

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
Thursday, May 15, 2014**

**14-15 CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF  
APRIL 17, 2014 / PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on May 15, 2014, at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Ave., NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Present: Chair Bruce Lee, Vice Chair Greg Madura, Secretary Jerry Byrne, Ron Cordes, Chuck Jakems, Mike O'Malley, and Mike Kayner. Planning Director Sue Becker and Recording Secretary Rose Kogge. Chair Bruce Lee called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Byrne moved, with support from O'Malley to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on April 17, 2014.**

**Ayes: 7                      Nays: 0                      Motion carried.**

**There were no public comments on non-agenda items.**

**14-16 PUBLIC HEARING: CROP PRODUCTION SERVICES' AGRICULTURAL  
SERVICE BUSINESS LAND USE ON PART OF 6201 FRUIT RIDGE AVENUE**

Chair Lee thanked everyone for attending and introduced Planner Becker who would explain the request. Becker reviewed the Request and Procedure for the Special Land Use and Site Plan Review Request from Crop Production Services in length. She covered; Site and Surroundings, Conformance with Master Plan, Conformance with Zoning Ordinance, Special Land Use Analysis, Special Use Standards, Site Plan Analysis, Utilities, Vehicular Access and Circulation, Parking, Buildings, Landscaping, Lighting, Dumpster, Signage, Phasing, and the Staff Recommendation. Also reviewed was the Township Engineer's report provided by Mike Oezer of Progressive AE dated May 9, 2014.

Becker also summarized her meeting with Alpine Fire Chief Dave Klomparens regarding this request. At this time there are at least 42 properties in Alpine Township that store and use chemicals. The chemicals are reported to the Fire Chief by LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee). All chemical storage information for these farms is reported to LEPC, the statewide database used by emergency personnel when responding to properties that contain hazardous materials. Chief Klomparens said there is also emergency pre-planning that goes into any major site that stores chemicals. The same would be true if Crop Production Services were to move their location to Alpine Township. All their chemical information would be obtained and noted.

At this time Chair Lee asked the representatives of Crop Production Services (CPS) to speak on their behalf regarding their request. Claudia Arkesteyn, Location Manager of CPS Sparta spoke about their request. They are a supplier of crop protection products for agriculture, and have been in business in 25 years. CPS strives to offer products that meet their customer's needs,

while keeping the inventory levels responsible. They also work closely with local Emergency Planning and Response teams as to what products may need extra care in case of an emergency situation. Ms. Arkesteyn invited members of the audience to visit and tour their Sparta location at any time.

**Motion made by Madura supported by Byrne to open the public hearing.**

**Ayes: 7                      Nays: 0                      Motion carried.**

Chair Lee asked that each person who came to the podium to speak to please give their name and address. He also suggested that everyone please be respectful of their length of time speaking. There seems to be a number of people here tonight that want to comment on the proposed Special Land Use and Site Plan Review.

**Community Members addressing the Planning Commission**

John May, 7828 Fruit Ridge NW. Fruit Ridge is not the ideal location for CPS. Traffic has doubled on Fruit Ridge because there are no stop lights; traffic is avoiding M-37. Fruit Ridge is a Class B road, M-37 is a Class A road.

Don Chorman, 6596 Fruit Ridge NW. I live across the street. This is just the start of non-agriculture uses, if you take farm land away you have nothing. What happens when someone else wants to do this? You set a precedent. I am pro-business, but this belongs on M-37 or 10 Mile Road.

Jim May, 7737 Fruit Ridge NW. We encourage growth, but traffic is bad on Fruit Ridge. Between 13 Mile Road and I-96 there are 11 stops on M-37 and only 4 on Fruit Ridge Avenue. Farmers are forced off the road at times. There was a building across the street for sale from CPS's current location and it's on a Class A road.

