

**BLAIR TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**APPROVED MINUTES**

June 17, 2020

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The Blair Township Planning Commission meeting of June 17, 2020 was called to order by Chairman Heim at 6:00 pm. The meeting was also available to Zoom attendees via a secured login.

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**C. ROLL CALL**

Present at roll call: Wagner, Heim, Fitzpatrick, Clous, Lombard and Nickerson. Commissioner Boeve was absent and excused.

Also present: Zoning Administrator Lisa Guerri, Recorder Susan Kase.

There were 2 attendees from the public and 2 attendees via Zoom.

**D. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public input.

**E. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Nickerson to approve the agenda. All Yeas. Motion carried.**

**F. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There was no conflict of interest stated.

**G. MINUTES**

**Motion by Lombard, seconded by Fitzpatrick to approve the minutes of December 18, 2019. All Yeas. Motion carried.**

**H. CORRESPONDENCE**

Zoning Administrator, Lisa Guerri stated no correspondence was received.

**I. PRESENTATIONS**

There were no presentations.

**J. NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. Public Hearing - Special Use/Site Plan Review - #20-02-01 Grand Bay Marine** - The applicant is requesting a Special Use/ Site Plan Review to establish

a boat sales and retail/warehouse with a service/repair facility in an existing building located at 211 US 31 S, Traverse City, MI 49685, formerly known as Parker Motor Freight building. Property ID# 28-02-004-008-01.

Chairman Heim stated that the Special Use application will be evaluated on Section 22.04, A through G, Standards for Approval of the Zoning Ordinance. This Public Hearing will only be addressing the Special Use application, each person addressing the Commissioners will be allowed three minutes. After the Public Hearing is closed, the Special Use application will be reviewed against the Standards for Approval in Section 22.04, A through G. The Chairman will open the Public Hearing, there will be a presentation by the applicant, there will be a presentation by staff, questions from the public will be accepted, and then the hearing is closed. The purpose of the Planning Commission's role in this endeavor is to recommend that the Special Use permit be approved or denied by the Blair Township Board of Trustees.

Chairman Heim opened the Public Hearing at 6:06 pm.

Bill Crain, Crain Engineering, represented the applicant and was present at the meeting and addressed the Commissioners with an illustration of the proposed site plan. Mr. Crain stated that this application was previously approved for four storage buildings, but the permit expired before the construction could begin. With this new Special Use application, the plans now call for the four storage buildings, a showroom, a display area, a service/repair facility and an office for Grand Bay Marine management. Chairman Heim reviewed the Standards for Approval as listed below:

### **Section 22.04 Standards for Approval**

1. The Planning Commission shall review the particular circumstances and facts related to each proposed special use application in terms of the following standards and requirements and shall make a determination as to whether the use proposed to be developed on the subject parcel meets the following standards and requirements:
  - a. Will be harmonious with and in accordance with the general objectives of the Master Plan.
  - b. Will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained in harmony with the existing and intended character of the general vicinity and the natural environment so that the use will not change the essential character of that area.
  - c. Will not be hazardous or disturbing to existing or future neighboring uses.
  - d. Will represent a substantial improvement to property in the immediate vicinity and to the community as a whole.
  - e. Will be served adequately by essential public services and facilities, such as highways, roads, drainage structures, police and fire protection, and refuse disposal; or, the persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of the proposed special use shall be able to provide adequately for such services.

- f. Will not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.
- g. Will not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, equipment and conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive smoke, fumes, glare, noise, vibration or odors.

Chairman Heim opened the meeting to public comment. There was no public comment. Mr. Crain had no further comments on his presentation for the applicant.

Chairman Heim closed the Public Hearing at 6:17 pm.

Chairman Heim opened the meeting for discussion from the Commissioners. It was agreed that the application met the Standards for Approval as listed above.

**Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Clous** to move to **recommend** to the Blair Township Board of Trustees to **approve** Case **SU/SPR #20-02-01** as presented as it has met the Standards for Approval as required in Section 22.04, A through G of the Blair Township Zoning Ordinance. **Yes:** Heim, Lombard, Fitzpatrick, Nickerson, Wagner, Clous. **Motion carried.**

Chairman Heim moved the meeting to the Site Plan Review for this same applicant, as the Special Use application has been recommended to be approved by the Blair Township Board of Trustees.  
The Site Plan Review is evaluated against the Standards for Approval, as listed below.

