

WRIGHT TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES  
MAY 21, 2018, 7:30 P.M.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Dausman with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. Commission members present: Rich Dausman, Gary Karr, Dan VanDyke, Steve Gray and Steve Van Timmeren. Also present were Township Planner Brian Werschem and Clerk Maureen Carmody as Recording Secretary. Several members of the public were also in attendance (see attached list).
2. No parking in the reserved fire spaces was announced.
3. There were no additions to the agenda.
4. A motion was made by VanDyke and supported by Gray to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2018 Planning Commission meeting as written. Motion carried.
5. There were no public comments for items not on the agenda.
6. There was a Public Hearing request from DeWys Manufacturing for an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change that portion of land located in the Township of Wright that is described and currently zoned as Agricultural (AG) to Industrial (IND). The property is located immediately east of 15300 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Marne, parcel number 70-06-25-300-023. The applicant, John DeWys was in attendance to address the Commission regarding the application for the rezoning of the parcel listed above. He stated that the parcel would be used for parking as the expansion of the existing facility would remove some of the existing parking. Additional area on the parcel listed above would likely be used for storm water retention or as a drain field for a septic system if the applicant is unable to obtain municipal sewer for the facility. Karr had done a site visit and inquired as to the suitability of the parcel for agricultural purposes due to its small size of approximately five acres. Van Dyke stated that the parcel has been used for agricultural purposes. The Public Hearing was opened at 7:37 p.m. Marjorie Gilde, 359 Garfield Street, addressed the applicant regarding the proposed location of parking on the parcel and lighting, the proposed sewer extension, traffic concerns and property taxes. DeWys informed her that the proposed parking would not abut her property, that he is committed to reducing light glare and preserving green spaces, and that the sewer extension has not been decided yet, but would likely be a force main, which would not allow for other property owners to connect to the system, and that there would be no cost to the township for the extension of sewer to DeWys Manufacturing. Traffic concerns would be the jurisdiction of the Road Commission, and taxes would be the jurisdiction of the Assessor, but it was the opinion of the Commission and the Township Planner that the rezoning of the parcel would not affect her property taxes. Dausman informed her that many of her concerns are addressed when the applicant presents a site plan for review by the Planning Commission. The Public Hearing was closed at 7:53 p.m. There were no additional comments from Planning Commission members. A motion was made by Karr and supported by Gray to recommend to the Township Board that parcel 70-06-25-300-023 be rezoned from Agricultural to Industrial. Motion carried.
7. There was a Public Hearing request from DeMeester Wood Products for a Conditional Rezoning Request and Conditional Rezoning Agreement from Agricultural (A) to Industrial (IND) for the property located at 15519 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Coopersville, parcel number 07-06-29-400-012. Dausman explained to the Public present that state law allows local government to do a conditional rezone based on the specific use of a property. When that use is abandoned, the parcel would revert to the original AG zoning. Mark Hoefakker, 0-264 Hayes St. NW, a grandson of the founder of DeMeester Wood Products, on behalf of the applicant presented information

