

**HOWELL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**

Howell Township Hall

March 27, 2018

6:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Andrew Sloan Chairman  
Mark Freude Vice Chairman  
Wayne Williams Secretary  
Matthew Counts Board Rep.  
Martha Haglund Commissioner  
Carolyn Henry Commissioner  
Peter Manwiller Commissioner

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Also in attendance: Zoning Administrator Joe Daus  
Township Planner Paul Montagno

Chairman Sloan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The roll was called.

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

**MOTION** by Henry, seconded by Freude, **“TO APPROVE THE MARCH 27, 2018 AGENDA AS PRESENTED.”** Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION** by Freude, seconded Williams, **“TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 27, 2018 MEETING AS CORRECTED: ON THE ROLL CALL FOR SPECIAL USE PERMIT, IT SHOULD READ CARRIED 6 TO 0.”** Motion carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Planning & Zoning News

**TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT:**

(Commissioner Counts reported on the following items)

- Approved Special Use Permit from Trilogy Health Services, (The Willows) for new building.
- Brewer Meadows Extension was tabled.
- Approved to pay down in advance one of the bonds.
- See synopsis.

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPORT:**

(Commissioner Sloan reported on the following items)

- No meeting in March.

**ZONING REPORT:**

(Zoning Administrator Daus reported on the following items)

- No report.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

A) THOMSON PLASTICE INC., PARCEL # 4706-29-200-005, REZONE FROM “RSC” to “HC”

- **MOTION** by Freude, seconded by Henry, **“TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THOMSON PLASTIC INC. AT 6:33 P.M.”** Motion carried.
- Township Planner Montagno introduced the project. This is a request to rezone the 8.49 acre property from Regional Service Commercial (RSC) to Heavy Commercial (HC). The site is located at 4100 Lambert Drive. The corner of Lambert and Burkhart in Section 29. They are indicating they would like to use the vacant building for

warehousing and storage of finished products. Because the site has already been developed there are no existing natural features on the site to be concerned with and it is within the water/sewer district. The Planning Commission will need to make a recommendation to the Board based on their findings. Planner Montagno addressed factors that need to be considered. The rezoning stays with the parcel not the business.

- Questions were taken from the Commissioners.
- John Dinsmore from Lee & Associates, realtor for the property explained that the property has set empty for quite some time and believes that this rezoning is an appropriate use and request.
- Spoke person for Thomson Plastic gave background on Thomson Plastic. They are planning on leaving the manufacturing in their existing building on Parson Road and then use the building across the street (4100 Lambert Dr.) for warehousing. They would like to add presses in their manufacturing building, but they need a building to warehouse the product. They want to grow their business and create jobs. (Some things Thomson Plastic manufactures are map pockets for car door panels, door inserts and 60% of business is for Ford Lansing Delta Assembly Plant.) At the present there are no plans to change the size of the building but will need to add some loading docks. Products will be transferred by truck from the manufacturing building to the warehouse building. There should only be around 6 trucks a day coming and going from the building.
- Questions were taken from the Commissioners.
- There was no response from the public.
- **MOTION** by Counts, seconded by Henry, **"TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THOMSON PLASTIC AT 7:00 P.M."** Motion carried.
- Further questions were taken from the Commissioners for Planner Montagno.
- **MOTION** by Henry, seconded by Haglund, **"TO RECOMMEND TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD TO APPROVE REZONING FROM "RSC" TO "HC", ON PARCEL 4706-29-200-005, AND BASED ON THE FACT THAT THE MASTER PLAN DESIGNATES THE AREA AS ESSENTIALLY ALMOST CONSISTENT WITH THE CURRENT ZONING. ALSO THAT THE EXISTING FACILITY AND POTENTIAL USES OF THE SITE ARE CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING AND PLANNED USES IN THE SAME AREA. THAT IS ALSO NOT LIKELY THAT THE PUBLIC SERVICES OR FACILITIES WOULD BE IMPACTED TO A GREATER EXTENT THAN THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT AND THAT THE EXISTING FACILITY APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED FOR LIGHT MANUFACTURING OR WAREHOUSING."** Discussion followed. A roll-call vote was taken: Williams – yes, Sloan – yes, Haglund – yes, Manwiller – no, Freude – yes, Counts – no, Henry – yes. Motion carries 5 to 2.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 324 BUILDING ADDITION- PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN

- Township Planner Montagno introduced the project for Operating Engineers a 33.36 acre parcel of land located at 275 East Highland Road. The zoning is "OS" Office Service. This site is used for heavy equipment education/training which is permitted in this district. The 550 foot frontage of this parcel is off Highland Road, but widens towards the rear to approximately 1,800 footage. The facility also includes roughly 425 acres of land both within Howell and Oceola Townships. The applicant is seeking a 17,500 square foot building addition to the east of the 13,400 square foot existing building for additional classroom space. There is another 6,000 square foot building in the rear of the property. The existing parking lot of 97 parking spaces will also be expanded to 194 spaces. No part of the proposed additions will encroach into any wooded or wetlands. No change to site access. Planner Montagno addressed factors that need to be considered.
- Paul Corneuvssen from French Associates Architects who designed the expansion and parking improvements. He stated that he will provide additional calculations for lot coverages. We are below the 50% coverage. He stated that there are concerns with having raised parking island with the all the snow removal and would like to continue with just having

stripped parking area. Because of grade elevation of the parking lot and planting of trees he doesn't believe the headlights will be a problem for any of the neighboring residents.