### **21.03 Standards for Approval**

A site plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission upon finding that the following conditions are met:

1. That the proposed use will not be detrimental to the adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood, including properties located in adjacent municipalities.
2. That there is a proper relationship between existing roads and highways and proposed deceleration lanes, service drives, ingress and egress drives, and parking areas to assure the safety and convenience of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
3. That buildings, structures, parking areas, utility areas, walls, and fences are so designed and located to minimize the adverse effects of such development on users of such development and occupants of adjacent properties.
4. That any adverse effects of the proposed development and activities which will impact

adjoining occupants or owners shall be minimized by appropriate landscaping, fencing, or other screening.

5. That as many natural landscape features as possible are retained, particularly where they provide a barrier or buffer between the development and adjoining properties used for dissimilar purposes, and where they assist in preserving the general appearance of the neighborhood or help control soil erosion or the discharge of storm water.
6. The proposed development provides for the proper development of public utilities and infrastructure.
7. All buildings or groups of buildings are arranged to permit emergency vehicle access.
8. That the plan for soil erosion control, storm water discharge, wells, and on-site septic systems have been approved. Site plan approval may be conditioned upon providing evidence that the necessary permits have been applied for. A land use permit shall not be issued until the Zoning Administrator receives a copy of the required permit(s).
9. The Planning Commission may further require landscaping, fences, and walls in pursuit of these objectives and same shall be provided and maintained as a condition of the establishment and the continued maintenance of any use to which they are appurtenant.
10. For a narrow frontage which will require a single outlet, the Planning Commission may recommend that escrow money be placed with the Township so as to provide for a marginal service drive equal in length to the frontage of the property involved. Zoning compliance permits shall not be issued until the improvement is physically provided or monies having been deposited with the Township Clerk
11. Where the Township has adopted a specific area or neighborhood improvement or redevelopment plans and recommendations involving, but not limited to, public rights-of-way, utilities and storm drainage, parking facilities, building placement, access drives, floor space density allocations, building facade and architectural treatment, no site plan shall be approved unless there is general compliance with such Township plan.

After the fire hydrants were added to the plans, it was decided that the Site Plan Review application met the above Standards for Approval. Chairman Heim asked for a motion.

**Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Clous to approve Case SPR # 20-02-01 as presented** because it has met the Standards for Approval as required in Section 21.03, #1 through 11 and is a use permitted in the Commercial Zoning District of the Blair Township Zoning Ordinance. **Yes:** Heim, Lombard, Wagner, Nickerson, Clous, Fitzpatrick. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

**2. Public Hearing Special Use Case# SU/SPR 20-06-01:** Applicant is GR Auto Gallery, requesting a Special Use/Site Plan Review to establish an indoor, internet-based specialty auto sales and retail showroom in an existing building located at 5555 Brentwood Ave, Grawn MI 49637, parcel # 28-02-200-019-00. The property was formerly known as Odom ReUsable

Building Materials.

Chairman Heim opened the Public Hearing at 6:28 p.m. Bill Crain, Crain Engineering, represented the applicant, GR Auto Gallery. The applicant is relocating from Park Drive in Traverse City to this location in Grawn. All sales are online, and all vehicles are in the building. The plans show that the existing parking lot and landscaping will remain as is.

Commissioner Nickerson inquired if any changes will be made to the road access as nearby residents have used that road for many years. Mr. Crain responded that he does not anticipate that any changes will be made to the road.

Chairman Heim, monitoring the Zoom attendees, accepted a comment from Christopher Hooks, one of the owners of GR Auto Gallery, who was attending the meeting remotely. Mr. Hooks commented that there are no proposed changes to the road.

Bruce Odom, owner of the property currently pending sale upon this application, attending the meeting remotely via Zoom offered to answer any other questions. There were none.

Mr. Crain had no further additions to his application presentation.

Chairman Heim closed the Public Hearing at 6:35 p.m.

Chairman Heim asked for discussion from the Commissioners. The Standards for Approval for a Special Use Application were reviewed:

### **Section 22.04 Standards for Approval**

The Planning Commission shall review the particular circumstances and facts related to each proposed special use application in terms of the following standards and requirements and shall make a determination as to whether the use proposed to be developed on the subject parcel meets the following standards and requirements:

- a. Will be harmonious with and in accordance with the general objectives of the Master Plan.
- b. Will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained in harmony with the existing and intended character of the general vicinity and the natural environment so that the use will not change the essential character of that area.
- c. Will not be hazardous or disturbing to existing or future neighboring uses.
- d. Will represent a substantial improvement to property in the immediate vicinity and to the community as a whole.
- e. Will be served adequately by essential public services and facilities, such as highways, roads, drainage structures, police and fire protection, and refuse disposal; or, the persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of the proposed special use shall be able to provide adequately for such services.
- f. Will not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public

facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

- g. Will not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, equipment and conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive smoke, fumes, glare, noise, vibration or odors.