Steve Alt, 2637 7 Mile Rd NW. Distributed a handout of size comparisons of spray equipment and passenger vehicles. If CPS builds on Fruit Ridge, you will see this size of equipment. I have a concern about vehicle safety because there are no shoulders on Fruit Ridge Avenue for sprayers to move over (spraying season is April-Sept).

Max Dunneback, 3241 6 Mile Rd NW. Try driving on Fruit Ridge with farm equipment. One time I had 23 cars behind me. When they passed me they flipped me off. Helena Chemical on 10 Mile Road has a 4-way stop so tractors can get going. Fruit Ridge is not a Class A road, 6 Mile is. Not a good fit.

Sara Sprik, 6575 Fruit Ridge NW. My family owns and farms the hay field just north of the proposed business. I agree with everyone else who spoke tonight. I don't like the look of a commercial building on farm land. Accidents with chemicals can happen. A different location on an all-season road would be better.

Laurie Alt, 2637 7 Mile Rd NW. We do business with CPS, but if the request is approved, it will set a precedent and then other agricultural businesses will come. It uses up farmland. I called 7 other townships in Michigan where CPS has facilities; 3 have industrial zoning and 4 have commercial zoning. In the Community Survey results from earlier this year, residents responded they want to preserve farmland and control traffic.

Bernie Kline, 6128 Fruit Ridge NW. I am a quarter mile south from the proposed site. When I pull out of my driveway I can't get going fast enough even though I can see a long way in either direction. When the Sheriff has radar on Fruit Ridge – he could give tickets all day long.

Dolores Kline, 3760 Sugar Loaf NW. I used to live across the street at 6440 Fruit Ridge and I want to expand on how dangerous Fruit Ridge is. This area is the first clear spot where cars can pass each other, and they do it very fast. People are in a hurry to go north to their cottages. The

road is elevated compared to the adjacent fields at this location which creates black ice a lot. My husband pulled cars out of the ditch a lot. Could have fatalities. Area is also a wildlife corridor.  
Ken Zahm, 4724 5 Mile Rd NW. I welcome the competition to the area, but CPS is choosing the cheapest not the best location.

Roger Alberts, 5750 Peach Ridge NW. Special Land Use permits should be rare. This is not an agricultural business; it is an industrial processing plant. There are other parcels in better locations. There will be ground pollution, water pollution, and we only have a volunteer fire department with no water. A Texas plant was leveled from a fertilizer explosion. Fruit Ridge is the second busiest north/south road in the Township. Farm vehicles are slow moving vehicles.

Jerry Shuker, 6783 Fruit Ridge NW. I used to be the Fire Dept. safety officer for 40 years. My understanding of the protocol for Wilbur Ellis (another ag. chemical business) is to not fight a fire, don't use water, let it burn and evacuate the area. We have a volunteer fire department. We can't fight these types of fires, you have to evacuate and let the fires burn.

Ellen Shuker, 6783 Fruit Ridge NW. Fruit Ridge is too busy. At 10 Mile Road and Fruit Ridge Avenue there is a 4-way stop and three cars will sneak through for each car that can go. I invite everyone to sit in my driveway and watch traffic for 3 or 4 weeks.

Chuck Rasch, farms behind 6440 Fruit Ridge NW (on property addressed 6566 Fruit Ridge Avenue). I try to avoid my Fruit Ridge field entrance between 3 -5 p.m. because of the speed of traffic and will plant sunflowers to discourage road rage.

**Motion made by Jakems, supported by Cordes to close the Public Hearing**

**Ayes: 7**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion carried**

Chair Lee commented he would like the minutes to show that the Township received 3 letters regarding this Special Land Use. Received from:

Doris Kline, 3760 Sugarloaf NW. (Who spoke this evening).

Randy & Charlotte Kraus, 6533 Fruit Ridge NW. Letter Summary: Fruit Ridge is not an all-season road and the KCRC will not bond the road for this type of business. If this goes through it would open up Fruit Ridge Avenue to other industries that manufacture farming products. We do not want to lose our farmland to this. The Special Land Use should be denied.

