

SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

October 13, 2004

The Saugatuck Township Planning Commission held a special meeting on October 13, 2004, at the township hall on Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, Michigan 49453.

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

Absent: Shanahan

Also present: Ed Marsilje and Todd Stivey for Ravines and several members of the general public

Chairman Milauckas called the meeting to order at 6:15 P.M. and explained that the purpose of this meeting was to review for final approval Phases III and IV of the residential PUD and Site Condo, lots #44 to #84, at the Ravines Golf Course off 136th Ave. He was told that it was at a meeting concerning the water looping that the Ravines group was told they needed no other approvals.

Todd Stivey, Excel Engineering, gave a brief history of the preliminary approvals of the PUD and Site Condo at the January 22, 2001, P. C. meeting, stating that the entire project at that time was to include 86 lots and that Phase III was divided later by the developer into Phase III and Phase IV. He added that the difference between the current plan and the one approved in 2001 was the elimination of some lots by the Health Department to the extent that there are now 84 lots total. He referred to the conditions in the original approval motions:

1. The school district has been notified.
2. Northern landlocked areas designated "potential future development" are still on the plan. Olendorf said he thought the original intent of the P.C. was that approval did not give carte blanche to develop them without coming back to the P.C., and he did not want this term used. Marsilje explained that this had to do with the release problems; if they did not include them in this plan, the condo owners might have to all sign off on any future development. He added they understood they would have to return to the P. C. for any future development.
3. The Old Allegan Road portion has been removed from the PUD.
4. Water has been extended to the site and is adequate at this time without looping. Permits have been issued by the State. A few of the lots in Phase IV will use the community septic system, which services all of Phase II. Phase III will be on individual septic systems.
5. New calculation to remove wetlands and nonbuildable property: total site is 404 acres with 72 acres of wetlands, at 2.5 acres per unit, allows for 147 units, currently proposing 84; open space does not include the potential future development areas, but there is adequate open space to conform with the Ordinance.
6. Topographical extensions into neighboring property to show potential access roads: legal rights to emergency access via St. Andrew Lane through the bottom of a ravine. Milauckas pointed out that the key is to have an agreement to have access to the neighboring property owned by Shashaguay. Marsilje replied that they foresaw that if Shashaguay develops his property, he would have the same problems for alternate routes as this property does. Fire hydrants should take care of some of the potential problems.
7. Intent to mitigate the sand removal area on Old Allegan Rd. by making a dry retention basin. Marsilje said there has been a decision to use no sand from there for Phase IV, but some is still being used for Phase II. Reclamation might begin in the spring, bringing it to grade and seeding. Development will take place in the future on this site.

Dale Harrison, 3108 62nd St., president of KRPA, said the sand pit is very close to being within the 66' ROW of Old Allegan Rd., and he thought that should be resolved soon. He recalled that Jim Jeltema had promised to preserve the natural beauty of the area, and Harrison asked that the building envelope be placed 50' back from the escarpment. He also thought there should be a wetland overlay. Olendorf asked the lot depth, and Stivey replied 180' to 270'. Stivey added that the minimum setback is 30', and he thought 50' would create an unbuildable situation on some lots where the bluff is off the property. Milauckas asked Harrison why he thought 50 feet was necessary, and Harrison replied he wanted to preserve the wildlife corridors and reduce the amount of clearing of vegetation. After some discussion, 30' was agreed on. Tree cutting is dealt with in the Master Deed. Fire hydrants have been extended all the way. The road is 26' wide within a 66' easement. The P. C. reviewed the Site Condo Ordinance, Sec. 40-936 ff.

Marczuk made a motion to give final approval to Phases III and IV of the PUD and Site Condo of Ravines Golf Course with the following conditions: that the building site be placed 30 feet from the crest of the bluff and that the master deed and by-laws applied to the earlier phases be extended to Phase 3 and 4, that the master deed and by-laws be reviewed by the township attorney and that consistent with the intent of Section 40-946, a copy of the approved master deed as filed with the County register of Deeds should be provided to the Township within ten days after filing with the County. Darpel supported.