- John Osika the training coordinator for Operating Engineers stating that all their heavy training season is in the winter months. It makes it harder to pile all the snow. He also would like to leave the parking stripped.
- Questions were taken from the Commissioners.
- **MOTION** by Freude, seconded by Manwiller, **“TO APPROVE THE OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 324 BUILDING ADDITION PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN, TO INCLUDE THE PLANNER’S REPORT, ENGINEER’S REPORT, FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT, MHOG REPORT, DRAIN COMMISSONER’S REPORT AND ANY OTHER REQUIRED APPROVAL OF FROM ANY OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES.”** Discussion followed. A roll-call vote was taken: Manwiller –yes, Counts – yes, Williams – yes, Haglund – yes, Freude – yes, Henry – yes, Sloan – yes. Motion carries 7 to 0.

B. AMERICAN LEGION POST 141 – SITE PLAN AMENDMENT

- Township Planner Montagno introduced the project for American Legion located at 3265 W. Grand River Avenue. The applicant has applied for a site plan amendment to install a 30 foot tall, 288 square foot per face, with two faces, billboard on the existing parcel. The site has a 5,500 square foot existing building, associate parking, a ground sign and two storage sheds. The site is nearly completely covered with the buildings and the parking lot. They are proposing to place the billboard in the middle of a parking lot island that frames one bay of parking spaces. Because the use of this site is in the “HC” Heavy Commercial District it is considered a legal nonconforming use. This type of use which includes clubs, fraternal organizations and lodge halls are permitted in the “RSC” Regional Service Commercial District. Billboards are permitted in the “HC” Districts. However, past billboards have been treated as a principal use on the parcel. There is an existing 44 square foot ground mounted sign on the site and two wall signs. The site is already over developed and cannot be developed to this intensity. Any additional structure would increase the use of an already nonconforming site. (See Carlisle/Wortman report dated March 23, 2018)
- Justin Hill from Crossroads Outdoor introduced who will be speaking on behalf of the proposed billboard.
- Cameron Hervath from Boss Engineering explained updates to the site plan. He also spoke about the setback variances, lot coverage variances and berm requirement variances that were granted in 2002. The spot where the proposed billboard is to go is where the existing flag pole is now. The flag pole would be moved elsewhere.
- Tony Lockridge is representing Crossroads Outdoor, which is a local Michigan Billboard Company. His specialty is developing new sign locations. He gave his explanation of his understanding of what is allowed for billboards and the contrary to what the Township’s allowance for billboards. Does not understand why they have to have a Site Plan Amendment for a billboard. He also stated his belief that there is a bias against this project under the guise of nonconformance.
- Mark Epley who is an executive board member from the American Legion, stated that they are a non-profit organization that does a lot for the community and explained the memberships of the American Legion. They are hoping to gain revenue from the billboard to help this chapter of American Legion stay open.
- Several Commissioners stated they are not against the American Legion nor is the Township Planner. It is not the Commissioners nor the Township Planner who are being confrontational. We appreciate what the American Legion brings to the Township.
- Discussion followed.
- The Township Board put a (120) one hundred, twenty day moratorium on billboards and signs commencing March 25<sup>th</sup>. Discussion on the issue that American Legion had their

application in before the moratorium was approved. The Board did not exclude the American Legion’s application from the moratorium.

- With a friendly **MOTION** by Freude, seconded by Henry, **“TO TABLE THE APPLICATION FOR AMERICAN LEGION UNTIL FURTHER RESEARCH FROM LEGAL COUNSEL AND TO HAVE THE ENGINEER REVIEW THE ILLUMINATION PLAN THAT WAS SUBMITTED.”** Discussion followed. A roll-call vote was taken: Sloan – yes, Henry – yes, Counts – yes, Freude – yes, Haglund – yes, Williams – yes, Manwiller – yes. Motion carries 7 to 0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Commissioner Haglund wanted to know about the process of getting the sidewalk ordinance going. Township Planner stated that it is one of the items on the priority list. He will have something to submit in a few weeks. Haglund also stated that she will be going to the Howell Area Park Recreation Authority Retreat to discuss strategically planning for the next (5) five years. Discussion followed.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

No response.

ADJOURNMENT:

**MOTION** by Haglund, seconded by Manwiller, **“TO ADJOURN.”** Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew Sloan, Chairman

As Presented: \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_

As Amended: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Wayne Williams, Secretary

As Corrected: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ 04/24/2018 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Debby Johnson, Recording Secretary