Dave & Deb Looks, 4060 8 Mile Rd NW. Letter Summary: To allow a chemical reseller on Fruit Ridge would be insane. Someone tried to build a house there and the perk test failed. Deer and rabbits live out there. Traffic is bad enough on Fruit Ridge, if this goes through it will be much worse. Our property value will go down. The fertilizer plant can go somewhere else.

Chair Lee asked the Planning Commission Members if they had any questions for the Crop Protection Services representatives.

The driveway mixture was discussed as it refers to any possible hazardous spills. John VanderWerf of VanderWerf & May Builders explained it was easier to contain spills on gravel versus asphalt. Secondary containment was also discussed. CPS would not store "chemistry" at this location.

Also discussed was the size and nature of vehicles coming in and out of CPS. Scott Van Houten of CPS stated CPS preferred to deliver the customized mixes directly to the farms, but there could be farmers bringing 1000 gallon nurse trailers in for loading. At this CPS location they will not do custom applications, therefore they will not have any big sprayers as depicted in the

photographs handed out earlier. Cordes asked if there will be bagging of fertilizer. VanHouten responded, fertilizer comes pre-bagged from their Sunfield facility.

Truck turning radius was discussed, Brian Holleman from Paradigm Design commented they looked at the largest truck size and the turning radius that would fit. Double bottom trucks would deliver to the site three or four times a week for re-stocking.

Claudia Arkesteyn of Crop Production Services, said they did not plan on doing any custom applications (dry or liquid) from this new location, it would be too much work for this site. They do not plan on filling any liquid 1000 gallon tanks for farmers, however if they wanted it filled with dry fertilizer they would do it. CPS does have an auger wagon that holds 16 tons, two – 26' box trailers, 3-4 auger wagons (holding 16-24 tons), 7-8 ton pull-behind trucks and an orchard spreader. CPS does not carry any chemicals that caused the Texas fertilizer explosion. Claudia commented that she also lives on Fruit Ridge Avenue at 4715 Fruit Ridge NW and understands the traffic concerns.

Scott Van Houten explained CPS does not carry ammonia nitrate. Fire Departments walk through their facilities annually. Their limit is 2500 gallons of water on a fire, beyond that they let fires burn. Fire is the most effective way to break the chemistry down to clean up the materials.

Kayner: Why was this site selected? VanderWerf: It fits the zoning perfectly.

Madura: Has a perc test been done? VanderWerf: The KCHD said it looks promising.

Lee: How much traffic would CPS generate? VanHouten: 20 to 30 customers a day would be typical. Less in the winter. Lee: The speed of the farm traffic is a concern.

Traffic speed and amount of vehicles travelling down Fruit Ridge Avenue was discussed. The consensus was that the road is dangerous already. Over 4800 cars travel it daily (2012 Traffic Counts). Jakems concerned product could end up all over the pavement if a slow moving vehicle pulls out and gets hit. Chair Lee said he watched 15 semi-trucks pass within 10 minutes on Fruit Ridge Avenue when he was out there looking at the site. CPS stated there could be up to 75 trips a day during the busy season.

**CROP PRODUCTION SERVICES' AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BUSINESS SPECIAL LAND  
USE ON PART OF 6201 FRUIT RIDGE AVENUE**

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Jakems motioned, supported by O'Malley to *deny* the Special Land Use permit requested for an agricultural service business (*storage and sale of seed, feed, fertilizer, and other products essential to agricultural production*) on a proposed 5-acre parcel at the northeast corner of property addressed 6201 Fruit Ridge Avenue (PP# 41-09-18-400-004) as it *does not* meet the standards set forth in Chapters 5 and 21 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance.

**Findings of Fact:**

The applicant failed to demonstrate that the proposed special land use meets the standards outlined in Section 5.07(c)(2): *The location and size of the proposed use, the nature and intensity of the use, the site layout and its relation to adjacent streets, shall be such that traffic to and from the use and the assembly of persons in connection therewith, will not be hazardous or inconvenient to the neighborhood nor unduly conflict with normal traffic of the neighborhood.*

Ayes: 5                      Nays: 2                      Motion approved, request denied.

