

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

March 2, 2011

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Cook, Linda Howell, Ed Stielstra, Bob Slikkers, Randy Becksvort

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 January 5, 2011 meeting. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Bob Slikkers and seconded by Linda Howell to approve the minutes as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE III. OLD BUSINESS

A. ZONING ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

Chairman Cook stated that the discussion will begin with Loading Requirements (e) under the General Parking Requirements. Section (e) (3) was determined not to be necessary and will be deleted. This will be taken into consideration when reviewing the site plans submitted. Section (e) (4) will also be deleted. Township Attorney Ron Bultje stated that in 38.679 there are specific requirements for loading/unloading space standards. Bob Cook asked if this section might be replacing Section X. Linda Howell suggested leaving the standards in the document. Ron noted

that in commercial and industrial uses, the table will be used when required as it pertains to its use. The planning commission can choose to eliminate the requirements if the use dictates.

Section (f) Minimum parking spaces table. The first section pertains to the minimum number of spaces for residential conditions. Bob Cook asked if minimum parking should be prescribed for single or multi-family dwellings. Bob Slikkers suggested requiring that all vehicles must be in a garage or driveway. He feels the numeric requirement is too difficult to define. Bob Cook asked if the residential requirements would now be the same as commercial. He feels it should be addressed in the residential chapter of the ordinance. Ed Stielstra asked if the residential chapter would apply to this section as well. Ron Bultje questioned the intent of this direction. Bob Cook stated that the numeric requirement cannot be named as it will not be feasible to determine the number of vehicles per family members. Al Meshkin commented that parking numerous cars on the grass could diminish the value of properties. He stated if there is a 40 foot setback, there would be enough for double lane parking in a driveway. Ron stated that there have been issues in the past on the lakeshore wherein there are no driveways and/or garages. There will have to be guidelines provided for parking.

Bob Cook began to review the non-residential section of the table. Ron Bultje cautioned the commissioners to give this section much consideration. Bob Cook would like to add a provision stating that the planning commission has the right to vary the number of required parking spaces based on the review of site plans on a case by case basis. Ron Bultje stated that there is such a provision in the ordinance.

Ed Stielstra questioned basing the number of parking spaces on the number of employees. Ed feels that both restrictions could be in place allowing flexibility for the board. Linda Howell stated that if we go by employees, it is possible that the total number of employees may not all be on site at the same time if it is a multi-shift operation. Al Meshkin stated that the problem with the current ordinance is that it is too specific. He asked if it is possible to provide the flexibility for the board to review each specific site plan request and determine the number of spaces based on the business plan, number of employees, primary use, and presentation of data supported by a simple study to determine appropriate need. Bob Slikkers agreed that the uses could change and the board would take that into consideration. Ed Stielstra asked if the board could defer the land usage for future parking. Ron Bultje confirmed that would be an option.

Ron Bultje suggested putting the table (or a similar table) in the guidelines as a potential norm. The applicant would still have to provide a business plan allowing the board to have the flexibility to provide requirements based on the applied use. If the use changes the board reserves the right to revisit the parking requirements by requesting a revised plan. Bob Cook asked if Ron would review the table and reduce it to a more appropriate format for the guidelines.

Linda Howell clarified whether or not the applicant would have to bring a formal traffic study or a proposed plan. Ron Bultje stated that a plan and not a detailed study would suffice unless the use dictated more comprehensive data.

Sec. 38-475 Signs Bob Cook clarified that this section is also covered in great detail in another area of the ordinance detail. Bob reviewed the very first sentence that addresses approval for all signs. Al Meshkin commented that all signs require a permit. Section (g) (3) addresses where a permit is not necessary. Ron Bultje stated that the City of Grand Haven had a situation on Jackson Street wherein a resident started writing signs on the side of his home and also erecting signs in his yard. Ultimately, the city prevailed by proving the structures were unsafe. The content of the messages were supported by the First Amendment of Constitutional Rights.

