

Blendon Township  
Planning Commission Meeting  
September 7, 2021

1. **The meeting was called to order** at 7:00 pm by Vice-Chairman, Jason Vander Kodde
2. **Invocation** was given by Brett Huizenga
3. **Roll Call:**

PRESENT:	Jason Vander Kodde	Jeff DeWind
	Sean Miller	Jeff Meyer
	Brett Huizenga	
ABSENT:	Terry Huberts (with notice)	
	Lyn Peters (with notice)	
4. **Also Attending:**
  - a. Andrew Moore – Township Planning Consultant
  - b. Steve Kushion – Township Zoning Administrator
  - c. Kurt Gernaat – Fire Chief
5. **Motion to approve the agenda** was made by Jeff Meyer, support by Jeff DeWind  
Motion Carried 5-0
6. **Motion to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, dated August 3, 2021, with the following changes**, was made by Sean Miller, support by Brett Huizenga.
  - Commissioner Miller stated he did not vote on item #6, therefore the Motion Carried should be 4-0.Motion Carried 5-0
7. **Opportunity for public comment and communication of business on the Agenda:**
  - a. None
8. **New Business:**
  - a. **Rezone Request**
    - Kelly Kuiper, representing Jim Overweg and Great Lakes Excavating, highlighted their application
      - Currently split zoned AG and R1
      - Asking to rezone to all R1
      - Presented a conceptual plan
    - Zoning Administrator, Steve Kushion, read the Public Notice
    - Vice-Chair Vander Kodde opened the public hearing at 7:10 pm
      - Randy Klunder: 8680 Taylor St
        - Opposed to getting rid of the farmland and making it residential.
      - Tom Geurink: 8727 Taylor St
        - Concerns about water, wells, and drainage
      - Larry Smith: 8717 – 88<sup>th</sup> Ave
        - Concerned about water crisis and questions on subdivision
    - Vice-Chair Vander Kodde closed the public hearing at 7:16 pm

- Vander Kodde addressed the resident's concerns brought up during the public hearing:
  - Agriculture – Farmland: The township does not manage the sale of land.
  - Wells – Water – Managed by Ottawa County
  - Drainage – Managed by Ottawa County
  - Building Moratorium – Currently there is not a moratorium in Blendon Township; the resident was referring to Allendale.
  - Conceptual Map – Was not a required submission but was submitted as a courtesy. A subdivision was not proposed.
- The Commissioners deliberated on the request:
  - Huizenga: Feels that request is conducive to our plan
  - DeWind: Has water concerns, and more wells does contribute to that concern, but feels that we can not dictate the sale of land.
  - Miller: Feels that the request reflects what we have been allowing in the past.
  - Meyer: Questioned the number of allowable splits. Noted that the same number is allowed in both AG and R1. R1 does not increase the number of splits, just the size of the splits.
  - Vander Kodde: Echo's Meyer's comments. Noted that having the larger lots allows for fewer homes long-term.
- ***Motion to recommend the approval of the rezone of parcel #70-13-05-300-021, located at 8912 – 88<sup>th</sup> Ave, to the Township Board was made by Jeff Meyer, support by Sean Miller.***

Motion Carried 5-0

b. **Rezone Request:**

- Rick Pulaski, from Nederveld and Associates, representing the applicant and developer, Wayne DeYoung, highlighted the request.
  - Rezone AG – R2
  - Construct a neighborhood similar to Stanton Woods
  - Approximately 40-45 (1) acre lots
  - Allendale Township willing to talk with Blendon Township concerning access to the watermain to provide water to the subdivision.
- Zoning Administrator, Steve Kushion, read the public notice
- Vice-Chair Vander Kodde opened the public hearing at 7:37 pm
  - Dave Van Dusen: 6700 Fillmore St.
    - Opposed. Not interested in water. Likes not having neighbors. Afraid this will raise his property value and taxes. Already too much traffic.
  - Judy Schmidt: 6695 Fillmore St
    - Opposed. Concerned about traffic. Would like to see a definite agreement – contract with Allendale before rezoning to R2.
  - Lauren Nysse: 6585 Fillmore St
    - Opposed. Concerns about traffic and safety on Fillmore St. Headlights shining in her home, entrance location on Fillmore.
  - Steven – Paula Manni – Pohler: 6768 Fillmore St
    - Expressed concern via letter submitted via mail.
- Vice-Chair Vander Kodde closed the public hearing at 7:43 pm

