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WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP

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WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
7525 Highland Road
White Lake, MI 48383
April 15, 2010 @ 7:00 p.m.

Chairperson Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called: Ms. Michalowski, Mr. Meagher, Ms. Spoor and Mr. Woodhouse were absent.

ROLL CALL: Steve Anderson, Chairperson
David Lewsley
Michael Long
Steve Martinko, Vice Chairperson
Peter Meagher, Secretary - **Absent**
Maria Michalowski - **Absent**
Gail Novak-Phelps
Beverly Spoor, Board Liaison - **Absent**
Stan Woodhouse - **Absent**

Also Present: Sean O'Neil, AICP, Planning Director
David Birchler, AICP, Township Consultant
Kristin Goetze, Johnson & Anderson
Lynn Lindon, Recording Secretary

Visitors: 7

Approval of Agenda:

Ms. Novak-Phelps moved to reverse the order of discussion and address the New Business item first. Mr. Lewsley supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (5 yes votes)

Ms. Novak-Phelps moved to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Lewsley supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (5 yes votes)

Approval of Minutes:

- Minutes of March 18, 2010

Mr. Martinko moved to approve the minutes of March 18, 2010 as presented. Mr. Lewsley supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (4 yes votes, 1 abstained - Long)

Call to the Public (for items not on the agenda)

Mr. Anderson opened the discussion for public comment on items not listed on the agenda, but none was offered.

Old Business:

- a. Continued Discussion on Temporary Signs

Mr. Birchler began by recognizing the fact that the economy has hit the local retail businesses hard and they are trying to get through this tough time. There have been a lot of temporary signs placed without permits and some that are in right-of-ways, etc. There was desire on the part of the township to establish order by actually permitting this type of signage. The building department has traditionally handled permanent sign permits, but the proposal here is for the planning department to handle temporary signs.

At the last meeting the commission wanted to make sure inflatable objects that serve as signs, i.e., stick man, gorilla, etc. are treated as temporary signs that would require a permit. There's also been concern from the planning and building departments and multi-tenant owners that the allowable size for primary monument signs was not large enough to get all the tenants on. A number of those buildings have their short end facing the road and the tenants are sometimes invisible to the passerby. The intent is to increase the size of this type of sign from 30 sq. ft. to 50 sq. ft. Most of the additions to the ordinance are located on pages 14-17 and involve periodic portable business signs and a new section for ambulatory signs.

Under this new ordinance, any business can make an annual application for (8) 14-day displays. They would be required to treat them as an event-related sign. The most efficient way is to let the business owner decide what his needs are and he would be allowed to add periods together for a longer display period. The only variation is that a new business or a business that is closing would get a display period of 30 days. The signs should be no larger than 12 sq. ft., but not smaller than 6 sq. ft.

The design criteria established would limit the signs to being either black or silver, without illumination, and they have to be designed to withstand the wind. Further, placement cannot be in a clear vision area or on a neighbor's property and cannot block a sidewalk. There is some allowance for multiple signs in cases of corner lots or frontage with at least 200 ft. There is new language for multi-tenant locations, where those tenants have to submit a single application that will put the landlord in charge of managing how this is dealt with.

The township building official, Brent Bonnavier, was present to address his concerns with the proposed changes to the ordinance. He noted he has one ordinance officer who is allotted 3-4 hours per week to take down signs that are violating the existing ordinance. He feels there will always be problems regardless because some of the business owners get discounts for displaying vendor's signs. He thinks these changes will cost the township money in the long run and questioned who would police this and provide the administrative help needed. He would like 60 days to come up with something more reasonable and simple. There is a lot of territory for one person to cover.

Mr. O'Neil indicated there really isn't a rush to put this through and he would rather spend more time looking at a mechanism for enforcement. At this point, we have more than a framework with some good rules and regulations. Mr. Bonnavier added that he would like to see the ordinance that addresses temporary signs that is easy to enforce, and easy for business owners to get the permits and comply.

Mr. Anderson asked if Mr. Bonnavier could provide an informal report within the next 60 days showing the number of citations written and the amount of revenue received in order for the commission to understand revenue generation.

Mr. O'Neil suggested forming a subcommittee consisting of himself, Mr. Birchler, Mr. Bonnavier and 3 other commissioners that could meet to shift gears and do some fine tuning.