Ron Bultje suggested adding verbiage to state that there are sections of the chapter depicting where permits are not required. Al Meshkin stated that it is permissible to have a 3' x 4' sign on your home or in your yard. Ed Stielstra commented that his neighbor has a sign that is clearly not 10 feet from the property lines.

Section (b) Signs prohibited in all zoning districts. Item (4) prohibits anything larger than two square feet such as a commercial advertisement on utility poles. Bob Slikkers questioned (7) for banners, how long can someone have one up. In (8) it addresses events not to exceed 15 days eliminating the last phrase which defines a specific use. Al commented on suggesting a setback for signs which may in some cases be ridiculous. Bob Cook stated that 90% of realtor and political signs are in the street right-of-way. It was suggested to eliminate (9) that addressed this. Ed Stielstra stated that there are two in his neighborhood that are within the right-of-way that do not create an issue. Bob Slikkers questioned why we would want to allow signs in the right-of-way. Ron Bultje referred to (d) that would allow for signs in the right-of-way that would not obstruct the clear view of traffic. There was discussion of real estate and other directional signs. Ed suggested restricting the size of the signs. Al Meshkin stated that property owners must be asked for permission before a sign is placed on their property. Ron Bultje stated that some temporary signs for open houses, parties, etc. will not be avoided. It was agreed that (d) will cover the necessary requirements with the correction of taking out the words, "in the township".

Bob Cook addressed (10) Scrolling or flashing electronic message boards. Ed Stielstra cited examples at the BoatWerks and Holland Christian High School. Ron Bultje has language that addresses this that has been used in other townships. Linda Howell commented on a study about billboards that change every ten seconds and the effects on drivers.

In (c) it was noted that signs must conform to all applicable codes adopted and enforced by the township. Linda Howell suggested that signs include a responsible contact person. Al Meshkin responded that the people who comply with getting a permit will provide their contact information.

It was agreed to leave (e) in the chapter to secure responsibility for outdated information. Bob Cook stated it would be difficult if the sign is a lease situation. The commissioners had no issue with (f) addressing non-conforming signs.

Bob Cook asked if the board would like to finish this section at the April meeting if there is indeed a meeting scheduled. Al Meshkin responded that a meeting will be scheduled as there are two items that will be on the agenda in addition to the continued discussion on the zoning ordinance. The

items are in regards to the Gibson Church move and a request by the kennel owner on 64th Street. The board agreed to break discussion at this point and continue this section at the April meeting.
ARTICLE IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. SLENK SPECIAL USE REQUEST

Mr. Alan Slenk, owner or agent of property located at 6329 North Ryan Ridge, that being tax parcel #0311-405-009-00 requests a special use permit to construct an oversize accessory building on this parcel.

Mr. Slenk presented an updated drawing of the position of the building on the property. He would like to build a 30 x 48 square foot building. The lot is deeper than it is wider so the variance would be for an additional 6 feet in size. The structure is aesthetically appealing to the style of the home on the property. The building will be for personal use only to store equipment.

Chairman Bob Cook opened for public hearing. Richard Stec of 6321 North Ryan Ridge stated that he has no objection to this request.

A motion was made by Bob Slikkers and seconded by Linda Howell to close the public hearing. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

Randy Becksvoort stated that he visited the site and does not have any questions or concerns.

Bob Slikkers stated that he does not have any concerns now that the position of the building has been changed.

Linda Howell and Ed Stielstra had no questions or concerns.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Linda Howell and seconded by Randy Becksvoort to approve the Slenk Special Use Request to construct an oversize accessory building finding it meets the criteria stated in Section 38.471 and Section 38.91, contingent upon meeting the requirement permitted by the standard, and contingent upon complying with all federal, state, county and township laws and ordinances, in compliance with the application submitted, the updated drawing of the positioning of the structure and the verbal representation provided at this meeting and in the minutes.**

UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

ARTICLE V. CITIZEN COMMENTS – None

ARTICLE VI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Bob Slikkers and seconded by Linda Howell to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 P.M. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

Ed Stielstra, Secretary

Diane Ybarra, Recording Secretary