

**D R A F T**  
**Whitewater Township Planning Commission**  
**Minutes of 4/7/10 Regular Meeting**

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Zakrajsek called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Members Present: Boyd, Lyons, Mangus, Miller, Savage, Zakrajsek

Members Absent: Courtade, Excused

Also Attending: Zoning Administrator Meyers, ZA intern Akers, Recording Secretary MacLean and 3 members of the public.

**Set/Adjust Agenda**

Move New Business, item 1, ahead of Old Business.

**Approval of 3/3/10 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Boyd to accept minutes, seconded by Savage.

**Motion carried 6-0.**

**Conflict of Interest: None declared**

**Public Comment: None**

**Public Hearing Open at 7:05 p.m.**

Request by Paul Tyrer, of Expert Handyman Services, to modify site plan to allow outdoor sales at 8858 E M 72.

Notice published in the Elk Rapids News on March 18, 2010.

Site Plan Review: Meyers: the property is adequate to accommodate. Recommends some sort of decorative type fencing to delineate parking area from sales area.

Savage: Are there any lot restrictions against having three businesses in this area?

Meyers: None, at the township level. If there are land owner restrictions, the land owner would have to enforce those.

Boyd: Any property line separation necessary?

Meyers: The area is actually platted as four lots with a platted but undeveloped road.

The landscape tree sales will be quite separated from the Mattress Company by the natural hill drop off. The fencing would be for the safety of patrons, due to the sharp drop off of the hill.

Savage: There'll be two businesses on one property? Answer: Yes.

Zakrajsek: There are four lots?

Tyrer: Yes. There is supposed to be a little road in behind. Right now everyone comes in through the drive at the Mattress Company. The display area will be the hill top area between the Mattress Company and the Handyman pole building.

Miller: The additional traffic is okay with the Mattress Company? Answer: Yes.

No further comment from the public.

**Public Hearing Close at 7:13 p.m.**

**Reports:**

**Correspondence:** New Economy Training, free, three classes, April, May and June.

Savage: Motion to send Intern Akers to training, paid for by the PC, and have him report back, seconded by Lyons. **Motion carries 6-0.**

Watershed Center information to be discussed at a future date.

**Zoning Administrator:** County PC recommended denial of our sign ordinance. Their only objection is that they do not like the Sign Review Board. They recommend having it reviewed by the attorney because, possibly, the PC does not have authority.

Meyers has researched this and it is within the rights of the PC. She will check with the attorney then this can be back on the next agenda in May to then be forwarded to the Board for approval or back to the county. We do not **have** to have the county approval, it is ultimately up to the Township Board.

Savage: Can we run it past the MTA attorneys?

Meyers: They will turn it back to our own attorneys. Meyers will do pre-research and will not squander the attorney fees.

Mangus: It is a legit concern. It has been a trend in the region to not allow very generous signage and one of the things we have done with this is to allow more creativity.

Zakrajsek: What is Acme's sign size, 60 sq. ft? Ours is at 32 sq. ft.

Boyd: Does the county tell us why they want to deny?

Meyer: Because they don't think it is legal.

Boyd: That does not hold water.

Zakrajsek: It appears they do not want us to allow more than they allow and we would be able to do that with the Sign Review committee.

Zakrajsek: This will come back to us at the next meeting.

Per Mangus' request all committee minutes and reports have been sent digitally.

**Road Committee:** Private Road Ordinance: We have a draft we would like reviewed as soon as possible as this needs to go to the Township Board since this is a function of the general ordinance.

**Disaster Plan Committee:** Meeting on Monday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, to establish goals.

**TC TALUS:** Winding down on all portions of the Grand Vision and its sub sections.

They will then be able to get back to the main business of TC TALUS, which is roads.

**ZBA:** No meeting in March. New meeting date will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

**Township Board Representative, Boyd:** We have new Auditors, Dave Wilson, out of Interlochen with a very "in your face" attitude. One year renewable contract. Very impressive. It's a great step, he's a leader. Attorney interviews tomorrow.

Emergency Service Committee: The Township Board has authorized Supervisor Lake to check with Rural Fire on the value of current fire equipment. Once a recommendation is ready the committee will look at the financial side of it too. We get lots of good information and audience participation. We invite everyone to come out. Next meeting April 14, 6 p.m.

**Chair, Zakrajsek: None**

## **New Business:**

### **Outdoor Landscape Sales – Special Use Approval**

Zoning Administrator: Is it compatible with the Master Plan? Yes.

Is it compatible with surrounding area? Yes

It will not change the general character or impact traffic.

It is consistent with ordinance standards.

According to Article 25, he was able to submit a plot plan for approval, rather than a whole site plan and open air businesses are on the list of things allowed.

Zoning Administrator recommends approval of special use with the stipulation that fence delineation be in place to separate parking, sales area and drive aisles.

Discussion: Expert Handyman Service will be run out of the existing building and tree sales will be outside. Is this going to be a “Barker Creek Nursery” type situation?

It will be retail sales of balled root trees. Will sell a variety of trees and bushes, possibly Christmas trees and associated items. There will not be loose landscaping bark in piles.

There is operational room to bring in a semi load of trees. There is not a soil run off problem as there is a retention pond already there. There will be an extra sign in front.

There will not be a lot of “foot” traffic but there is enough room that people can get in with a truck and trailer. Additional equipment to be parked behind the barn. Possibly sell landscape related materials and seasonal items.

Meyers: We do not have to be picky and specific as once the sales are approved, additional items for sale can be approved without a public hearing or coming back to the Planning Commission.

Motion by Savage to approve Outdoor Landscape Sales, Special Use, as it is consistent with the seconded by Boyd.

**Motion carried: 6-0**

## **Old Business**

- Example of a Master Plan from Cleveland Twp. in Leelanau County implemented since the 2008 state legislation on Master Plans. They are similar to us, with some obvious differences but enough similarities to look at for ideas.
- Letter of intent to Plan to go to all entities that touch Whitewater Township.
- Public Act 33 MPEA info offered to each member
- Goals: Use the survey information. Establish goals based on survey results. IE: Lot size issue: the community overwhelming said they want it to stay the same or have the minimum lot size increased. Possibly base it on when the property was created or base it on densities. Mangus states that specific issue may need to have more information disseminated to the public. The County is investigating the time frame of when the lot size changes were made.
- Goals: Each committee member is to come back with a goal, specific to their sub-committee topic. The Planning Commission has to make the goals, Zoning Administrator can help word-smith the document.

Can the Master Plan address which is the final “go to, final document”, the Master Plan or the Zoning Ordinance? Is it possible to address that issue in a statement? The Zoning Ordinance is based on the Master Plan. We need to make this as fool proof as possible. In order to have a Zoning Ordinance there must be a Master Plan.

Akers is going to create a current land use map to create a future land use map. Future land use map could be the most contentious item we will have to deal with.

Savage: Lot size in this township is a very contentious issue. We need to develop a way to get lot size zoning figured out. Minority groups are trying to tell the rest of the groups what they can and cannot do. Boyd: "Squeaky wheel lot sizing." Mangus: we need to work toward providing maximum freedom for individuals, minimum impact on neighbors.

**Public Comment:** Citizen at large, Vaughn, states that the PC has a tough task with the 5 acre minimums. Statistically, the survey shows the will of the people. Check the mission statement. Rural Township / Rural Charm.

**Continuing Education – Master Citizen Planner Presentation – Lois MacLean**

Open Space development as an option. The state requires, we need to plan for it to work in our community.

**Motion to adjourn at 8:49 pm** by Boyd, seconded by Savage. **Motion carried 6-0.**  
Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lois MacLean  
Recording Secretary