

SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

September 1, 2004

The Saugatuck Township Planning Commission held a special meeting September 1, 2004, at the township hall on Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, Michigan 49453.

Present: Darpel, Hanson, Marczuk, Milauckas, and Olendorf

Absent: Rausch and Shanahan

Also present: Dale Bauer and Atty Joel Bowens representing North Point Commerce Center.

Chairman Milauckas called the special meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. The purpose of the meeting was to review major issues on North Point: location of entrance from Blue Star, lighting plan (photometric design), planting strip along building's front sidewalk, and façade design. There was no general public comment.

Entrance: Milauckas referred to an e-mail in which Planner Sisson said the entrance drive could not be moved north from the proposed site near the south edge of the property to the center because of the Zoning Ordinance's requirement that driveway cuts be at least 275 feet apart on a 50-mph or greater road. The tree that might be saved by making this change is a Chinese elm, which is not a desirable tree and this specimen appears to be diseased, according to Sisson. Milauckas noted that the Ordinance needs to be redrafted to allow flexibility in rules relating to driveways, parking requirements, setbacks and other factors to allow the Planning Commission to save existing trees.

Lighting Plan: Milauckas noted Sisson concurs on the need for a lighting plan, and he wants poles lower than 20 feet. Bauer observed that lighting in Best Western motel across Clearbrook Drive is at 18-20 feet, and it is just barely lit for safety. He added that lower light poles mean more bollards, poles and safety issues. He and Darpel discussed the proposed lights, which are halogens of 250 Watts on poles and 150 Watts in wallpacks that cannot be made brighter without changing the heads. Bowens confirmed that 20-ft. light poles like Best Western's will not spread light to nearby residential areas or roads. Bauer promised a photometric design for the next meeting.

Five foot planting buffer close to building: Bowens referred to a fax from Thom Carpenter, who sketched a possible buffer. Darpel proposed three deeper planting areas instead of the buffer strip. One would replace the current north handicap spot in the center. Up to three parking spaces would be lost. Existing grass areas at the north and south of the building would provide space for the other two planting areas. Milauckas said Sisson will propose cross easements in front and back for connections to the Township hall parking lots. Bowens asked if it was a requirement to have cross easement approvals for planning approval. Milauckas said no. Bauer said a joint driveway with the gas station was impractical. It is possible the Blue Star entrance could be in-coming only with exits elsewhere, under some circumstances. Milauckas asked if the large oaks at the north end of the parking lot could be saved as part of the north planting area. Bauer said this would be difficult, as they are located very close to the north exit to the gas station. Milauckas asked for a plan that accommodates three new planting areas as well as existing trees with the number of parking spaces to be lost to planting areas under each alternative.

Façade: Bowens showed a photograph of a Movie Gallery store. Bauer said the roofline of the Movie Gallery would be 16 feet, the middle of the building 17 feet, and the Dollar General 18 feet. Bowens said they had

limited design flexibility because of economic requirements to meet a specific price point for tenants. Delivery system for building must be designed for price. Darpel referred to the tri-community meeting where an example was given of a town that kept development out of the approach to preserve the town's aesthetic appearance. Olendorf and Darpel recommended a façade design similar to the remodeled strip center north of Weathervane Mall in Douglas, which has pillars, a sloping roof treatment and evergreens in the landscape. Neither wanted the developer to go to great expense in redesigning the building; however, they said the community wants an appearance that does not suggest strip malls. Olendorf stated that he appreciates the developers' efforts to meet the Planning Commission requirements up to now, but he observed that the North Point project is unique to the area. He recommended an arts and crafts appearance to the new building. Bowens said they could not provide several design alternatives, but they could come back next meeting with an arts and crafts design proposal.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M. The next regular meeting is September 27 at 7:00 P.M.

Recording Secretary, Betty A. White

Jim Hanson, Secretary pro tem