

**Dorr Township Planning Commission
December 20, 2005 Minutes**

1. Chairman Robert Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Roll Call--Members Present: Joycelin Denstone, Larry Dolegowski, Norm Fifelski, Gordon Lieffers, Doug Montgomery, Karen Slater, and Robert Wagner. Members Absent: None.
4. The Minutes of the November 15, 2005 meeting were presented. A motion was made by Norm Fifelski and supported by Larry Dolegowski to approve the minutes as presented. All Aye. Motion carried.
5. Changes or Additions to the Agenda
None.
6. Public Comments
None.
7. At 7:30 P.M. the Public Hearing to consider the request of Robert DeYoung, Gerald Joubert and Betsy Joubert to rezone 65 acres in Section 14 from Agricultural to Rural Agricultural zone district was held. Don Degroot of Exxel Engineering presented. 24 attended.

Discussion: The conditional rezoning request was withdrawn. The cost to subdivide by metes and bounds is less than a conventional plat. The request for the Rural Agricultural zone district would allow for 12-17 homes on 3-acre lots. Norm Fifelski asked how the developer determined that 13 lots were possible when there were severe limitations on much of the land. Don DeGroot identified the areas that were too wet for construction on an aerial map. He explained that 30-40 lots would be possible in the B-Zone district but they would require sewer system access.

Joe Norton questioned the development plans for property located south of the property in question.

Jim Potter voiced concerns about the size of the houses in the proposed development to the south of the property in question. He questioned whether the township earns or loses money from housing developments. He asked why there is no money for paving roads. Larry Hanson commented that the Planning Commission denied a previous request to develop this property because 144th Avenue was not paved. Bob Wagner explained that the previous request was for a higher density development and the Township prohibits construction of new housing developments in the high-density zones.

Bob Senneker asked if there were any plans to pave 144th Avenue. Larry Dolegowski stated that there were no plans at this time.

Sharon Helmholdt asked why 144th Avenue was currently being surveyed if there was no plan to pave it in the near future.

Larry Hanson said he spoke to the survey crew and was told that the County was surveying the road due to the proposal under discussion.

Larry Dolegowski stated the County was surveying in order to provide a better estimate of the cost for paving 144th Avenue.

Jack Morren explained that a large waterway was located on the northern edge of the property to the south and that connecting the 2 proposed developments would require extensive excavation.

Linda Dumond was concerned about what types of houses would be built and whether the new construction would devalue existing homes. She stated smaller homes encouraged transients who did not stay in the community and did not take pride in their homes. She stated that she preferred larger homes and fewer homes on larger lots. She voiced concerns about water run off onto her land.

The Public Comment Section was closed at 8:04 P.M.

A motion was made by Gordon Lieffers and supported by Karen Slater that the request by Robert DeYoung, Gerald Joubert and Betsy Joubert for approval to rezone 65 acres from Agricultural to Rural Agricultural zone located at Northwest portion of Section 14 with approximately 400 feet of road frontage on the south side of 144th Avenue approved for recommendation to the Allegan County Planning Commission and the Dorr Township Board for approval as it has been demonstrated that the low density designation on the Master Plan is no longer appropriate because of the uncertainty of paving 144th Avenue, the wetlands, steep slopes, and muck make it difficult to physically connect the roadways and utilities to the LDR planned property to the south and the proposed RA Zone would provide a transition zone and is more compatible with the long term farming on the north of 144th Avenue.

Roll Call vote: Dolegowski-no, Fifelski-Yes, Lieffers-Yes, Montgomery-no, Slater-Yes, Wagner-Yes, and Denstone-No. Members Absent: None. Motion carried.

8. At 8:43 P.M. the Public Hearing to consider the request of Gary Godley to rezone 4 acres in Section 15 from Agricultural to Residential B-1 was held. Gary Godley presented. 7 attended.

Discussion: There were no comments from the public.

The Main Street Planning Staff Report dated 12/8/05 was reviewed

The Public Comment Section was closed at 8:46 P.M.

A motion was made by Larry Dolegowski and supported by Norm Fifelski that the request by Gary Godley for approval to rezone 4 acres located in Section 15 on the southeast corner of 18th Street and 144th Avenue which has 528 feet of road frontage on the south side of 114th Avenue and 330 feet of frontage on 18th Street from Agricultural to Residential B-1 zone district be approved for recommendation to the Allegan County Planning Commission and the Dorr Township Board for approval as it has been demonstrated that the project conforms with the Township Master Plan, is consistent with trends in the area, and 144th Avenue and 18th Street are both paved roads.

