

SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

July 24, 2006

The Saugatuck Township Planning Commission met on July 24, 2006, at the township hall on Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, Michigan 49453.

Present: Edris, Hanson, Jarzembowksi, Marczuk, Milauckas, and Rausch

Absent: Darpel

Also present: Planner Sisson; Z. A. Ellingsen; Bill Nelson, Allegan County Road Commission; Howard Bouwens, Jr. and Josh Van Howe for open-air boat sales; Dave Calvano for Peach Creek Ravines; William Pater for AIS; and members of the public.

At 7:00 P.M. Chairman Hanson called the meeting to order, postponed considering minutes of the previous meeting and reordered the agenda to accommodate various schedules. He then introduced Bill Nelson for the Allegan County Road Commission and asked his advice on how to solve the potential traffic problems arising from six-way intersections on Blue Star Highway. Rausch referred to the Blue Star Corridor study and commercial rezoning some years ago, and Sisson said there was a report at that time on what could be done. Nelson said he would like to see that report. Most of the discussion centered on the 64th Street intersections with Blue Star. Hanson asked Nelson what the township could do to convince the county that it should take action to solve these potential traffic hazards. Nelson suggested creating a plan for where the township wants to be in the future, starting with the report mentioned earlier, identifying where additional ROWs might be needed, or prevent development where these would occur, and including the access-management parts of the Zoning Ordinance.

Larry ~~Sybersma~~ SYBESMA said he had met with Nelson and they couldn't see where extending the 64th St. near BurgerKing south into his property would serve any purpose. Chris Gorgas showed the drawing of the area where his property and Larry ~~Sybersma~~'s SYBESMA'S meet and how 64th St. could follow the common property line and then veer off along Gorgas property. Gorgas suggested a traffic light at Blue Star. One problem seemed to be the funding for the road and another was how long it would take before ~~Sybersma~~ SYBESMA could develop his property. ~~Sybersma~~ SYBESMA wanted a road in the middle of his property so he could use both sides of it and did not want to build two roads, but he said he would cooperate with Gorgas. Milauckas suggested ~~Sybersma~~ SYBESMA bring his development plan to the next meeting for an informal review. Hanson thanked the different parties for attending this meeting.

During the public comment period, Dan Shanahan suggested that if ~~Sybersma~~ SYBESMA and Gorgas decided to put a road in, the township could give them some concessions, such as increased density, to make it worth their while.

Dayle Harrison said correspondence between the DEQ and the township office should be made part of the public record. He thought there should be postings and newspaper notices in the township of DEQ public hearings so the public could attend. He also

thought the township needs a traffic light on Blue Star and shouldn't wait for these two property owners to agree. Nelson said traffic studies showed Blue Star and 64th as busy, but there have been no accidents. Milauckas asked what the time frame is for securing a traffic light, and Nelson replied, "Three or four months," and it could be at the intersection in question.

Hanson invited Howard Bouwens, Jr. to continue with a hearing on his request for SAU for open-air boat sales at the former Onken building on Maple St. Hanson enumerated the issues brought up at the previous meeting: Access to Blue Star, no display of boats in the parking lot on Maple, lighting, pilings preventing unauthorized access from Blue Star, screening for neighbor to the south, "No stopping/standing" signs on Blue Star, motors to run only inside the building, drain to storm sewer, hours of operation. Bouwens introduced his tenant, Josh Van Howe, and his lawyer, Randy Schipper, who said the tenant did not anticipate any type of engine repair, only washing the boats. Van Howe said his was a brokerage business, not high volume but higher-end boats, and he needed office space, storage and display space, a place to install electronics, and a place to clean boats when they are sold. Hours of operation would be 7:30 to 5:30 or occasionally later, Monday through Friday, till 1:00 on Saturday, and no Sundays. Rausch requested that Van Howe use only one driveway cut on Blue Star, and Milauckas clarified that it would be used only when boats are delivered.

Sue Lark, the neighbor across Maple, asked about lighting, all night? Humming? Sisson pointed out that the lights on the boat hulls would have to be directed down. Ron Van Wieren, the neighbor to the south, said he had a letter from Nelson of the Road Commission saying he had no problem with two driveways to Blue Star. Van Wieren added that there is a high, very bright light on the Maple Street side which is on all night. Rausch had a letter dated May 14, 2004, from Onken promising shrubbery screening for the south side, but it was never done. Van Wieren said he wanted screening of the 62 feet of open area between the properties. Sisson said 5-7 foot trees or a 6 foot fence would satisfy the Ordinance. Warren Englebrecht, another neighbor, said he retracted his opposition because he now has more faith in the plan. About shrink wrapping boats, Van Howe said he needed to be flexible but did not want it to be an eyesore. Milauckas wanted to clarify how many boats could be parked on the Maple Street side, and Lark said she had no objection to seeing boats on Maple Street. The north side of the parking lot would be the obvious place, said Hanson, because the office is on the south side.

