

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423
(616) 335-3050

November 7, 2007

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bob Cook called the regular monthly Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Cook, Bob Slikkers, Roger Prins, Ed Stielstra, Al Dogger

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Ron Bultje – Township Attorney
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the October 3, 2007 meeting. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Bob Slikkers and seconded by Al Dogger to approve the minutes as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE III. OLD BUSINESS

A. FLYING J SPECIAL USE REQUEST

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Al Dogger and seconded by Bob Slikkers to table this item until the December meeting. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

B. CALVARY SCHOOLS SPECIAL USE REQUEST

Calvary Schools, owner or agent of property located on the north side of 147th Avenue, west of 60th Street, that being tax Parcel #0311-001-011-10, requests a special use permit to construct a school

on this property.

Paul Davis of Calvary Schools discussed point K of the report prepared by Attorney Bultje in regards to the use of portable classrooms. Chairman Cook explained that if the school proposed the use of portable classrooms in the future, it would require a request for amendment to the approved special use approval. Mr. Davis also expressed concern about the sprinkling provisions on the site. Two wells have been drilled with no water present so a third well may be drilled if necessary. If a new well is not an option, Mr. Davis requests the ability to use the municipal water to irrigate the landscape buffer in an effort to be a good neighbor to the condominium developments. Cook explained this would be an administrative matter handled by the Township and would not require coming back to the Planning Commission but would require approval by the township administration.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Ed Stielstra and seconded by Bob Slikkers to approve the resolution and report as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

C. GRASMAN SPECIAL USE REQUEST

Chairman Cook reported that this special use request has been withdrawn.

ARTICLE IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. F & W NURSERY REQUEST

Mr. Willis Weyman, owner or agent of property located at 4458 61st Street requests a special use permit to produce renewable energy and Biofuel at this site.

Township Manager Al Meshkin explained that Mr. Weyman is making this request as he believes that this proposal is for an agricultural use whereas Mr. Meshkin believes that it is an industrial application and the property is not zoned for industrial use. Mr. Weyman communicated that crops would be grown on the property as part of the processing.

Attorney Ron Bultje stated that the zoning does have language that might lend to the understanding as an agricultural use. He would recommend that if it is an interpretation issue, it should be brought before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Chairman Cook asked Mr. Weyman to clarify the process proposed. Mr. Weyman explained that the biodiesel would be produced from the soybeans that would be grown on the property. Mr. Weyman provided a picture of the machine that would be used in the process which runs off 5.5 amps.

Al Dogger asked what kind of volume is Mr. Weyman proposing to produce. Bob Cook stated that the question tonight is whether or not the biodiesel processing is an agricultural use or industrial use. Mr. Dogger feels it is industrial. Attorney Bultje spoke to the application Sections that address agricultural use of property. Bob Slikkers asked what the economics of growing the crops versus obtaining oil waste from other sources. Mr. Weyman stated that the soybeans would support the process and the byproducts would be used for feed. Mr. Weyman stated that the process would be mixing the soybeans with ethanol resulting in the production of diesel fuel. Mrs. Weyman explained that the process is a close looped system that provides no contamination. The machine would produce 80 gallons of fuel per day running 24 hours per day. This is a small operation to benefit the local farmers in the area. The equipment cost is \$6,000-\$10,000 for two units.

Ron Bultje stated that while this is an ecological friendly process, allowing it, would set a precedence for future proposals of non-agricultural processes.

Mrs. Weyman explained again that the byproducts of this process would be used to fuel the farm equipment and selling of the overages to other farmers.

Al Meshkin stated that the difference is in the word “process”. When you process something, it becomes industrial. Meshkin stated material would need to be brought onto the site for the process, such as ethanol and lye.

Chairman Cook reviewed the allowable uses as stated in the Township Zoning Ordinance Section 5.02 that apply to agricultural uses. Chairman Cook stated that he does not see where this special request would fit in the Zoning Ordinance. Attorney Bultje stated that the uses must be listed in the Ordinance in order for the Board to have authority to approve the special use request.

Al Meshkin noted Ordinance 11.02 (i) stating that this request would fit in an industrial zoned area.

Mrs. Weyman expressed concern that the Board is not taking into consideration the benefits for the local farmers as a cost savings on fuel expenses. Mrs. Weyman asked how this Section 5.02 could be updated to include this type of use.

Al Meshkin stated that according to Section 21.01 a request to amend the Ordinance could be submitted by a resident. Attorney Bultje explained the entire process and the timing of it, which at a minimum might be 90 days.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Bob Slikkers and seconded by Al Dogger to acknowledge the request does not fit into the Section 5.02 of the Zoning Ordinance, and therefore cannot be considered by the Planning Commission. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE V. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Dave Wickstrom stated that most of the audience is present tonight as they do not feel that this special use request for the biodiesel plant is a fit for the township.

Diane Lenters stated she knows what it is like to drive past the Zeeland soybean plant and also 30 years ago when Klomparens requested to have a greenhouse as a hobby, it is now a large operation that produces many bad fumes in the area.

George Smeenge asked for the status of the Flying J topic. Chairman Cook responded that it has been tabled.

ARTICLE VI. ADJOURNMENT

**A motion was made by Ed Stielstra and seconded by Al Dogger to adjourn at 8:42 P.M.
UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**