

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

October 21, 2020

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

The Blair Township Planning Commission meeting of October 21, 2020 was called to order by Chairman Heim at 6:00 pm.

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**C. ROLL CALL**

Present at roll call: Wagner, Heim, Fitzpatrick, Lombard, Boeve, Clous, Nickerson; Also present: Zoning Administrator Lisa Guerri, Recorder Susan Kase. There were no attendees from the public. Two representatives for each Site Plan Review application were present, as identified below.

**D. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public input.

**E. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**F. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None stated.

**G. MINUTES**

Chairman Heim noted two corrections to the September 16 minutes; on page two, “**There was no public comment**” needs to be added after paragraph two before the Public Hearing was closed. The second correction is also on page two, paragraph four, the sentence should read, “Chairman Heim commented that if fence height restrictions are removed from this ordinance, there are other **sections of the ordinance** that will be affected.” **Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Lombard** to approve the minutes for the September 16, 2020 meeting with the corrections. **All Yeas. Motion carried.**

**H. CORRESPONDENCE**

Zoning Administrator, Lisa Guerri stated there was a letter was received from Haggard’s Plumbing in support of tonight’s applicants, Deluxe Self Storage and Wash N Go.

**I. PRESENTATIONS**

There were no presentations.

## **J. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Site Plan Review #20-10-01:** Applicant, Deluxe Self Storage, is requesting a Site Plan review to establish additional mini-storage unit buildings located at 4155 Vance Road, Traverse City MI 49685, parcel #28-02-017-001-10. Chairman Heim stated that the Site Plan review will be guided by the Ordinance under Section 10.04, Uses permitted by mini-storage warehouses.

Chairman Heim opened the Public Hearing at 6:06 p.m.

The applicant, Brian Rohlen, was represented by Sarah Keever of Northview 22, Land Use Planners and Engineers, P O Box 3342, Traverse City MI 49685. Ms. Keever reviewed the history of the development, with the original approval in 2015 for the first half of the storage buildings. At present there are eleven buildings with 260 units fully rented. Phase II of the development, proposed in this site plan review, is for an additional six storage unit buildings and one storage shed. Ms. Keever said a fire hydrant was added to the site plans to satisfy the Fire Department's requirement for adequate service.

Construction would begin Spring 2021 if approved. Mr. Rohlen added that he has had an increase in demand for self-storage units, with 100 names on a waiting list. Commissioner Boeve asked if roads will be needed on the property. Mr. Rohlen answered in the affirmative. Mr. Rohlen stated that the first eleven buildings were constructed over a three to four-year period.

Lisa Guerri stated that the fire hydrant will need to be approved by DEQ. One of the proposed storage buildings abuts a residential home and will require a ten-foot landscaping buffer by Building "L".

Chairman Heim reviewed the Site Development Standards for mini-storage warehouses, Sec. 18.29.

1. The property meets the minimum lot area of three acres. **It is 9.77 acres.**
2. **The property is accessed from a paved roadway, Vance Road.**
3. The minimum distance between self-storage buildings is fifteen feet; **each unit has a minimum distance of 25 feet.**
4. A landscape buffer with a minimum of ten feet shall be provided; **Building "L" is 8.44 feet from a residential property.**
5. No structure shall exceed 5,000 SF in area. **The largest storage building is 5,000 SF.**

### Section 18.34 Open Storage Areas

1. The open storage area as proposed is approximately 660 feet from Vance Road and 634 feet from M37. **This meets the standard of 50 feet to any public right of way.**
2. The storage of combustible materials such as lumber, fuels, or fertilizer shall be no closer than 20 feet to any property line. **Per Site plan, it is 65 feet to the closest property line.**

3. All open storage areas shall be screened from the public road right of ways, all sides which abut any residential or commercial district by a solid eight-foot fence, and all stored material shall not be stacked to a height greater than eight feet. **There is no fencing shown on the Site plan.**

4. The storage of any soil, fertilizer, or other loose material shall be contained to prevent any adverse effects on neighboring properties. **This is not applicable to this business.**

The applicant has met the Standards as summarized above. There were no further questions.

Chairman Heim closed the Public Hearing at 6:28 p.m. Comments were requested from the Commissioners for discussion.

Commissioner Boeve asked if the wall is required by the ordinance around buildings. Chairman Heim stated that the Site Plan review needed to address three open issues: setback, ten-foot landscaping buffer at Building "L", and the fence requirement.

Mr. Rohlen said that the RV/Boat Open Storage area does not financially support the construction of an eight-foot fence surround. He said that the seventeen storage unit buildings precede the outdoor storage area and that it cannot be seen from Rt. 37. The commissioners questioned the ordinance requiring an eight-foot fence to screen 11-foot-tall buildings, and that this ordinance was not written with RV/Boat storage and mini-warehouses in mind.

In terms of the setback and landscaping buffer, Ms. Keever agreed to relocate the proposed building on the site plan to accommodate this requirement and updated the Site Plan as submitted with this change.

Mr. Rohlen needed the Site Plan approved with no contingencies in order to obtain financing approval from his lender. Standards for Approval, Section 21.03, were met. Please see attached.

**Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Clous to approve SPR #20-10-01 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, Nickerson, Wager, Clous, Boeve, Fitzpatrick. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

**2. Special Use/Site Plan Review #20-10-02:** Applicant, Wash N Go Car Wash, is requesting a Special Use/Site Plan Review to establish a drive through car wash on vacant property located at 910 US 31 South, Traverse City MI 49685, parcels #28-02-005-060-30 and #28-02-005-060-40, formerly the location of Dairyville. Section 5 T26N R11W.

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:55 p.m. The applicant, Kraig Visser, presented the Site Plan for review. Wash N Go has been in business for over twenty years, with three partners. This proposed car wash will be their fifth location. The location near Red Lobster on Rt. 31 in Traverse City is the oldest. There are also locations in Cadillac, Gaylord, and S. Garfield Road in Traverse City. Mr. Visser stated the locations are professionally landscaped and that management takes pride in the care of the properties. The entrance and exit will be off of Prevo Road, not directly on Rt. 31.

Chairman Heim read the Site Development Standards for Auto Wash Establishments, Section 18.06.

1. All washing activities must be carried on within a structure. **This washing facility is completely enclosed.**

2. Vacuum islands may be placed in the front yard but no closer than fifty feet from adjacent property boundaries. **The rear island as proposed is twenty- five feet from the property line and seventy feet from adjacent property boundary; the front island is fifty feet from the property line.**

3. Access to the wash facility shall be from within the lot and not directly to or from an adjoining public right of way. A public right of way shall not be used as maneuvering or parking spaces for vehicles to be serviced by the facility. **Access to this proposed development is located at the front of the property facing M 37.**

4. Overnight parking or storage of vehicles is prohibited. **None as proposed on plan.**

The applicant has met the Standards for Auto Wash Establishments. Several Commissioners asked questions about car wash specifics, as to which type of cleaning utensil is best, brush or cloth. Mr. Visser stated that all his car washes now use foam brushes which are best for a car's finish. As to the use of water, Mr. Visser said that there is some water reclamation in his car washes. Mr. Visser hopes to begin construction in Spring 2021.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:04 p.m.

Opening up the discussion, Chairman Heim reviewed the Standards for Approval, 22.04.

Please see attached. **Motion by Clous, seconded by Wagner** to recommend to the Blair Township Board of Trustees to **approve Case # SU/SPR 20-10-02** 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:** Clous, Wagner, Heim, Lombard, Boeve, Nickerson, Fitzpatrick. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

The Site plan review for the same applicant was then addressed. The applicant had all the required data to meet the Standards in 21.02. Standards for Approval 21.03 were met as well. Please see the attached

Standards. Chairman Heim asked for comments from the Commissioners. There was none.

**Motion by Fitzpatrick, seconded by Clous to approve Case # SU/SPR 20-10-02** with the following condition: **1) that the Special Use application is approved.** The site plan with condition will have 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:** Fitzpatrick, Wagner, Clous, Heim, Lombard, Nickerson, Boeve. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

**3. Public Hearing regarding proposed amendments to the Blair Township Zoning Ordinance. Amendment #104-05-20-02 to amend section 16.05. Amendments regarding General Site Landscaping.**

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:17 p.m.

Lisa Guerri summarized the conflict of the current General Site Landscaping requirements, as it is overextending its reach to require one tree per every 3,000 SF. If amended, it will require one tree per each 9,000 SF.

There was no Public Input. There was no discussion. The Public Hearing was closed at 7:18 p.m.

**Motion by Clous, seconded by Boeve** to recommend to the Blair Township Board of Trustees to **approve** the amendment to the General Site Landscaping, Sec. 16.05 to standardize the requirement of **one tree per 9,000 square feet of site area, Amendment #104-05-20-02**. **Yes:** Heim, Clous, Wagner, Nickerson, Fitzpatrick, Boeve, Lombard. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

**4. Public Hearing** regarding proposed amendments to the Blair Township Junkyard Ordinance. **Amendment # 102-20-01** to amend Sections 6.01, setback of fence.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:21 p.m.

Lisa Guerri provided the backstory of the original Junkyard Ordinance, as it was in conflict with the Zoning Ordinance. There was no Public Input. The Public Hearing was closed at 7:22 p.m.

Commissioner Clous commented that the ordinance should read “said fence shall be maintained in good condition” and strike the “shall be painted” as not all fences require painting.

**Motion by Lombard, seconded by Clous** to recommend to the Blair Township Board of Trustees to **approve** the amendment to the Junkyard Ordinance, #102 to standardize the setback requirement of a fence to **300 feet from the front property line, Amendment #102-20-01**. **Yes:** Heim, Clous, Wagner, Nickerson, Fitzpatrick, Boeve, Lombard. **No:** None. **Motion carried.**

## **K. Unfinished Business**

None

## **L. Reports**

- 1) Zoning Administrator - nothing on the agenda yet for November.
- 2) Town Board Representative – Dennis Fitzpatrick reported that the Board of Trustees approved two zoning amendments, a CARES Act grant provided \$1,000 to the Fire Department payroll, and the Township Clean Up Day was successful.
- 3) Zoning Board or Appeals – no meeting
- 4) Trails – on hold until other items are complete

## **M. Any Other Business**

None.

## **N. Public Input**

None

## **O. Adjournment**

**Motion by Nickerson, seconded by Wagner** to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. All Yeas. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Kase, Recorder

## **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.

## **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.