Mr. Martinko feels the township is trying to remove barriers to bring new business in, but there is no doubt there is conflict happening. He knows Mr. Bonnavier is stuck and it needs to be conveyed to the administration that this problem with temporary signs will progressively get worse.

New Business:

File 10-004 Trinity/White Lake Rehabilitation & Wellness Center
Location: Property is described under parcel number 12-22-301-011
 Located on the north side of Elizabeth Lake Road. The subject property (9.13
 acres) is part of the Village Lakes Planned Business District Development.

Request: Applicant will make an informal presentation
Applicant: Professional Engineering Associates, Inc.

Mr. O'Neil noted for the record that a public hearing is scheduled for May 6. Present were Dave Hunter of Professional Engineering; Anne Bellow-Mills of the Smith Group; and Dave Raymond of Trinity Health.

Mr. Raymond indicated they are developing a 92-bed facility that will be the benchmark for the country. This will be a combination wellness and rehab facility for people of all ages. Half of the facility is more of a short-term and modeled after the longer stay residents. The building will have a rehab center with a pool, retail within the space, and walking paths. In addition, they will have a sanctuary for residents to live their final days. They are setting up "neighborhoods" with private rooms and 10-12 residents per family unit. The care delivery model is where the family and resident make the decisions on their care plan. He noted the site is challenging and the facility was stacked into 2 levels, which has given them the opportunity to create some unique spaces.

Mr. Long asked if this building would provide drug rehab, but Mr. Raymond stated it would be more for orthopedic type rehab rather than drug rehab. They are hoping to have prints done in July/August.

Mr. Hunter reviewed the site plan. There are approximately 2 permanent access points, one from Elizabeth Lake Road and one from the shopping center, with an extra emergency access point as requested by the Fire Department. The total parcel is 7.5 acres once they dedicate the right-of-way with a walking path. This is a 2-story building and 78,000 sq. ft. They are planning for 156 parking spaces. There is a walking path around the site with 7-8 wide concrete that can also be used to rehab. He briefly reviewed the topographic survey and grading plan. He noted drainage and utilities was master-planned with the shopping center and roof water drainage will be connected to the sewer system.

Ms. Bellow-Mills reviewed the first level plan. The concept is to pattern a home with 11 residents in each "neighborhood" that have a common living area including a kitchen. The second level plan is similar to the first level with the exception of the rehab center for physical therapy, and offices. She reviewed the garden level, or basement, which will be used for support space i.e., kitchen, mechanical/electrical rooms, staff lounge, etc.

She reviewed the building elevations. The highest peak is at 42 ft. and the average is 37 ft., which is slightly higher than the requirement. They've created a chapel in the front which will serve as a symbol for their centers. They haven't made final decisions on materials. They are considering cement board, cultured stone and architectural features.

Mr. Martinko asked if Mr. McAdams, the township environmental quality person, has reviewed this and Mr. O'Neil stated there would not be any impact to the wetland.

Mr. Lewsley referenced the area for the MBO and questioned whether it would remain raw dirt. Mr. Hunter stated there would be a finished roadway and a finished walkway to shopping center. The walkway they are required to put in is along Elizabeth Lake Road. Mr. Lewsley noted that part of the approval was to integrate a multi-use area of the township and there will be a need and desire to have the pedestrian pathway linkage to the shopping center. Mr. Long added that he would like to see more than just wild flowers. He wants to see this area maintained and this will be a requirement.

Ms. Novak-Phelps stated she likes that this is not a block building and feels it will be pleasing to look at from Elizabeth Lake Road. This is a good variation from this facility to the medical building. She asked about shelter areas in hazardous weather conditions. Ms. Bellow-Mills showed on the graphic that there is an area of support between the "elbows" of the building that would be the area of refuge.

There was a brief discussion on parking and lighting plans, receiving hours, etc. Operation aspects will be addressed in the development agreement.

The consensus of the group was favorable to the concept.

Planning Consultant's Report

Mr. Birchler announced he was recently elected as Secretary/Treasurer of the APA's Smalltown and Rural Planning division.

Director's Report

Mr. O'Neil had nothing further to add.

Communications:

Next meeting dates:

- Regular meeting – May 6, 2010
- Regular meeting – May 20, 2010

Adjournment

Mrs. Novak-Phelps moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Mr. Long supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (5 yes votes)