**Chair Lee called for a 5 minute break, and stated the meeting will resume at 9:20 p.m.**

**14-17                      SPECIAL LAND USES & SITE PLAN REVIEW BY TIP TOP DRILLING FOR  
OUTDOOR STORAGE (CONTRACTOR'S EQUIPMENT YARD AND RVs) AND  
VEHICLE REPAIRS AT 8274 ALPINE AVENUE**

Planner Becker reviewed the request of Aaron DeKubber, Owner of Tip Top Drilling LLC. The property at 8274 Alpine Avenue has been a vehicle salvage yard with vehicle sales for decades. This new request includes an outdoor storage request on the property for Tip Top Drilling equipment and recreation vehicles. DeKubber also will operate a vehicle repair shop in the south building. This request does not include vehicle sales or the dismantling of vehicles to salvage parts for use or sale. A recommendation can only be given if the applicant proposes to own a single commercial enterprise and operate it in a unified manner. If that changes in the future, the applicant must come back to the Planning Commission for a Commercial Planned Unit or other appropriate solution for more than one commercial enterprise on a property. According to the applicant both Phase 1 and 2 environmental reviews of the property came back clean. Additional landscaping is required along Alpine Avenue. The Kent County Health Department must review and approve the existing well that services 3 commercial buildings and one off-site home. A storm water permit is not needed and the applicant is advised to maintain vegetation adjacent to the County Drain. The southern building on the property is non-conforming because it doesn't meet the side yard setback requirement. The sign on Alpine Avenue is non-conforming because it is located in the public road right-of-way.

**Motion made by O'Malley supported by Byrne to open the public hearing.**

**Ayes: 7                      Nays: 0                      Motion carried.**

Kevin Edison of W.L. Perry Associates introduced himself. He noted the proposed uses are a good fit for the property and reuse of the existing buildings. Nothing hazardous will be kept on the property and the dumpster will be located behind the building. Responding to questions from Madura and Cordes, Mr. Edison stated a floor drain will be added to the south building and tanks to collect oil and other fluids will be located behind the building. With regards to what percentage of the business will be vehicle repairs, Kevin stated they are going into that business because they have the room and have a mechanic. There are four drilling employees. The property will be well maintained and there will be no above ground or underground fuel tanks.

Chair Lee welcomed Bob Souter, 8236 Alpine NW. Mr. Souter commented that he has owned portions of the property at 8274 Alpine for 50 years and the care for his business and property has been a passion of his. He and his wife wondered who they would have for neighbors once they sold the property because they live next door to the south. He commented Tip Top Drilling is a family owned business and will be wonderful neighbors. He feels this is a win-win for the Township and himself because it is a quiet use with low traffic.

**Motion made by Byrne supported by Kayner to close the public hearing.**

**Ayes: 7**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion carried.**

**TIP TOP DRILLING SPECIAL LAND USE FOR OUTDOOR STORAGE (CONTRACTORS EQUIPMENT YARD AND RVs) at 8274 ALPINE AVENUE**

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Kayner motioned, supported by Madura to *approve* the Special Land Use permit requested for Outdoor Storage (Contractor's equip. yard and recreational vehicles) at 8274 Alpine Avenue, PP# 41-09-01-101-033 as it *does* meet the standards set forth in Chapter 21 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance.

**Findings of Fact:**

1. It will be harmonious with the character and use of the immediate vicinity and was designed in such a manner as to mitigate any negative effects.
2. The special use will not be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors.
3. The proposed use is consistent with Master Plan and the intent and purpose of the zoning district.
4. The proposed use will not set a precedent for development which could adversely affect the long term plans and policies of the Township since outdoor storage (contractor's equip. yard and recreational vehicles) are special land uses in the commercial district

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion carried

**TIP TOP DRILLING SPECIAL LAND USE FOR VEHICLE REPAIR AT 8274 ALPINE AVENUE**

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Madura motioned, supported by O'Malley to *approve* the Special Land Use permit requested for vehicle repair at 8274 Alpine Avenue, PP# 41-09-01-101-033) as it *does* meet the standards set forth in Chapter 21 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance.