Roll Call vote: Denstone-Yes, Dolegowski-Yes, Fifelski-Yes, Lieffers-Yes, Montgomery-Yes, Slater-Yes, and Wagner-Yes. Members Absent: None. Motion carried.

9. Site Plan-John Williams

John Williams presented. 8 attended.

Discussion: The Main Street Planning Company Staff Report dated 12/7/05 was reviewed.

A motion was made by Doug Montgomery and supported by Gordon Lieffers that the request by John Williams for approval of the site plan dated 12/19/05 for a 14,868 square foot building for uses as permitted in the I-Industrial zoning district at 1228 Ingle Street, a private street located in Section 1, running west off 12th Street approximately 1000 feet north of 146th Avenue be approved as it has been demonstrated that the project conforms with Chapter XIV-A.

Approval is subject to the following conditions: The addition of screening of dumpsters to the plan.

Roll Call vote: Denstone-Yes, Dolegowski-Yes, Fifelski-Yes, Lieffers-Yes, Montgomery-Yes, Slater-Yes, and Wagner-Yes. Members Absent: None. Motion carried.

10. Special Use Permit-Brian DeSmit

The Public Hearing to consider the request of Brian DeSmit for issuance of a special use permit, which would allow him to construct and maintain a private road at 2105 140th Ave., was resumed. Mike Timmer of Pathfinders Engineering presented. 7 attended.

Discussion: The applicant plans to build a private street via an easement that would serve 4 lots on a 10-acre parcel. The front lot located on 140th Ave. already has a house and barn on the property. The driveway for that house would remain on 140th Avenue but the property owner would have access to the private road and intends to construct a drive from the barn to the new street. A letter of approval from the Fire Chief was presented.

The road easement stopped one foot short of the property line which protects the owners of the property to the west.

There were no comments from the public.

The Public Comment Section was closed at 9:17 P.M.

A motion was made by Gordon Lieffers and supported by Joycelin Denstone that the request by Brian DeSmit for issuance of a special use permit, which would allow him to construct and maintain a private road at 2105 140th Ave. be approved as it has been demonstrated that the proposed project is compatible with adjacent uses of land; consistent with, and promotes the intent and purpose of Ordinance 300.220; is compatible with the natural environment; is consistent with the capacities of public services and facilities affected by the proposed use; protects the public health, safety, and welfare.

Roll Call vote: Denstone-Yes, Dolegowski-Yes, Fifelski-Yes, Lieffers-Yes, Montgomery-Yes, Slater-Yes, and Wagner-Yes. Members Absent: None. Motion carried.

11. Larson's Ridge

Jack Barr of Nederveld's represented the applicant.

- a. The major area of concern was the plan to have a mixture of private and public roads in the same development. The consensus of the Planning Commission was to have all streets in Larson's Ridge be private.
- b. The possibility of adding a connecting street to the property to the north was discussed. The road connection to the north to be added to the plan. Eliminating the connecting street to the east was an option.
- c. Conditions of approval include an Open Space Management agreement and approval from the DEQ.
- d. More detailed plans must be provided at the time that the individual phases are reviewed.

12. Old Business:

- a. Amending the Grass and Weed Ordinance

Karen Slater made a brief presentation regarding the need to amend the ordinance to include residential areas regardless of the zone district. Further discussion is planned for future meetings.

- b. Increasing the minimum square footage of new homes.

The consensus of the Planning Commissioners was that Dorr Township should increase the minimum square footage of new homes but the size increase was not decided upon. The rationale for the increase is that the community has a sufficient number of smaller starter/empty nester homes and larger homes would encourage diversity in the community. A Public Hearing is required to change the minimum square footage of new homes. The issue will be discussed at future meetings prior to setting a date for a Public Hearing on the matter.

13. New Business:

- a. Set meeting dates for 2006.

Discussion ensued regarding changing the time of the meetings from 7:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. It was decided to discuss the issue with the Township Board prior to making a decision.

A motion was made by Gordon Lieffers and supported by Robert Wagner to hold the Planning Commission meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Dorr Township Hall. All Aye. Motion carried.

14. Commissioner Comments
 - a. Karen Slater reported on the review of the material presented by Shawn McKenney regarding the Rabbit River Watershed project.
 - b. Karen Slater will present the year-end summary at the January meeting.
 - c. Jane Rens is requesting the email addresses of the Planning Commissioners to facilitate communications.
 - d. Robert Wagner welcomed Joycelin Denstone to the Planning Commission.
 - e. Robert Wagner and Tim Johnson wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

15. A Motion was made by Larry Dolegowski and Supported by Gordon Lieffers to adjourn. All Aye. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 P.M.

The next scheduled regular Planning Commission meeting is January 17, 2006.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Ann Slater

Karen Ann Slater
Secretary