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## WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP

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### WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting  
7525 Highland Road  
White Lake, MI 48383  
February 18, 2010 @ 7:00 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL: Steve Anderson, Vice Chairperson  
David Lewsley, Chairperson  
Michael Long - **Absent**  
Steve Martinko, Secretary  
Peter Meagher  
Maria Michalowski - **Absent**  
Gail Novak-Phelps  
Beverly Spoor, Board Liaison - **Absent**  
Stan Woodhouse - **Absent**

Also Present: Sean O'Neil, AICP, Planning Director  
Ole Anderson, Township Engineer  
David Birchler, AICP, Township Consultant  
Lynn Lindon, Recording Secretary

Visitors: 0

#### Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Martinko moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mrs. Novak-Phelps supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (5 yes votes)

#### Approval of Minutes:

- Minutes of January 21, 2010

Mrs. Novak-Phelps moved to approve the minutes of January 21, 2010 as presented. Mr. Lewsley supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (5 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.

#### New Business:

- a. Discussion of Temporary Signs

Mr. Birchler reviewed his memo of February 10, 2010. He was asked to provide a draft to address temporary signage. He is looking for input from the commission from a policy standpoint with regard to the approval process and enforcement authority. He asked the commission to consider temporary signs being handled administratively by the planning department and not the building department. Permits would be issued for a short period of time and the planning department will know what is out there and when it needs to come down. In addition, the planning department has the manpower to police this.

There are approximately 200 illegal signs along M-59 right now and these businesses will be informed that they will now need a permit. This effort will try to maintain the integrity of what the township has worked hard to establish over the last 10 years and is also designed to bring those businesses into compliance. The intent is to establish a reasonable system to help businesses get the word out and enable them to strive and thrive.

With regard to frequency and duration, there has to be a reasonable limit on how long a temporary sign can be displayed. For discussion purposes, consider giving each business 4 discretionary times per year for signs to be put out for 14 days and then 4 other times for seasonal signs or signs related to specific events. They could literally have a sign up for 1/3 of the year and up to 8 signs. The message on the signs would be continually changing, which would add interest.

Mr. S. Anderson expressed concern with seasonal and holiday permits due to ethnic diversity. Mr. Lewsley suggested allowing 1 holiday per season.

Mr. Birchler noted that this could be set up in a way that a business could come in once per year to obtain a permit for 8 signs and this system could actually regulate itself. The planning department should only have to go after the businesses that are cheating all the time. Mr. O'Neil added that this entire section will be looked at throughout the year and addressing temporary signs is a good place to start. He would like to know what the business owner's needs are and would also like some of them to provide their input. Mr. Lewsley suggested sending a letter notifying them of our intent and giving them time to provide their input before a public hearing is held. Mr. Martinko suggested the commissioners could also individually visit some of these businesses and ask for their opinion.

Briefly discussed was distinguishing temporary signs, the costs of those signs, and placement if it is prohibited in the right-of-way. Mrs. Novak-Phelps cautioned that placement could affect the line of site. Also referenced was the Copperfield Plaza and while their sign is well done, it does nothing for the stores located in the plaza. Developers should consider the fact that their tenants would want signage. Mr. Birchler suggested a longer display for businesses that don't have frontage on the road and for businesses located deeper in a center, i.e., restaurants, possibly allowing a menu board outside their door. Mr. Meagher felt there might be some discrimination, but Mr. Birchler was thinking more of having a permanent panel next to the door on the wall, not "A" frames that would block sidewalks.

Mr. O'Neil stated there are so many situations and opportunities and suggested coming up with 4 or 5 acceptable options for businesses to choose from including size, color, material, etc. that fits the mold and has a standard.

The consensus of the group is to make sure this will happen administratively through the planning department; that permits will be handled through the planning department and not the building department; to establish a fee for the use of temporary signs; to be able to determine a measure/timeframe for changing out the signs; and to provide options for signage.

Mr. O'Neil added that as we get closer to implementing this, the board will be requested to propose a moratorium on all temporary signs. This will not affect the signs that are legitimately in front of a business. Business owners will be instructed to go to the website and come to the public hearing if they want to be a part of the process.

Mr. Martinko feels the group needs to define temporary signs to expand across displays, rentals, etc. such as hot air balloons, et al. Also, be flexible at grand openings to allow more than 2 weeks and define special events. This could come off the total of 16 weeks. If we do grant a holiday, some businesses have different occasions, not just holidays, such as seasonal sales events that should be considered. We need to lock it in not to exceed a back-to-back-to-back schedule or it will defeat the purpose of "temporary" signs.

Mr. Lewsley referenced a moratorium versus amnesty. A moratorium is that we won't allow any more temporary signs within a period of time; and amnesty is to acknowledge non-compliance and to come in and fill out the correct paperwork. Mr. O'Neil will talk to Attorney Greg Need.

Another issue brought up was banners. Ideally, Mr. O'Neil would like to commit to at least ½ dozen options, i.e., banners, flags, sandwich boards, etc. and provide standards for each. When businesses come in for permits, they will have to stay within the limits. They will be approved based on being out of the right-of-way, being on their property, and not overlapping someone else's store, etc. Allow for 2 signs for a grand opening, then drop to 1 sign. You can have different signs, but only one at a time during certain times of the year. Let the business be creative to generate business.

This will be discussed again at the March 4 meeting.

**Other Business:**

- a. Update on "The Bluffs at Williams Lake Crossing"/File No. 09-019

Lombardo Homes and Dan's Excavating have purchased the northern portion of the Ivanhoe Huntley property called the Bluffs. They are moving quickly to amend a similar consent judgment. This is master-planned for multiple-family, but these will be single family homes in the 2,200 sq. ft. range on R-1D size lots. They want to break ground in April and there are some roads and utilities already in. They cut the number of units from 74 to 62 and took out t-turnarounds and added a cul-de-sac.

**Planning Consultant's Report**

Mr. Birchler had nothing further to add.

**Director's Report**

Mr. O'Neil had nothing further to add.

**Communications:**

**Next meeting dates**

Regular meeting - March 4, 2010

Regular meeting - March 18, 2010

**Adjournment**

Mrs. Novak-Phelps moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m. Mr. Martinko supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (5 yes votes)