The Commissioners reviewed the four general standards for SAU in Sec. 40-693 of the Zoning Ordinance. Jarzembowksi was concerned about an accidental spill of some hazardous material down the drain, and Atty Schipper said the cost of installing a grease trap, etc. would be \$4000. He said the possible spill could be monitored by the appearance of stains on the floor. Z. A. Ellingsen was consulted, and he said he didn't know whether this drain was connected to the storm or sanitary sewer, it was an issue for the plumbing inspector, but he agreed that usually inside drains are connected to the sanitary sewer.

Rausch made a motion to approve the SAU for Howard Bouwens, Jr. for outdoor boat sales at 365 Maple Street in the C-2 zone with the following conditions: (1) That lighting be directed downward in compliance with the Lighting Ordinance and the existing Maple Street security light be corrected to comply with that Ordinance; (2) That except for the security light, lights on the Maple Street side should go off at 10:00 P.M.; (3) That the south lot line be screened with a 6 foot privacy fence from the east end of the building to the existing tree line and that the front lot line be landscaped; (4) That the pilings along Blue Star appear as on the site plan; (5) That two “No stopping/standing” signs be requested for the Blue Star side; (6) That the hours of operation be Monday through Friday 7:30-5:30, Saturday 7:30 to 1:00, none on Sunday; (7) That there be no engine repair on premises; (8) That delivery of boats to display pads shall be from Blue Star only; and (9)That there be a limit of boats displayed in the north end of the parking lot on Maple to three, and also on Blue Star to three. Milauckas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

After a brief break, Hanson opened the public hearing at 9:10 on the application by RomVano for SAU for a boardwalk and four non-permanent floating finger piers along the Kalamazoo River across from Peach Creek Ravines. Secretary Rausch read the notice published in the newspaper. Dave Calvano displayed his site plan and explained that the area had been rezoned to R-2, and the DEQ was calling his project a “marina” because it would be used by more than one person, that is, the residents of his development of 18 to 21 homes. He said the dock has to be at 100-year flood level, according to the DEQ, or 4 feet above the current water level so there will be steps to get down to the floating fingers. Hanson reviewed the items on Sisson’s memo dated July 21, which called for clarification on whether the finger piers can only be constructed if the water level returns to the ordinary high water mark of 581.5’; inclusion in the site plan of the second parcel of land along with ownership information, etc; clarification of whether motorized watercraft may use the “marina;” limitation of use to lot owners in Peach Creek Ravines; a letter from the Allegan County Road Commission for activity within the right-of-way; and prohibition from parking vehicles along the roadway for the duration of boating activities. Calvano said his attorney had sent a letter which treated all these points. Also an e-mail dated July 24 from Sisson suggested other limitations and exceptions related to the sale of the “marina.” Calvano said no camping or campfires would be permitted, boats will be stored on the docks, and no unnecessary vegetation will be removed in the construction.

Hanson read a letter from Bob and Kathy Roper, neighbors, who are opposed to the “marina” because it is too large for the area, residential values will be compromised by it, it will be a traffic safety hazard; and if the river comes back up, other craft besides kayaks and canoes could be docked there. He also read a letter in support from Ms. Gray and Mr. ~~Wolbring~~ WOLBRINK and another letter in opposition from Gerald Cooper, who thought this would be a traffic hazard.

Hanson opened the meeting to public comment, and Gerrit Sturrus, 6377 Old Allegan, said he did not understand “marinas” in an area where no boats can be used, where you can’t get in even in a flat-bottom boat; whereas there is a perfect spot nearby,

Hacklanders Landing, which can be used for canoes and kayaks, where there is plenty of parking space. He was concerned that the natural environment not be destroyed by dredging.

Dayle Harrison, on behalf of the Kalamazoo River Protection Association, warned that once a marina permit is secured, there are no longer limits on what can ensue, referring to Deep Harbor Marina where more and more slips were permitted. Milauckas challenged this statement because he insisted the township still had to give approval to expansion. Harrison said if the PC only gave Calvano a limited approval on a number of docks, rather than a “marina,” the PC would still have the final say on any possible expansion, but if the PC went along with the DEQ “marina,” the PC would no longer have control. Harrison went on to show that this is funneling for a number of residents who would not ordinarily have riparian rights. There are plenty of other marinas in the area. This would destroy wildlife, change the character of the neighborhood and be a safety hazard.

Kathy Roper added that if the water level comes up, and motor boats begin to appear at this dock, she didn’t want to be the neighbor who had to monitor that. Milauckas said he thought if the approval said “no motorized boats,” and motor boats appear, a complaint from a neighbor should bring a reaction from the township.

Dan Shanahan said he owns a lot in Peach Creek where he also represents the properties and he thought the only boats that would be used there would be dinghies, even if the water level came back up. He suggested requesting “no parking” signs from the County.

Rausch made a motion to close the public portion of the hearing, Milauckas seconded and the motion carried.

