

Rome Township Planning Commission - Meeting Minutes - Thursday 23 May 2019

I. Call to order:

Mike Griffith, Chairman called the Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7pm at the Rome

Township Hall – 9344 Forrister Road - Adrian, MI 49221. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

II. Roll call:

Present: Leo Oswald, Mike Griffith, Jeff Elwell, Pat Bournes, and Jack Griffes

Absent: Kevin Fisher

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting:

Motion to approve 25 April 2019 minutes by Jeff, 2nd by Pat, motion carried.

IV. Additions/Changes to Agenda: none

Motion to approve agenda by Pat , 2nd by Jeff. Motion carried.

V. Reports:

-Township Board – Voted to replace culvert on Woerner Rd.// connect to Consumers Gas // Return check to citizen who felt they had damaged just off off a cemetery drive // approved shoulder work on Townline and two inches gravel on Teachout.

-Zoning Officer – no permit requests this month - some inquiries from potential buyers about restrictions - notices about blight issues going out soon and 3 specific ones already in queue have received final notice.

-Zoning Board of Appeals – none

-Planning Board Commission - none

VI. Order of Business:

- Review Training held Thursday 16 May 2019 at Woodstock Twp Hall - discussion - review Master Plan at next meeting (put on agenda)

Pat moved to close regular meeting, Jeff seconded - carried 7:11pm

Public hearing opened at 7:11pm

-Public Hearing for Special Use Permit - Jason Cooper - Landscape business.

Jason Cooper read a statement about his small lawn care business, himself, one full-time, one part-time employee as need. Working 7:30am - 7:30pm currently - generally until 5pm or so. Three trucks and trailers. Generally two trucks are kept onsite - one is taken home. Had not been aware of need for special use permit - also unaware of restriction on burning but has ceased and is dumping clippings, etc. at Slusarski where a number of lawn care businesses dispose of lawn waste. Zoning Enforcement Officer stated she has checked into this and has checked with other owners about concerns they have which were mainly the burning which has ceased and the noise of the vehicles including back-up beepers going off when neighbors are sleeping.

Neighbors delivered copies of formal complaint letters to Planning Commission and also voiced concerns - about having a business across the street from them when they bought property and built a residence in the country for peace and quiet. Another neighbor that has lived there 50 years complained about vehicles racing up and down road multiple times per day plus a beeper going off all hours of day.

Jason Cooper reported that since January the Bobcat with a beeper has been off site and only been onsite once as requested by Brenda the Zoning Officer. There are no beepers on any of his trucks. He claims only being in and out of property a couple times a day except for potentially his own personal pickup.

Neighbor (Jack) that has lived there fifty years rebutted. Said it had been nice and peaceful until Jason Cooper started doing business there. Says there are lots of trips in and out during single days and sometimes tires on trailer smoked in front of his home by someone driving a Black Dodge truck pulling the trailer and trying to slow down. Jason said this person no longer works for him.

Leo asked Jason Cooper if he brought any concrete onto property. He hasn't recently and needs to get rid of some that is on site. He will need to have equipment onsite to clear out remaining concrete and that equipment will have a back-up beeper.

Moved to close Public Hearing by Jeff, Seconded by Pat, motion carried 7:39pm
Regular meeting re-opened 7:39pm

VII. Public Comment:

Property owner is in favor of getting special use on property.

Roxann Sweet asked about when business started and when buildings were built (building of large 3 car garage around 2006 with permits pulled by previous owner - Shumaker ?sp?).

Neighbors across road in Dover Township claim their property had been zoned Agricultural and was changed to Residential so they could build their homes. Neighbors are concerned that property value may decrease via having a business running across the road from them.

Mike Griffith spoke to all present about their concerns and the fact restrictions can be placed on Special Use Permit that if violated would void the Permit. Neighbors are concerned about noise and traffic and potential property value degradation.

Neighbors asked what happens if property is sold. Jack clarified that Special Use Permit stays with property. Neighbors say front end of property looks nice and back of property looks like a junkyard. If back was cleaned up and kept looking nice they would feel better about that aspect.

Owner mentioned that road is heavily travelled at all hours of the night when rodeo is going on down the road. Neighbors pointed out that was Saturday only and was not the traffic they were talking about - that they were talking only about Cooper Lawn Care business traffic. Neighbors complained about mud being put on road.

Roxann asked about his five year plan.

Jeff explained to neighbors, owner, and business owner that a lawyer explained years ago that many people move to a rural area thinking it is all peace and quiet but in reality there are many activities going on that make noise, and smells. It is also important to realize that many people in the country have sideline businesses as a means to actually be able to make a living. It is a difficult situation to tell someone they can't make a living here because I don't like the smell or the noise. Advocated for neighbors to work together to work things out - go and talk - go and offer to help clean up a mess. Mike backed up that neighbors should work things out. Neighbors said they don't want to stop someone's business but they want to be respected and communicated with. Neighbors complained more about the smoldering fire but also conceded that we all make mistakes. Neighbors asked to be respected. Jeff talked about neighbor (Jack) having a heart condition and needing to keep stress down. Brenda (Zoning Enforcement Officer) mentioned neighbor with kids with health concerns.

Jack (neighbor) suggested it be tabled and Board draft Special Use Permit restrictions. It was explained that it needed to be completed in an open meeting.

Jeff moved to set restrictions on Special Use Permit. Pat seconded. Discussion to create list below ensued.

- Moderate the noise - don't speed up fast when leaving - don't race in and stop super hard - basically ease in and out to respect nearby neighbors.
- Property needs to be cleaned up and kept cleaned up.
- No disposal of or accumulation of lawn refuse or brush (from jobs) on property
- No burning of yard waste or brush on property

Pat moved to accept listed restrictions and make recommendation to grant permit. Jeff seconded. Roll call vote: Leo yes; Pat yes; Jeff yes; Jack yes; Mike yes // motioned carried

Township Board Meeting is 13 June 2019 which offers opportunity for additional complaints.

VIII. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn @ 8:42 pm by Pat, 2nd by Jeff - motion carried unanimously, meeting adjourned

Next Regular Meeting to be held 27 June 2019 @ 7:00 pm

Minutes submitted by: Jack Griffes, Secretary of Planning Commission

Minutes approved by: Mike Griffith, Chairman _____