

**Approved Minutes**  
**Grass Lake Charter Township Planning Commission Meeting**  
**August 17, 2017 @ 7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hinkle called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

ROLL CALL: Members present: Jere Hinkle, Ken Elliott, John Lesinski, Todd Raehtz, Jim Warbritton and Roger Memmer. Members absent: Lacey O'Quinn

ALSO PRESENT: Doug Lammers, Township Zoning Administrator, Todd and Colten Fodor and 10 Citizens. A sign in sheet with names and addresses of those attending the meeting is attached to these minutes.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Moved by Lesinski and supported by Elliott to approve the agenda. All ayes. One absent. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Moved by Warbritton and supported by Lesinski to approve the July 20, 2017 meeting minutes. All ayes. One absent. Motion carried.

Chairperson Hinkle temporarily adjourned meeting and opened public hearing at 7:05 pm.

**PUBLIC HEARING-** Special Land Use Application Case #17-07-0008 by Todd Fodor.

Chairperson Hinkle indicated that the purpose of the public hearing is to receive comments on a Special Land Use application by Todd Fodor for processing firewood at parcel #000-15-22-100-001-07, 4105 Novell Road. The parcel is located in an AG, Agricultural Zoned district. The firewood processing business is being considered as an "open air business" which is designated as a Special Use in Agricultural Zoned districts under Section 5.03 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Todd Fodor presented an overview of the proposed firewood processing. Logs will be stockpiled on site for processing. Processing equipment will cut, split and stack the firewood. Processing equipment is driven by a diesel motor and has a 60" saw blade to cut the logs to firewood length. A 100' x 120' concrete slab will be constructed to support the firewood processing equipment and stockpile up to approximately 2500 face cord of processed firewood. Operation at the site will intermittent but may occur between 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Saturday. No retail sales are proposed at the site. After initial processing, to create a stockpile, it is anticipated that processing equipment will be operated a maximum of 40 hours per month. All runoff from the processing area will be retained on

the site and construction of a berm is being considered to screen the site from Norvell Road.

Several neighbors, present at the hearing, expressed concern for noise emanating from the operation. Noise will emanate from operation of a loader and the processing equipment. Mr. Fodor indicated that they have been operating the same equipment at his Burtch Road site for 15 years and noise has not been an issue with neighbors at that site. Truck drivers entering and leaving the site will be requested to not use Jake brakes. Zoning Administrator, Lammers, indicated that the operation would need to comply with the Township noise ordinance.

Concern for site aesthetics were also expressed by neighbors. Mr. Fodor assured neighbors that the site will be kept neat and that a possible berm along Norvell Road, along with existing vegetation, will help screen the site from neighbors.

Chairperson, Hinkle, closed the public hearing. Public Hearing closed and planning commission meeting reopened at 7:47 pm.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

a. PUBLIC HEARING- Special Land Use Application Case #17-07-0008 by Todd Fodor

Planning Commission members noted possible impacts on neighbors including concerns over site security, aesthetics, driveway location and noise. Possible mitigating measures were noted including moving the driveway further north from the south property line, constructing berms with evergreen trees along the west property line and portions of the north and south property lines, limiting hours of operation and constructing a gate at the driveway entrance.

Motion by Elliott and supported by Lesinski to approve the Special Land Use Application with the following conditions:

1. Construction of a 6 foot high earth berm with evergreen trees along the west (Norvell Road) property line and along the westerly 250 feet of the north and south property lines.
2. Business hours between 7:00am and 5:00pm Monday through Saturday with no operation of the firewood processing machine on Saturday.
3. Moving the driveway north to provide a 30 foot setback from the south property line.
4. Construction of a gate at the driveway entrance from Norvell Road
5. Construction of a sign must be in compliance with the Township Sign Ordinance.

All ayes. One absent. Motion carried.

b. Review of LI/HC zoning district.

This is an ongoing issue because the Zoning Map shows a combination Light Industrial/Highway Commercial (LI/HC) district along a portion of I-94, however there is no corresponding section in the ordinance describing the district requirements or identifying permitted or special land uses for such a district. Chairperson Hinkle reported that the Planning Commission may want to consider changing the zoning in this district from LI/HC to either Light Industrial (LI) or Highway Commercial (HC). No action taken.

c. Review of rezoning project following Master Plan adoption.

After the recent completion of the Master Plan, it is noted that several areas in the Township are being used for agriculture purpose but are located in Residential zoned districts. Although agriculture use in residential districts is allowed, it may be desirable to rezone these areas to be more consistent with their current use. Chairperson Hinkle suggested that the Planning Commission (as a trial case) may want to review the zoning classifications in a small portion of the Township to determine if or where any rezoning may want to be reconsidered.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION:

Resident, Ryan George, indicated that their family is considering purchasing approximately 23 acres of vacant land northeast of the intersection of Norvell and Grass Lake Roads. She is considering construction of a commercial business on Norvell Road and a residence on another part of the parcel. Residential use would require the parcel, or a portion of the parcel to be rezoned. The parcel is currently zoned Commercial. The Planning Commission indicated that this area has been zoned Commercial for some time and that the Township Master Plan shows this area to remain Commercial on the Future Land Use Map.

TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT:

Township Board member, Lesinski, reported:

- a. The Board is looking at the need for a fireworks ordinance.
- b. The Board is looking into improving internet service/options.
- c. The Board is looking into extending water service to the Sandhill Estates subdivision.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Sign Ordinance amendments: Item was tabled.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Zoning Administrator, Lammers, noted that he has had requests regarding constructing solar panels on residential lots. Since solar panels are not specifically addressed in the zoning ordinance, they are being considered as an accessory building with regard to required setbacks.

## PROPOSED BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING:

The September and October meeting dates were established for September 14, 2017, and October 12, 2017. The meeting dates for September and October were moved to the second Thursday of the months to avoid conflicts. Business to include continued work on zoning ordinance amendments.

## ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Lesinski and, supported by Raehtz to adjourn meeting at 9:22pm. All ayes. One absent. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,

Roger Memmer, Secretary  
Grass Lake Charter Township Planning Commission

Attachments: Attendee Sign In List