Milauckas made a motion to table the SAU request by Calvano for a “marina” to the next meeting August 28 to review the information provided and consult with the township planner. Edris seconded and the motion carried. It was suggested that Calvano consult directly with Planner Sisson to clarify the issues in his memo.

After a brief recess a public hearing was opened at 10:20 to consider a zoning change from C-3/A-1 to all C-3 of a 14-acre parcel located on the east side of Blue Star ¼ mile south of I-196 interchange #36 for Automated Integrated Systems, a company which assembles and sells tarping system kits for dump trucks. Jason Hall of Lamar Construction showed the plan for a warehouse and explained that the company would rather build on this parcel, shown as parcels B and C on the plan, because it is already cleared, whereas the property it also owns on the west side of Blue Star, already C-3, is heavily wooded. It is a growing company, expecting to expand from 35 employees to 60 by 2008. Bill Pater with AIS said the company had rented property across from Hanson Machine. They do light packaging during the day inside the building, which will be 25,000 to 30,000 s.f., not involving much of the parcel, leaving a lot of buffering. Occasionally large trucks will arrive during the day. There will be a retention pond. The access drive, parcel C on the plan, is already zoned C-3. Marczuk asked what the future

plans are for the parcel across Blue Star, and was told it was not for sale, that they did not need a larger facility than the one proposed.

Hanson asked if there were anyone in opposition to this proposal, and George Stoutin, 2753-2755 Blue Star Hwy, the “Horseshoe,” asked for an explanation of the notification process because he said he just received the notice three days ago and others did not receive any. Hanson read the list of neighbors to be notified and said notice had been mailed June 27.

Dave Heilman, 2753-2755 Blue Star, asked if the property has been sold and was told it was closed on a month ago. He asked what happens if the property sells later on after being rezoned, can it be expanded, what kind of businesses are allowed. Hanson reminded him that this hearing is only for rezoning and referred him to a list of possible uses in the Zoning Ordinance. A site plan would be required later on. He asked about hours of operation and Pater told him Monday-Friday 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. UPS arrives at 5:00 P.M.

Brent Van Oss, 6742 126th Ave., wondered if they realized that there are no public utilities to serve such a large installation, and the builders said they did, but they described the preparations they would make for fire suppression with a reservoir.

Heilman wondered how they would provide sixty parking spaces without clearing any more woods. He said the tree line is right on his property line. Pater replied that he had been told that 60 parking spaces would take up 18,000 s.f. + 30,000 s.f. of building only added up to about one acre, and there are 14 acres in the parcel. Hanson said there was some confusion about the actual acreage. There was some discussion about whether the entire parcel needed to be rezoned C-3. Pater offered to make a deed restriction on further tree-cutting around the perimeter.

Jerry Schippa, 2750 Blue Star Hwy., was concerned about added traffic and more access points to Blue Star. Pater said the traffic is already there because most workers come from Fennville to their current site just across I-196.

Paul Heiber, 2790 Blue Star, Hunters’ Lodge, was concerned about losing the rural nature of the area.

Rausch made a motion to close the public portion of the hearing, Marczuk seconded and the motion carried.

Milauckas asked Ellingsen how to classify this business, warehouse, sales, manufacturing? Is it permitted in C-3? In the notice, Ellingsen called it “wholesale sales and service,” referring to the Zoning Ordinance, Stoutin thought it was “manufacturing,” and Milauckas said the applicant calls it a “warehouse.” Rausch wondered if it could be used for the applicant’s purpose as it is zoned. The Commissioners proceeded to examine the “Criteria for considering...rezoning request.” They also consulted the “Future Land Use Plan,” which called for low density development. There was some

discussion about how the western parcel could be used for this project. Milauckas thought the issue should be tabled because of the late notice or lack thereof to neighbors.

Jarzembowski made a motion to table the rezoning request for AIS because more discussion was needed, and Milauckas supported. The motion carried with one NO vote from Marczuk.

The incumbent Planning Commission officers were re-elected unanimously, by roll call vote: Hanson, Chairman; Marczuk, Vice chairman; and Rausch, Secretary.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 P.M. The next regular meeting is August 28, 2006.

Betty A. White, Recording Secretary

Sandy Rausch, Secretary

MOTIONS

1. Motion by Rausch/Milauckas to approve the SAU for outdoor boat sales at 365 Maple Street with several conditions.
2. Motion by Rausch/Milauckas to close the public portion of the public hearing on RomVano's request for SAU to build a boardwalk with finger piers at Peach Creek Ravines.
3. Motion by Milauckas/Edris to table SAU request of RomVano.
4. Motion by Rausch/Marczuk to close public hearing on request for rezoning to C-3 by AIS.
5. Motion by Jarzembowski/Milauckas to table request for rezoning to C-3 by AIS.
6. Motion by Milauckas/Rausch to nominate Hanson Chairman for one year.
7. Motion by Milauckas/Edris to nominate Marczuk Vice chairman for one year.
8. Motion by Jarzembowski/Hanson to nominate Rausch Secretary for one year.