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WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP

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WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
7525 Highland Road
White Lake, MI 48386
March 17, 2011 @ 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called: Mr. Long and Mr. Woodhouse were absent.

ROLL CALL: Steve Anderson, Chairperson
Todd Birkle, Board Liaison
Michael Long
Steve Martinko, Vice Chairperson
Peter Meagher, Secretary
William Pierson
Gail Novak-Phelps
Beverly Spoor
Stan Woodhouse

Also Present: Sean O'Neil, AICP, Planning Director
Jason Iacoangeli, Staff Planner
David Birchler, Township Consultant
Jill Bahm, Birchler Arroyo
Kristin Goetze, Township Engineer
Lynn Lindon, Recording Secretary

Visitors: 8

Approval of Agenda

Mr. O'Neil reported that Mr. Lewsley was recently appointed to the Township Board. William Pearson was introduced as Mr. Lewsley's replacement and it was also noted that Mrs. Spoor was reappointed to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Martinko requested to discuss the new business items first this evening.

Ms. Novak-Phelps moved to approve the agenda as amended. Ms. Spoor supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (7 yes votes)

Approval of Minutes

- February 17, 2011

Mr. Birkle moved to approve the minutes of February 17, 2011 as presented. Ms. Spoor supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (7 yes votes)

Call to the Public (for items not on the agenda)

Mr. Anderson opened the discussion for public comment on items not listed on the agenda, but none was offered.

Old Business

a. Review White Lake Township Master Plan, Four Towns Focus Area Review

Mr. Birchler gave a Powerpoint presentation that provided an overview of the White Lake Township Four Towns Area Plan. He defined the Four Towns area as a shared corner of four townships; Commerce, Waterford, White Lake and West Bloomfield, and reviewed activities in the area.

The intent is to revitalize the commercial strip by adding elements such as strong pedestrian orientation, a mix of uses (residential over retail); in-town style residential condos; access management to relieve congestion; landscaping to soften the streetscape; sidewalk connectivity; and a structure or public art to define key corners.

Mr. Birkle felt this type of project might be better looked at 5 years down the road, considering the economic shape of Commerce and Waterford.

Mr. O'Neil indicated he personally thought it was important to paint a vision and set some goals for the area right now. Mr. Birchler added that one of the reasons municipalities are in danger with the economy is because they don't have economic development. White Lake Township can not abandon the idea of planning for economic development in the future.

Mr. Birchler distributed illustrations of some of the elements and stated that the key is to make sure the development community knows White Lake Township has a vision for the area.

New Business

Mr. O'Neil reported that both applicants this evening are in the conceptual phase. Soltis Plastic is proposing an accessory structure behind the existing building, and Gin Mill wants to replace an old building. Both are struggling with non-conforming properties and have been running existing businesses for many years. Both applicants are looking for feedback this evening and are most likely to need zoning variances as well. No action is required on these items at this time.

- a. Name: Soltis Plastic
Location: 10479 Highland road, 12-22-252-023
Request: Discussion on Conceptual Plan for Accessory Structure

Vern Hooper, representing Soltis Plastic, stated that storage is necessary to protect inventory from UV ray problems. They are requesting conceptual approval to move forward.

Mr. O'Neil indicated that the main issue is with a section of Glynn Road that was abandoned were there was the opportunity to pick up additional land. There is no fencing or landscaping in that area and there are issues with outdoor storage. The State Police had approved a "no parking" restriction on Glynn Road.

Soltis has outdoor storage with pallets of plastics that should be kept inside and away from UV rays and they are looking to build a pole building. The proposed elevations were reviewed. Mr. O'Neil noted that the township would require landscaping along the side parallel to Glynn Road and while there isn't room for a berm, it would be consistent with what the neighbor (AmComm) has now. This is the industrial district and it is consistent with what would be expected for the area.

There are other issues with regard to setback that would have to be addressed by the Zoning Board of Appeals and if approved, they would have to go through the site plan approval process.

