the annual PC report which is required by the MI Planning Enabling Act

Township Board Representative:

Commissioner Fitzpatrick reported that the Townboard would be conducting a combined Board meeting of the Planning Commission, zoning Board and the Townboard on review of the Master Plan on July 18, 2017.

Zoning Board of Appeals:

None.

Trails:

None.

M. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

N. PUBLIC INPUT

*Supervisor Blonshine gave input regarding the issue of junk violations, rather than adding ,more regulations and placing liens on properties, we need more consistency and enforcement. Not a subcommittee that meets once a month to add more regulations, we have regulations in place and the Boards need to be looking at the Supervisor and the Zoning Administrator to enforce what we already have. The need to re-establish a community junk day, where peoples can bring their junk, and the possibility of using the DPW truck to help those that cannot transport their junk, the possibility of establishing a sign up list to help those who are unable to load/transport their junk to the clean up day. This is day-to-day business, not work for a subcommittee to establish another enforcement ordinance.

*Rick Barck of Manorwood dr, stated he has been through the blight ordinance issue before and would be willing to submit paperwork regarding the same to help. The Planning Commission or Townboard needs to do something regarding traffic on M-37 during the summer months as it is difficult to get out on the highway, they need to push back on M-DOT and get something done, the site plan of Wistrand Woods has a lot of holes, more questions, buffers, setbacks, connectivity; postcards informing public needs more info and more time lead; understands from his neighbors the developer of this plan does not have the best reputation;

O. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Fitzpatrick, supported by Trailer to adjourn. 6-Ayes / 0 Nays **Approved**
Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Guerrieri, Acting Recording Secretary

Wistrand Woods Correspondence:

David Rowe, 202 E. State Street, Suite 100 TC 49684
Sonjia & Kevin Chouinard, Blair Townhall Road
Kimberly & Jason Moore, 4875 Blair Townhall Road

Isaac Murray Rezoning Correspondence:

Against:

Kelly Robart, 2191 Woodcock Lane
Jeffrey Dreffs, 2173 Woodcock
Chad Todd, 2155 Woodcock Lane
G.J Spriet, 2209 Woodcock Lane
Tyler Sivek, 2227 Woodcock Lane
Jenna North, 2263 Woodcock Lane
Jeremy Hoxie, 2245 Woodcock Lane
Patricia Navarro, 2143 Woodcock Lane
Dawn Draper, 4265 Vance Road

Other Township Business:

Cherie & Brian, Blair Township Residents