**Findings of Fact:**

1. It will be harmonious with the character and use of the immediate vicinity and was designed in such a manner as to mitigate any negative effects.

2. The special use will not be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors.
3. The proposed use is consistent with Master Plan and the intent and purpose of the zoning district.
4. The proposed use will not set a precedent for development which could adversely affect the long term plans and policies of the Township since vehicle repairs is a special land use in the commercial district

**Conditions:**

1. Consistent with the applicant's representations, the special land use approval is conditioned upon the outdoor storage (contractor's equipment yard and recreational vehicles) and vehicle repairs being owned and operated in a unified manner as a single commercial enterprise.
2. The Special Land Use does not include vehicle sales or the dismantling of vehicles to salvage parts for use or sale on the property or elsewhere. Such uses are prohibited.

Ayes: 7          Nays: 0          Motion carried

<b>TIP TOP DRILLING SITE PLAN AT 8274 ALPINE AVENUE</b>
---

Based upon representations made by the applicant, Kayner motioned, supported by Byrne to *approve* the site plan dated April 29, 2014 drawn by W. L. Perry Associates for outdoor storage (contractor's equipment yard and recreational vehicles) and for vehicle repairs at 8274 Alpine Avenue, PP# 41-09-01-101-033 as it *does* meet the requirements set forth in Chapters 12, 18 and 19 of the Alpine Township Zoning Ordinance with the following conditions of approval:

**Condition of Approval:**

1. The applicant shall provide 3 copies of revised plans illustrating:
  - The water line from the well to the south building.
  - A dumpster location (if needed). If the location is visible from the Alpine Avenue, enclosure construction details.
  - Several shrubs to be planted along the Alpine Ave. frontage in addition to the two trees.
2. If equipment is visible behind the southern building, the applicant shall install slats in the fence immediately north of the southern building.
3. Prior to use of the buildings, the applicant shall supply the Township with written documentation from the Kent County Health Department that the well, septic systems and necessary oil/water separator in the south building are in place and approved.

4. A Certificate of Occupancy is required prior to occupying or using the buildings.
5. All conditions outlined in the Township Engineer's letter dated May 8, 2014.
6. The property owner shall enter into a Site Development Agreement memorializing the Planning Commission's decision.

Ayes: 7                      Nays: 0                      Motion carried

**14-18                      PUBLIC HEARING: ALPINE TOWNSHIP FINANCE PRIMER AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN (2014-2020)**

Planner Becker reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan handout. There were no questions. She highlighted the proposed construction projects: storm water and sidewalk improvements at the Township Center property, gravel in the roads in two cemeteries, mill and fill two roads in the Westgate subdivision and portions of Alpine Church Street and Baumhoff Avenue and maybe some technology upgrades at the Township offices.

<p><b>MOTION TO RECOMMEND THE 2014-2020 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD</b></p>
--

Jakems motioned, supported by Byrne to recommend the Capital Improvement Plan Primer to the Alpine Township Board for their approval.

Ayes: 7                      Nays: 0                      Motion carried

**14- 19                      STAFF UPDATES/ ADJOURNMENT**

Planner Becker updated the Commissioners about the Site Plan Review tomorrow (5/16/2014), at Builder's Iron, 7770 Venture Avenue. Commissioners Kayner, Cordes and Lee will attend.

Motion made by Byrne, supported by Cordes to adjourn at 10:24 p.m.

Ayes: 7                      Nays: 0                      Motion carried.

---

**Jerry Byrne, Planning Commission Secretary**

---

**Rose Kogge, Recording Secretary**