After some discussion Marczuk amended his motion to require that the areas of "potential future development" be referred to on the site plan as "undeveloped areas not included in the open space." Darpel supported. A roll call vote showed unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

The meeting reconvened at 8:05 P.M. Chairman Milauckas indicated the purpose of the second session was to discuss and review the Tri-Community Plan as it related to the township.

The first order of business was to review the Minutes of the Tri-Community Meeting at Dutcher Lodge in Douglas on August 26, 2004. Hanson moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Darpel supported. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Chairman Milauckas asked the Planning Commission members to review three issues: 1) Discuss simple matters regarding map included in Draft Joint Comprehensive Plan dated September 27, 2004. 2) Point out other issues regarding the map. 3) Review chapters in the Plan relating to Saugatuck Township.

The map in the Plan, which shows Future Land Use, was reviewed against the current Zoning Map of the Township. The map in the Plan indicates mixed use on Blue Star Highway north of the Holland Street Y and south of the Douglas exit to I-196. Milauckas indicated that currently this is C1 with overlay district showing mixed use. There was discussion regarding mixed use zoning and the underlying zoning, in this case commercial. The changes to the existing zoning map so it will be consistent with the changes in the Future Land Use map proposed in the Tri-Community Plan are 1) commercial zoning, as well as mixed use overlay, is eliminated on Blue Star Highway south of Clearbrook Drive to the Saugatuck City limits. This area becomes medium density residential 2) Commercial area south of Douglas exit to I-196 becomes mixed use. Area immediately south of this mixed use area west of Blue Star becomes medium density residential, and east of Blue Star reverts to low density residential (A-1). The Denison property north of Saugatuck City limits to the Laketown Township line becomes greenspace preserve.

There was a discussion of low- and medium-density residential areas on the map on the Plan and how those relate to existing township zoning. The Master Plan shows fewer gradations than the current zoning map. Density distinctions that are important to township zoning enforcement disappear on the map in the Plan because the Plan calls all areas with less than 1 dwelling unit per acre low density. The P. C. believes that current Township zoning density distinctions must be considered more binding than the Master Plan in future discussions with developers.

The text of the Plan was reviewed. Page 9-4 discusses the “dilemma for the Township” of allowing current zoning density even though it could permit a potential population of 4 times the current township population. The P.C. supports current density because it needs to balance the desire of the township residents not to lose the rural character of the area with the right of private property owners to develop their properties.

Page 10-5, third paragraph under “RESIDENTIAL” should be modified from “New residential construction in the Township should be encouraged on soils suitable for basements and with soils capable of safe septic disposal. The best locations for concentrations of such housing are **north** of Saugatuck and southwest of Douglas” to “New residential construction in the Township should be encouraged on soils suitable for basements and with soils capable of safe septic disposal. The best locations for concentrations of such housing are **directly northeast** of Saugatuck and southwest of Douglas.” This confirms the Township’s desire to focus development on areas where municipal water is available or convenient. North of Saugatuck is Denison.

Page 10-6, second paragraph should be modified from “Lastly, the area along north Blue Star Highway between **134th Avenue** and the I-196 freeway interchange (Exit 41)...” to “Lastly, the area along north Blue Star Highway between **Clearbrook Drive** and the I-196 freeway interchange (Exit 41)...”. This correctly states the change in commercial zoning south of Clearbrook Drive in the township.

The Commission believes the map on page 10-2 should be modified. The Plan indicates that low density is less than 1 dwelling unit per acre. It would be appropriate to show the lakeshore strip between Lake Shore Drive and Lake Michigan south of the Douglas village limits to the Ganges Township line as medium density residential since it has existing ½ acre zoning. It would be also appropriate to show the area between Blue Star and I-196 northeast of Saugatuck as medium density. The Saugatuck cemetery west of Blue Star and south of Clearbrook drive is shown as commercial on the existing map and it should be changed to medium density residential on that map.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M. The next regular meeting is October 25, 2004 at 7:00 P.M.

Betty A. White, Recording Secretary

Sandy Rausch, Secretary

MOTIONS

1. Motion by Marczuk/Darpel to approve Phase III and IV of PUD Site Condo of Ravines Golf Course, with conditions.
2. Motion by Hanson/Darpel to approve minutes of Tri-Community Meeting, August 26, 2004.