- Township Planner, Andrew Moore, highlighted his memorandum concerning the request.
  - Would not recommend approval
  - Has concerns
    - Does not feel it is consistent with the Master Plan
    - Looking for consistent development patterns, not leapfrog development.
    - With an R2 zoning and the presence of municipal water, the developer could have up to 70 single family dwellings.
- Vander Kodde addressed the resident's concerns that were brought up during the public hearing:
  - Taxes – Assessing decides this not the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is responsible for development and planning.
  - Traffic – Managed by the Ottawa County Road Commission
  - Headlights and Entrances – Part of the Site Plan Review, once presented, at the Planning Commission.
  - Water Agreement with Allendale: A developer would not spend the time or capital to pursue the development if the agreement was not viewed as favorable.
- The Commissioners deliberated on the request:
  - DeWind: Likes the access to municipal water. There is a lot of pressure for growth and feels that this is a good plan because of the water access. We need to figure out ways to embrace access to the watermain.
  - Miller: Agrees with DeWind. Does not like the unknowns that come with the R2 rezone. Not favorable of spot zoning.
  - Meyer: Feels that the access to water makes it attractive. Concerned about fitting with the Master Plan. Feels that there is a need for more housing.
  - Huizenga: Also concerned about the R2 zoning and the number of potential lots that would be allowed. Questioned whether the applicant could offer a conditional rezone.
  - Vander Kodde: Opposed to rezoning to R2 as presented because the density does not meet the Master Plan.
- Mr. Pulaski reapproached the Commission and voluntarily asked that the application be tabled until the applicant can propose conditions for the rezone.
- ***Motion to table the rezone request for parcels 70-13-03-200-019 and 70-13-03-200-003, for up to 3 months, until additional information can be provided by the applicant was made by Brett Huizenga, support by Jeff DeWind.***

Motion Carried 5-0

c. **SPR Amendment:**

- The applicant, Jim Mys, was present and highlighted his request.
  - Add on to existing barn.
  - Needs more room
  - Jim Mys trucking started in 1993, leased space to B & D Pole Barn starting in 2002.
  - Both businesses operate out of the 56<sup>th</sup> Ave building.
- Zoning Administrator, Steve Kushion, read the public notice

- Vice-Chair, Jason Vander Kodde, opened the public hearing at 8:08 pm.
  - There were not public comments
- Vice-chair, Vander Kodde, closed the public hearing at 8:09 pm.
- Township Planner, Andrew Moore, highlighted his memorandum concerning the applicant's request:
  - Sketch plan submitted is not sufficient to determine compliance.
  - Need a full site plan that meets the standards on the application.
  - Need to contact Jim Scales concerning the storage of the semi-trailers on the parcel.
- The Commissioners deliberated on the request:
  - Miller: Recommend the applicant work with the Zoning Administrator and present a full site plan as required.
  - Meyer, Huizenga, DeWind and Vander Kodde all agree with Miller.
  - Vander Kodde: Explained to Mr. Mys what was needed to be considered a complete site plan. Also noted that a bike path may be required or could be deferred or placed elsewhere.
- ***Motion to table the request for a Site Plan Amendment, for up to 3 months, until the applicant can provide a complete site plan was made by Jeff Meyer, support by Sean Miller.***

Motion Carried 5-0

d. **SLU Amendment:**

- Applicant and owner of Farmhaus Cider, John Behrens, was present and highlighted his request.
  - Requesting an amendment to the seasons and hours of operation.
  - Needs more flexibility. Times are different now then when he originally applied.
  - Work closely supporting the community
  - GVSU has approached John about offering opportunities for students in their Agri-tourism and Molecular Biology (brewing) classes. Students would need 400 hours a semester.
  - Need to be open a minimum of 40 hours/week during peak season to maintain their Pure Michigan and Michigan Tourism endorsements.
- Zoning Administrator, Steve Kushion, read the Public Notice
- Vice-Chair, Jason Vander Kodde, opened the public hearing at 8:37 pm.
  - Mike and Bev Hill: 5085 Stanton St
    - Opposed. Concerned about safety. Agree with a letter that was submitted by Tim and Cindy Baker. Numerous Zoning violations. Dislikes the noise, traffic, food trucks, and parking. Also submitted a letter to the commission prior to the meeting.
  - Cheryl Behrens: 5245 Stanton St
    - Supports. In favor of the change. Feels change is inevitable.
  - Jerry Behrens: 5094 Stanton St
    - Supports. Not related to John. Lives across from Farmhaus. Stated that John and Megan are very compassionate people that care about their neighbors. They provide a very family-friendly atmosphere. Hears more noise from the surrounding area like Grand Valley Football, Allendale Football, and Post Family Farms.

