

Chair
Bruce Keilen
Vice-Chair
Kristen Krol
Secretary
Mike Nolen
Commissioners
Steve Musselman, Trustee
Dale Dailey
Marsha Zimmerman
Tim Fair
Adam Bertram
Abby Lorenzen



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Township Planner
Brett Wittenberg

Recording Secretary
Linda K. Parkinson

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 2017
7:00 p.m.**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the DeWitt Charter Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Keilen at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was said by those present.

ROLL CALL by Secretary Nolen.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Keilen, Dailey, Nolen, Lorenzen, Krol, Bertram, Fair, Trustee Musselman.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Zimmerman.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Fair moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Supported. **MOTION CARRIED.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Lorenzen moved to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2017 meeting. Supported. **MOTION CARRIED.**

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

I. Request for Future Land Use Map Amendment 16-870001 from Signature Land Development – Michael R. McGraw, to amend from SF-M (Medium Density Single Family Residential) to SF-H (High Density Single Family Residential) for a 77.98 acre parcel located south of Clark Road, north of Solon Road, east of Myers Road and west of Business 27, in the northeast ¼ of Section 21 of DeWitt Charter Township (Parcel #050-021-100-005-50). **Postpone until the August 7, 2017 meeting at the request of the applicant.**

II. Rezoning Request 16-880003 from Signature Land Development – Michael R. McGraw, to rezone a 77.98 acre parcel from A (Agricultural) to R6 (Residential Single Family). The property is located south of Clark Road, north of Solon Road, east of Myers Road and west of Business 27, in the

northeast ¼ of Section 21 of DeWitt Charter Township (Parcel #050-021-100-005-50). **Postpone until the August 7, 2017 meeting at the request of the applicant.**

NEW BUSINESS:

- I. **Site Plan Review 17-150006 from Robert Kennedy of The Peabody Group on behalf of RND Holdings, LLC**, to be allowed to construct a 60'x60' storage building and enlarge parking area on property located at 15400 S. US 27, Lansing, MI 48906, on the west side of S. US 27, south of Stoll Road, north of State Road, in the northeast ¼ of Section 28 of DeWitt Charter Township (Parcel #050-028-000-075-00).

Township Planner Brett Wittenberg briefly reviewed staff's memorandum dated June 29, 2017 stating the applicant is requesting Site Plan approval to be allowed to construct a 3,600 sq. ft. storage building to be utilized for vehicle and equipment storage for Techmark. Techmark is a professional engineering service that received Zoning Compliance approval back in 2012. Their operations include accessory product and equipment testing and some assembly.

The subject property is approximately 3.7 acres in size and currently has a BC (Business, Community) zoning. The property to the north is vacant with a BC zoning and is designated on the Future Land Use (FLU) Map for Community Commercial (CC). The property to the east is S. US 27 and office space zoned BC with a FLU designation for CC. To the south is a vacant parcel with public facilities zoned BC and FLU designation of CC. The same property wraps around to the west side of the subject site as well.

The site originally received Site Plan approval in 1999 for a printing company. At that time there was also an approved landscape plan. The site is currently deficient 3 canopy trees, 1 evergreen tree and 11 shrubs in the front buffer yard. There is substantial existing vegetation at the rear and sides of the property. The Planning Commission does have the ability to make a discretionary decision regarding the reduction and substitution of plants along with the ability to require additional plantings to achieve utilitarian and aesthetic objectives. Given the character of the area and the existing vegetation to the north, south and west, staff believes that the existing landscaping meets the utilitarian and aesthetic objectives of the landscape ordinance.

Wittenberg also mentioned the western portion of the site is encumbered by floodplain and wetlands. The applicant has received the necessary permits from MDEQ for the work within the floodplain and wetland areas.

Chairman Keilen invited the applicant to speak.

Robert Kennedy, The Peabody Group, 4740 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864, representing the applicant, gave a brief description of Techmark's day to day operations. By constructing the proposed storage building for vehicles and equipment it will give them more space inside their existing building.

Fair moved that the Planning Commission approve Site Plan Review 17-150006 from Robert Kennedy/RND Holdings, to construct a storage building for vehicles and equipment, subject to the following conditions:

1. **The applicant provides a revised landscape plan that accurately depicts the existing landscaping on the property prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.**
2. **The applicant shall comply with the requirements of all reviewing agencies having jurisdiction over the project.**

- 3. The applicant shall comply with the Clinton County Drain Commission's requirements for drainage.**

Supported.

ROLL CALL vote on motion:

AYES: 8 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1 (Zimmerman)

MOTION CARRIED.

II. Clearzoning:

Wittenberg briefly reviewed staff's memorandum dated June 29, 2017. He noted the Township recently contracted with Giffels and Webster for a scope of services related to planning projects such as updating our Comprehensive Development Plan. The consultant also provided information regarding Clearzoning, a proprietary product to transform the Zoning Ordinance into a more user friendly document. There appeared to be interest from both the Township Board and Planning Commission to utilize the Clearzoning product.

At the Joint Meeting held between the Board of Trustees and Planning Commission the representative from the consulting firm Giffels and Webster offered a discounted price of \$21,500.00 in addition to what our current contract amount is with them.