regarding the application for a Conditional Rezone of the parcel listed above. The applicant would like to add additional buildings for the purpose of indoor storage of wood and wood products manufactured by the business. Planner Werschem explained that as the use of the property is pre-existing, legal non-conforming, they would not be allowed to expand or alter the facility, which is an Industrial use, unless the parcel is brought into conformity by a rezoning to Industrial. Under the terms of the Conditional rezoning agreement, the property can only be used for the current specific Industrial use. If the use is changed, the agreement would be nullified, and the buildings could only be used for agricultural purposes as the property would revert to the previous AG zoning and the current Industrial use of the property would no longer be allowed. The applicant stated that the intent was not to expand the business. The applicant is intending to add indoor storage. Dausman noted that under section 405 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, that the applicant may voluntarily offer in writing and the local unit of government may approve, certain use and development of the land as a condition to a rezoning of the land or an amendment to a zoning map. The township cannot require the landowner to offer conditions as a requirement for rezoning. Werschem stated that the applicant has volunteered to do a boundary line adjustment of the parcel in order to reduce the area to be considered for rezoning. The remainder would be added to an adjacent AG parcel also owned by DeMeester. If approved, the contract would be modified to indicate the smaller parcel size for the Conditional rezoning. Dausman also questioned the applicants regarding disposal of waste products, as the Township had received a complaint regarding the burning of waste products on an adjacent parcel. Connor DeMeester, 3180 Harvest Lane, Coopersville, stated that DeMeester Wood Products chips most of their waste products and utilizes a dumpster for metal waste products. Wood products that are not suitable for chipping are burned on the adjacent parcel. After extensive discussion, it was determined that the issue of burning waste products is not relevant to the rezoning and would be better discussed with the site plan review. The Public Hearing was opened at 8:25 p.m. Andrew Hildebrandt, 15550 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Coopersville, questioned whether the property was already zoned Industrial, as the parcel is indicated as Industrial on the County property search site. Werschem informed him that the parcel is taxed as Industrial but zoned as AG. He also had concerns regarding increased traffic on the unpaved road and an increased amount of waste being burned. Mary Goericke, 15550 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Coopersville, was concerned that there would be increased truck traffic and that the smoke from the burn pit is adversely affecting local residents. Hoefakker replied that there should not be an increase in traffic as the expansion would store existing product. Werschem stated that reducing the footprint of the property would limit future expansion. Jen Helsel, 21 Arthur St., Marne, is supportive of the project, but concerned that the business could expand its size and use. Dausman replied that the contract would limit the type of operations on the property and the use could not change even if sold. Melissa Weining, 3100 Harvest Lane, Coopersville, inquired as to who oversees businesses to make sure that they are complying with zoning requirements. She was informed that complaints must be filed, after which the appropriate officials can take action. Residents were told to call the fire department regarding the burning of waste product. Werschem stated that the Conditional Rezoning would be a legally binding contract. Wanda Haarsma, 15910 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Coopersville expressed concerns regarding the speed of traffic and the safety of children. Barb Gochenour, 15755 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Coopersville, had concerns regarding the loudness of the truck traffic during the night and how the business affects property values. Kathy DeMeester, one of the owners of DeMeester Wood Products, stated that the business had been in operation long before these residents had moved nearby. Paul Haarsma, 15910 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Coopersville, also stated concerns with the speed and amount of traffic generated by the business. The Public Hearing was closed at 8:53 p.m. There was Commission discussion regarding the application. Both VanDyke and Van Timmeren informed residents that even agricultural businesses generate a lot of noise, traffic, dust and long hours of operation. Karr stated that the applicant's offer to reduce the size of the property would limit its growth and protect the surrounding AG area. Dausman stated that they could continue to operate as they are, but with the rezoning they would voluntarily limit what they can do and many issues could then be addressed. A motion was made by Karr and supported by VanDyke to recommend to the Township Board that parcel 70-06-29-400-012 be conditionally rezoned to Industrial according to the contract with the boundary line adjustment as volunteered

by the applicant and presented on the sketch. A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Van Timmeren, Karr, Gray, VanDyke, Dausman. Nays: None. Absent: None.

8. The DeMeester Wood Products site plan application for parcel number 70-06-29-400-012 was submitted for review. The property is located at 15519 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Coopersville. There was discussion of buffer areas, and whether parking areas would need to be concrete or another hard surface and adequacy of the retention basin upon review by the Ottawa County Resource Commissioner. It was noted that the site plan has not yet been reviewed by the Fire chief. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed that there was adequate landscape screening along 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and adequate screening of outdoor dumpsters. The Commission recommends that the applicant maintain the existing screening along 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave. It was also decided that a permeable parking surface was preferable to requiring a hard parking surface and rerouting runoff to retention ponds. There was extensive discussion regarding putting conditions on the location of a pit for burning waste products. Planner Werschem stated that the Commission could not put conditions upon an activity that is not allowed by ordinance or state law, and also as it is not on the property or site plan under review. A motion was made by VanDyke and supported by Gray to accept the site plan as is. After further discussion, the motion was amended to accept the site plan with the contingencies of the boundary line adjustment being made as volunteered by the applicant and presented on the sketch, the conditional rezoning be approved by the Township board, the current screening be maintained and contingent upon compliance with all federal, state, county and local ordinances being met. Motion carried.
9. There were no Commission member concerns.
10. There were no Wright Township Board Communications.
11. A motion was made by Karr and supported by Gray to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Maureen Carmody  
Recording Secretary