Chairman Heim asked for a motion, as there was agreement that the applicant met all the Standards for Approval.

**Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Clous** to move to **recommend** to the Blair Township Board of Trustees to **approve** Case# SU/SPR 20-06-01 as **presented** as it has met the Standards for Approval as required in Section 22.04, A-G of the Blair Township Zoning Ordinance. **Yes:** Lombard, Wagner, Clous, Heim, Nickerson, Fitzpatrick. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

The application for Site Plan Review by same applicant was then reviewed. Mr. Crain illustrated on the drawings that there are no proposed changes to the property's exterior parking lot or landscaping. Chairman Heim asked for comments. There were none.

The Standards for Approval, Section 21.03 are as follows and were met by the applicant.

### **21.03 Standards for Approval**

A site plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission upon finding that the following conditions are met:

1. That the proposed use will not be detrimental to the adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood, including properties located in adjacent municipalities.
2. That there is a proper relationship between existing roads and highways and proposed deceleration lanes, service drives, ingress and egress drives, and parking areas to assure the safety and convenience of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
3. That buildings, structures, parking areas, utility areas, walls, and fences are sodesigned and located to minimize the adverse effects of such development on users of such development and occupants of adjacent properties.
4. That any adverse effects of the proposed development and activities which will impact adjoining occupants or owners shall be minimized by appropriate landscaping, fencing or other screening.

5. That as many natural landscape features as possible are retained, particularly where they provide a barrier or buffer between the development and adjoining properties used for dissimilar purposes, and where they assist in preserving the general appearance of the neighborhood or help control soil erosion or the discharge of storm water.
6. The proposed development provides for the proper development of public utilities and infrastructure.
7. All buildings or groups of buildings are arranged to permit emergency vehicle access.
8. That the plan for soil erosion control, storm water discharge, wells, and on-site septic systems have been approved. Site plan approval may be conditioned upon providing evidence that the necessary permits have been applied for. A land use permit shall not be issued until the Zoning Administrator receives a copy of the required permit(s).
9. The Planning Commission may further require landscaping, fences, and walls in pursuit of these objectives and same shall be provided and maintained as a condition of the establishment and the continued maintenance of any use to which they are appurtenant.
10. For a narrow frontage, which will require a single outlet, the Planning Commission may recommend that escrow money be placed with the Township so as to provide for a marginal service drive equal in length to the frontage of the property involved. Zoning compliance permits shall not be issued until the improvement is physically provided or monies having been deposited with the Township Clerk
11. Where the Township has adopted a specific area or neighborhood improvement or redevelopment plans and recommendations involving, but not limited to, public rights-of-way, utilities and storm drainage, parking facilities, building placement, access drives, floor space density allocations, building facade and architectural treatment, no site plan shall be approved unless there is general compliance with such Township plan.

**Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Clous to approve Case SU/SPR # 20-06-01 as presented** because it has met the Standards for Approval as required in Section 21.03, #1 through 11 and is a use permitted in the Commercial Zoning District of the Blair Township Zoning Ordinance. **Yes:** Heim, Lombard, Clous, Wagner, Fitzpatrick, Nickerson. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

#### **K. Unfinished Business**

None.

#### **L. Reports**

1. Zoning Administrator - Lisa Guererri reported that there is an application for apartments near Rennie Road on the July agenda for the Planning Commission.
2. Town Board Representative - Dennis Fitzpatrick said there have been two Zoom

meetings and that the variance was approved to extend the water line off Blair Town Hall Road for a landscaping company moving to that area.

3. Zoning Board of Appeals - there was no meeting.

4. Trails - George Lombard stated that much of the new trail developments are now all focused on the north side of Grand Traverse County.

**M. Any Other Business**

None.

**N. Public Input**

None.

**O. Adjournment**

**Motion by Lombard, seconded by Wagner** to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 pm.

**All yeas, motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted by  
Susan Kase, Recorder