- Cal Avink: 5230 Stanton St.
  - Support. Feels Farmhaus is very quiet, and they have nothing against them.
- Megan Behrens: 5025 Stanton St.
  - Proud of the impact that Farmhaus has had on the community. Stated that Farmhaus is seasonal because they are season-dependent being a cider mill. Feels that they have run their business properly and respectfully and feels that others should treat Farmhaus with similar respect. Feels that they have been compromising in not asking for what they want for Farmhaus but only what the need.
- Wayne Behrens: 5056 Stanton St
  - Support. Submitted a letter via Megan Behrens
- Tim and Cindy Baker:
  - Expressed concerns via letter and email that were sent to the township.
- Vice-Chair, Jason Vander Kodde, closed the public hearing at 9:03 pm.
- Township Planner, Andrew Moore, highlighted his memorandum concerning the request.
  - Highlighted the history of Farmhaus Cider with the Planning Commission.
  - Currently have 21 conditions on their SLU including the seasons and hours.
- Vander Kodde addressed the concerns that were brought up by the resident's during the public hearing:
  - Businesses: The Planning Commission wants to encourage businesses to be successful in Blendon Township.
  - Violations: Zoning Administrator, Kirk Scharphorn Jr, performed the required 'conditional inspection' in December 2020. No violations were noted or have been received since that time.
  - Public Notice: Per Michigan law, all residents that live within 300' will receive a notice of the public hearing.
  - Public Comments: The commission appreciates and takes into consideration all public comments
- The commissioners deliberated on the request:
  - Meyer: Farm with Sales and Entertainment are seasonal in nature. Master Plan shows this as falling in a 'mixed use' area, seems like a reasonable request.
  - Huizenga: Agrees with Meyer. Currently falls within an area marked from growth and mixed use.
  - DeWind: Supports small businesses. Concerned because it seems to be a lot of additional hours and the impact that will have on the neighbors.
  - Miller: Feels the new seasons and hours is much cleaner. Feels that the owner has already compromised by scaling back the requested hours to 10:00 pm instead of the proposed 12:00 am. Not looking to hinder businesses.
  - Vander Kodde: Need to find a balance. Stated that Farmhaus would about double their operating hours and that did not include the allowed events. Concerned that the days are not set and are variable.

- The suggestion was made to form a subcommittee to review and explore potential hours and allowable events.
  - Miller, Huizenga, and Huberts (via Vander Kodde), along with Andrew Moore, volunteered to be on the subcommittee.
- ***Motion to form a subcommittee consisting of Commissioners Sean Miller, Brett Huizenga, Terry Huberts and Planner Andrew Moore to work with John Behrens was made by Brett Huizenga, support by Jeff DeWind.***  
Motion Carried 5-0
- ***Motion to table the SLU amendment request until the October meeting was made by Brett Huizenga, support by Sean Miller.***  
Motion Carried 5-0

e. **Water Supply System Master Plan:**

- Board Liaison, Jeff Meyer, and Fire Chief, Kurt Gernaat provided an update.
- Township Board is seeking PC support for the proposal from Prein & Newhof to have them provide a water system master plan.
- The Commission would like to make sure Section 19 is also added to the proposal.
- The Commissioners were supportive and would like it to be a coordinated effort to update the master plan.

9. **Old Business:**

a. **Mike Knoper Rezone Request:**

- Tabled at the May 5, 2021, meeting.
- Applicant was notified that to remain tabled the commission needed to receive an update or new information prior to the September 7 meeting.
  - No response was received.
- ***Motion to remove the Knoper Rezone Request from the table and to close the request due to no new information was made by Sean Miller, support by Brett Huizenga.***

Motion Carried 5-0

10. **Updates of Ongoing Business:**

a. **Township Board Meeting Minutes:**

- As submitted
- Highlighted by Jeff Meyer

b. **Bonds and SLU:**

- No Additions or changes

c. **Master Plan Updates:**

- Postponed until October due to full agenda.

11. **Opportunity for public comment and communication of business not on the agenda:**

- Kelly Kuiper addressed the Commission as a follow-up to her attendance at the Ottawa County Ground Water Meeting on August 16, 2021.
  - Kelly has met with Paul Sachs and staff two time since the meeting. To address her concerns.
  - Stated that there is a disconnect between the county and the township regarding what the county has to offer for assistance.
    - County has staff that can help rewrite ordinances at not cost to the township.

- There are relief monies available that can be applied for to help defray costs associated with improving or installing infrastructure.
- Tim Rowland, Rowland Machine:
  - Wanted to discuss a site plan that was submitted
  - Site plan was not given to the Commission due to no application and fees have not been paid
  - Mr. Rowland was sent an email from Zoning Administrator, Steve Kushion, on August 30 explaining exactly what needed to be done.
  - The commission advised Mr. Rowland to meet with the Zoning Administrator and then submit a complete site plan with the application and paid fees to be placed on the agenda for a meeting.

**12. Planning Commissioner Comments:**

**a. Ordinance adding Mini-Warehouses and Self-storage to the LI Zoning District:**

- At August Planning Commission Meeting the ordinance was approved for recommendation to the Board.
- Ordinance was approved by the Board at the Board Meeting.
- A public hearing is required to make a zoning amendment but was never held.
- The ordinance is not void.
- A public hearing will be noticed for the October 5 meeting and will be revoted on at that time.

**b. Extending Sewer in addition to Water:**

- Commissioner Vander Kodde inquired on whether we should use county funds to study the extension of sewer as well as water.

**13. Correspondence for informational purposes only:**

- a. None

**14. Upcoming Events:**

- a. Township Board Meeting: September 20, 2021
- b. Planning Commission Meeting: October 5, 2021

**15. Adjournment:**

- a. With no further business brought before the Planning Commission a motion was made to adjourn, at 10:04 pm, by Jeff DeWind, support by Brett Huizenga.

Motion Carried 5-0

Recorded by Tina Vander Schuur  
Respectfully Submitted by Lyn Peters, Secretary