

Unadilla Township Planning Commission

Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting @7:01 p.m.

June 16, 2020

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. ROLL CALL: Spadafore, Topping, Green, Miller, and Constable present.
3. PUBLIC HEARINGS
 - a. **Rezoning of Property**
 - i. Property ID #1321201004 located on M36 north of town, and west of 223 W. Main Street (Gregory Bank).
 - ii. The Petitioner requests to allow development of a boat storage (indoor/outdoor) business on the far west end of the described property, which will require a zoning change from R-3 (Residential) to B-1 (Business).
 - b. **Applicant comment**
 - i. The property owner, James Tomlinson was not present, Instead, the interested buyer of the property, Mike Haney submitted his plans to use the SW corner area of 3-4 acres of the 18.5 acre parcel as a boat storage area. This is a seasonal business for storing boats overwinter.
 - ii. The area in question is a separate parcel of the 18.5 acres and is dryer land compared to most of the rest of the property.
 - iii. Plans are to not touch the wetland area other than to enhance the current drive which goes to the back of the property where the intended boat storage area will be.
 - iv. He plans to store up to 100 shrink wrapped boats outdoors, with future plans to build a storage boat barn to store additional boats.
 - v. Because of the proximity of the storage area to the Lakeland Trail, there will be an approximately 400 ft long, 6-foot privacy fence built to aid in hiding the outside boat storage from users of the Trail.
 - vi. There will be no signs on M36 to indicate the business, and the owner of the business states he will be the only one pulling the boats in and out of the property. Most of the traffic for transporting the boats will occur in the mid to late fall, and again in the spring when boating season starts.
 - vii. The current drive to the back of the property will need to be enhanced to handle up to 30-foot boats, and will have to include additional culverts.
 - viii. A 30x40 pole barn will be built on the property to use for shrink-wrapping the boats.
 - ix. The Shrink-wrapping process will require propane (propane tank), electrical services which will have to be established, and a porta potty will be on site.
 - c. **Planning Commission questions**
 - i. Mr. Green has concerns of the open storage being an eyesore from the Lakeland Trail and fears it will not preserve the naturalness of the trail. Would it be better to store the boats on the North end of the property?
 1. Mr. Haney states there is a residential home within 100 feet of that area and it would not be feasible

- ii. Mr. Miller states that once the zoning is changed to B1 it will always be only B1 use allowed.
- iii. Mr. Spadafore states that the B2 status is more appropriate for the use requested because there is no storage use in B1, but B2 allows storage use but requires a Special Use permit. The property may also require a variance because of the amount of road frontage required for the B2 status.

d. Public Comment

- i. Gary La Casse has concerns about the property value of the nearby homes depleting, power washing concerns due to noise of the equipment and concerns of chemical pollution of the surrounding wetlands and county drain.
 - 1. Mr. Haney states the boats will NOT be cleaned on site, the only procedure to the boats will be the actual shrink wrapping.
- ii. Johnathan Botorowicz had a few questions:
 - 1. What are the Master Plan guidelines for Business Growth in the township? (L. Topping states the Master Plan of 2017 allows business growth along the M36 corridor, east and north of town, which includes the parcel in question.)
 - 2. Concerns that the rezoning and special use permit will set a precedent, and what sorts of other businesses could be allowed on the property if the zoning is changed. (B. Spadafore stated that although a change in zoning can also allow certain types of businesses to use the property that do not need a special use permit, the Special Use permit does allow the Planning Commission to attach restrictions to the property. If the property is rezoned to B2 and the business folds, the property will remain in a B2 status)
 - 3. Will Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) need to be consulted about the enhancement of the roadway to the back of the property?
 - a. Mr. Haney stated he believes so, and has gotten some estimates to upgrade the current roadway.
 - 4. Concerns about the beauty of the Lakeland Trail, which draws visitors to the area. We should be choosy about uses for properties along the trail, why does this parcel need to be used for boat storage?
- iii. There were several Public comment concerns about the quality and safety of the water as the property is a marshy area and contains a county drainage ditch, and of potential flooding should the driveway/roadway improvements affect the water flow. Some of the nearby homes already have seasonal flooding issues.
 - 1. G. La Casse stated the County drain goes right along M36. The County Drain Commission should be contacted for input, and the potential new owner may need to contact the Highway Department to find out if a wider entrance pad will be required.
- iv. Bob Whalen has several concerns:
 - 1. Public safety due to the need to use both lanes of the M36 highway to swing the boats onto the roadway into the property. Perhaps Mr. Haney should contact the Michigan Department of Transportation concerning any impact to M36.
 - 2. Crime potential for those that may rob and/or pillage the boat storage area, possibly using his property to get to the area.

3. It will be an eyesore along the Lakelands trail, he feels the fence will not be enough to hide the 100 stored boats.
 4. He feels the storage area will not benefit the residents as such a use does not bring traffic to other businesses in town.
 5. Property value decrease concerns for his and other properties if the rezoning is approved
 6. G. La Casse stated he had talked to a DeWitt official concerning commercial spot zoning in residential areas and was told that such a rezoning decreases residential zoning.
 7. B. Spadafore requested survey or research data from 'like' areas to show how much of a change in value may occur
- v. Other concerns from the Public:
1. Most of the lakes in the area are in Pinckney- why is there a need to store boats so near the residential area here?
 2. New business should be encouraged in the downtown area to encourage people who pass through to stop and visit the town, a storage area will not do this.
 3. Many worry about resale value and dropping property values.
 4. Concerns about wildlife displacement
 5. What happens as the business grows- will there be more services added to include washing and other small maintenances of the boats?
 - a. Mr. Haney stated there are no plans to do anything other than shrink wrap.
 6. It was noted there is a zoning ordinance for noise should the business noise become bothersome.
 7. It was asked what size of boats will be stored there?
 - a. Mr. Haney stated 30-foot pontoons would be the largest, pulled with a full-size pickup truck.

e. Planning Commission deliberation / motion

- i. B. Spadafore states the discussion needs to be continued at the next Planning Commission Meeting on June 23rd, 7PM because more information is needed to determine a decision. We need more information about frontage issues from the Zoning administrator and John Enos, Planning Consultant.
- ii. The Planning Commission has 60 days to make a decision on the property. The Commission needs to be sure any proposed changes and special use needs meet the Township Zoning Laws
- iii. The potential owner should inquire with the State Department EGLE and the County Drain Commission, concerning the drain and highway needs, if any. He may also need to contact the Michigan Department of Transportation concerning any impact to M36.
- iv. Donny Miller Motions to table the current discussion and to continue the discussion at the June 23rd Planning Commission meeting. Richard Green supports, Brian Spadafore, Linda Topping, and Diane Constable vote 'Aye'. Motion is passed.

4. FINAL CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- a. None

5. ADJOURN MEEETING 8:35 PM