

Vernon Township
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by saying the pledge.

Present: Nathan Charles, Janeene Temple, Russel Hilliker, John Wolf, Robert Corwin, and Ben Telford.

Absentees: None.

Motion: John Wolf motioned; Ben Telford seconded to approve the agenda as presented. All yes; motion passed.

Motion: John Wolf motioned; Ben Telford seconded to approve the February 3, 2025, minutes, as presented. All yes; motion passed.

Public Comment:

No Public Comment

New Business:

No New Business

Old Business:

Holiday Shores/ Leisure Lake:

Noah Bussell from McKenna was available via Zoom for the meeting. He discussed how we got to where we are today and some recommendations on moving forward. He did try to secure the special use permits for both Holiday Shores and Leisure Lake without success. The planning commission discussed some of the issues surrounding the zoning and what impact any resolution may have moving forward. Per McKenna, the Planning Commission will need to take the following steps to resolve the zoning issues surrounding these two properties.

- A. The Zoning Map Amendment would restore the original A-2 zoning and require a public hearing.
- B. Zoning Text Amendments would adopt new language clarifying the distinction between a manufactured housing community and a campground and require a public hearing. There is also a recommendation to remove the section 2.14 LO Overlay District from this area.
- C. Secure both properties' original special use permits to ensure that any text amendment does not cause further issues.

Motion: John Wolf motioned; Ben Telford seconded to schedule a public hearing for the April Planning Commission meeting. The public hearing would be for a zoning map amendment, recommending the rezoning of the area of Leisure Lake and Holiday Shores to A-2. Roll Call, all yes. The Motion Passed.

Motion: John Wolf motioned; Nathan Charles seconded to remove the Section 2.14 LO Overlay District from the Leisure Lake/Holiday Shores properties. Roll Call, all yes. The motion passed.

Durand Lanes:

A memo regarding zoning regulations north of Saginaw Street was presented to the planning commission. This area is zoned M-1, but many properties are not appropriate for that zoning. Noah Bussell from McKenna discussed many of these properties and then gave options for resolving the zoning issues in the area.

There were three options given to the planning commission that could be used.

- Text Amendment to amend Table 2-2 of the Zoning Ordinance; this would permit the illegal non-conforming either by right, by right with use-specific Standards, or by special land use permit.
- Enterprise Overlay District: This would grant flexibility in how the M-1 zoned land north of Durand can be developed.
- Rezoning: This would require rezoning one, multiple, or all parcels. It is discouraged at this time as it must be in accordance with the Future Land Use Map.

After discussing these options, it was felt that the Enterprise Overlay District would give the Planning Commission time to complete current projects and then consider amending the future land use map, with an eye towards rezoning this area.

Motion: John Wolf motioned; Robert Conrad seconded to recommend that the Township Board authorize McKenna planners to draft a formal text and map amendment that provides the language for the Overlay District and designates the properties it will cover. Roll Call; all yes. Motion Passed.

Durand Lanes is permitted to renovate and open, given the current footprint. Any renovation will need to be to the building proper and they cannot expand until the zoning has been resolved.

McKenna Updates:

Lucky's Pets has given the new site plans to McKenna for review and they will review them this week. Site plans were given to the fire department prior to McKenna seeing them and the Clerk has informed the representatives of Lucky's Pets that they are to have no contact with the fire department regarding site plans. Once McKenna has reviewed them, they will be given to the proper entities.

Noah Bussell also indicated that they had received site plans for a billboard along M-71. They will be reviewing those plans as well this week.

Staff Communications:

There was not staff communications.

Commissioner Comments:

John Wolf was asked about the M-2 zoning he would like looked into. He indicated that it can wait until other projects have been completed or are further along.

Chairperson Janeene Temple asked that all planning members be provided with a copy of the current Master Plan and Township Zoning.

Chairperson Janeene Temple asked that two planning/zoning books be purchased for the planning commission's use as there has been no training available through MTA. The clerk will purchase those books in the next budget year, which starts April 1, 2025.

Chairperson Janeene Temple shared some of her thoughts on a recent book regarding zoning. She wanted to impress upon the rest of the commission that they should not be setting restrictions above that of the State of Michigan.

The next planning commission meeting will be held on Monday, April 7, 2025, at 7:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Susan Bannister
Recording Secretary
Vernon Township Clerk