Mr. Birkle stated that he likes the idea with screening, but questioned whether there was a concern with parking. Mr. O'Neil noted that vehicles would be ticketed for parking on Glynn Road. There currently is parking available in the front of the building and they are not anticipating an increase in the amount of traffic flow.

Ms. Novak-Phelps questioned why they couldn't add on to existing building and Mr. Hooper stated they are in need of dry storage and the building is heated.

Mr. Anderson expressed concern over deliveries being at the dry storage area and the use of a hi-lo to move product back and forth.

Mr. Martinko asked if there was any feedback from the Fire Dept. Mr. O'Neil indicated there are other issues that would have to be discussed when this comes in for site plan review and the proposal will go to every department for review at that time.

Ms. Novak-Phelps cautioned that this board needs to be careful when giving conceptual approval and Mr. O'Neil noted a decision could be made contingent upon ZBA approval.

Kristin Goetze of Johnson and Anderson stated that they would mainly be looking at storm water runoff from the roof and the turning radius of semis backing into the storage building. Mr. Hooper noted there is a detention pond behind them that he believes is state land. They were given a ditch for retention and water has been diverted to the creek across Glen Road to the south side. Mr. O'Neil added that there would be a more complete application meeting in the future.

- b. Name: Gin Mill
 Location: 8240 Highland Road, 12-13-476-008
 Request: Discussion on Conceptual Plan for Building Placement

Mr. Birchler reported that the applicant has been helpful with the SAD hearings in getting sewer and water, in hope of moving forward with their project.

The owner, Rob Shunia was present, along with Ciad Al-Baba, the engineer for the project. Mr. Al-Baba stated the existing building is very close to the setback on M-59 and the approach is shared with the hotel. He reviewed the proposed plan and their concept is to build a new building and bring it up to code rather than remodel the old building. They are providing the 15% required landscaping and they have pushed the building 5 ft. from all sides to provide landscaping in the rear. They met with the township regarding code requirements. They are hoping and asking for the setbacks to go back to 5 ft.

It appears the biggest issue will be with the setbacks. Mr. O'Neil stated this is a prime corner for retail and this is a good site for this use. He feels this is the catalyst that will start redevelopment on the point. The applicant has helped bring the SAD to the area with this long term goal. While the site is challenging, it will be a nice addition to that corner. There will be storm water questions that will be answered at a later date and he doesn't support the 20 ft. setback.

Mr. Martinko questioned the storm sewers running through the property and their depth. Mr. Al-Baba stated they would work the storm system out. Ms. Goetze added that 6 ft. is a normal depth and they have to be below frost level. Mr. Martinko stated he is in favor of the 5 ft. setback and trees for screening. Mr. O'Neil indicated there is a buffering requirement by ordinance and they would consider the back of the building to be a screened wall.

Mr. Martinko stated that carpet roses and spirea have done well and day lilies should be considered near the building itself. As for the shrubs on corner section, they are looking at a nonconforming site. He feels the best thing for this site is to have an area that is all grass with 5 trees.

Mr. Al-Baba noted that trees and shrubs would be controlled by the frontage of the road and they would have to comply with the ordinance. Mr. Martinko felt the site could be altered due to its non-conformity and a scale of trees would compensate for a percentage of the landscape.

Thomas Johnson, 9136 Buckingham, commended the board for moving along with this. He is in favor of the proposal and feels there are issues with the traffic light and school children that should be addressed at some point.

Planning Consultant's Report

Mr. Birchler had nothing further to add

Director's Report

Mr. O'Neil had nothing further to add.

Mr. Anderson reported the Township Board approved the Michigan Natural Trust Fund Agreement for Bloomer Park at their last meeting and gave recognition to the Parks & Rec Committee for its efforts. He commended Mr. Iacoangeli for all his hard work.

Communications

Next meeting dates:

- Regular meeting – April 7, 2011 (possible cancellation)
- Regular meeting – April 21, 2011

Ms. Novak-Phelps announced they are introducing the White Lake Farmers Market at Lakeland High School, which will start May 7th and run every Saturday throughout the summer. Information and applications are posted on the township website.

Adjournment

Ms. Phelps moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Mr. Martinko supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (6 yes votes)