In staff's memorandum Wittenberg encouraged the Commissioners to access Watertown Township's website to see exactly what the product can provide. It is very useful for the general public to better understand the Zoning Ordinance by using layman's terms and providing simple graphic visuals. Staff would recommend that the Planning Commission recommend to the Township Board to include the Clearzoning product within the scope of services for the Giffels and Webster contract.

Fair questioned what the regular price would have been without the reduction. He further questioned the price of the existing contract with Giffels and Webster.

Wittenberg stated the price would have been close to double the \$21,500.00 reduced price. The entire contract, including the Clearzoning product would be approximately \$75,000.00 dollars.

Chairman Keilen added for Commissioners Krol and Bertram, who were unable to attend the presentation, that he was very impressed with the presentation provided by the Giffels and Webster staff.

Fair stated he was also very impressed by the presentation. It was very helpful and interesting.

Musselman stated he also was very impressed by the presentation at the joint meeting. It illustrated how easy and user friendly it would be for the public to comprehend our Zoning Ordinance. This brings up the question that perhaps Planning Commission members should each be provided access to the program during meetings.

Keilen added this would also be a very useful tool for Township staff to use in place of a large hard copy of the ordinance. This allows all the information to be easily accessible.

Lorenzen brought up the added advantage of not having to use so much paper. She thinks the program is phenomenal and was also impressed by the presentation. Her only concern is if the company were to go out of business the Township would not have the rights to that system.

Brief discussion followed regarding the fact that those chances are slim and the program is definitely a saleable asset for someone else to take over.

Bertram noted that Giffels and Webster is an extremely large firm in the State of Michigan and has been in existence for almost 70 years. His only concern is because the system is self proprietary, they are basically locking themselves in for infinity because no one else can touch the software. However, he believes the software sounds great and would be an asset.

Wittenberg clarified that for the reduced price of \$21,500.00 Giffels and Webster would provide support for the Clearzoning component until the Township or Consultant terminate the contract. This contract is separate from the current consultant services being provided and would not be affected if that contract is terminated.

Fair stated the Clearzoning product would be very helpful to both the public and staff. Giffels and Webster would take our specific Zoning Ordinance and reformulate it into their format.

Krol questioned if the Township really needs this service. She further questioned if residents would be required to pay a fee to view the materials.

Wittenberg stated there would be no fee involved for residents to use the service.

Krol questioned again if the Township needs this service.

Wittenberg stated it would be very beneficial to staff and the Township residents. Everything pertaining to a search is linked and easily accessible. This would be more helpful than going back and forth through several sections of the ordinance. Furthermore, having this format would show where there might be conflicts within the ordinance.

Krol stated she can navigate through the existing Zoning Ordinance and find everything she needs to. Most residents do not need all the bells and whistles. She does not see a need for our residents to search through our Zoning Ordinance.

Lorenzen stated she respectfully disagrees with Commissioner Krol. She does have difficulty navigating through the Zoning Ordinance and would find this to be very helpful.

Keilen noted this would also be helpful for developers to access and be able to obtain information on their own. Being short staffed in the Planning Department, this would streamline things for staff.

Bertram stated it is very frustrating to navigate through a code book, which is usually a very large document, to determine what the requirements are in the Township. He believes this would be a good tool for developers and the Township staff.

Krol questioned if this item is listed on the Work Program document.

Wittenberg stated Clearzoning is not listed in the Work Program document.

Krol stated "That's a problem." She questioned if the Township has an extra \$21,000.00 to spend on this every year.

Lorenzen clarified that the \$21,500.00 is not every year. It is a one time charge plus \$30.00 per page for any updates. They will also go through the Zoning Ordinance and standardize it by fixing anything that is not concurrent.

Krol questioned what would be dropped from the Work Program should the Township spend \$21,500.00 on this program.

Wittenberg stated acceptance of the Clearzoning application does not necessarily mean something will be removed from the Work Program. In addition, this application would serve the Planning Commission and staff well when drafting future ordinance amendments. The Clearzoning product can also be customized to be used in other Township departments.

There was no further discussion.

Lorenzen moved that the Planning Commission recommends the Township Board include the Clearzoning product within the scope of services for the Giffels and Webster contract. Supported.

ROLL CALL vote on motion:

AYES: 7 NAYS: 1 (Krol) ABSENT: 1 (Zimmerman)

MOTION CARRIED.

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None.

REPORTS:

I. Trustee:

Trustee Musselman gave a brief report on business conducted and action taken at the Board of Trustee meetings held on June 12, 2017 and June 26, 2017.

II. Zoning Board of Appeals:

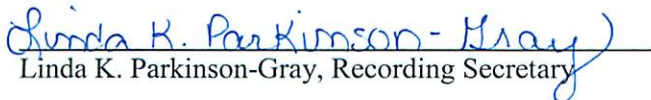
Krol gave a brief report of business conducted and action taken at the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017.

III. Committees: None.

IV. Staff: None.

DISCUSSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT: **Fair moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. Supported. MOTION CARRIED.**


Linda K. Parkinson-Gray, Recording Secretary


Mike Nolen, Secretary