

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, May 21, 2015**

**15-24 CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
MINUTES OF APRIL 6, 2015 AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL
16, 2015 AND THE / PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on May 21, 2015, at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Ave., NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Present: Chair Bruce Lee, Vice Chair Mike O'Malley, Ron Cordes, Dawn Swafford, Chuck Jakems and Mike Kayner. Secretary Lisa Frizzell was absent and excused. Planner Susan Becker and Recording Secretary Rose Kogge were also present. Chair Bruce Lee called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Cordes moved, with support from O'Malley to approve the minutes of the Special Joint Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission and Township Board on April 6, 2015

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Cordes moved, with support from O'Malley to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Alpine Planning Commission on April 16, 2015.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Chair Lee opened the floor for public comment on non-agenda items

Township Supervisor Alex Arends commented on the results of Monday night's Township Board meeting vote on the R-3 rezoning request at 942 and 960 Alpine Church Street. Arends says the Township Board has very high respect for the Planning Commission members. We work very well together. In this instance there was a difference in the interpretation of how the land on Alpine Church Street could be used. Three of the Board members opposed the rezoning and four members supported the rezoning request from R-1 to R-3, High Density Residential. The main reasons myself and the other three Board members decided to rezone the properties was because a denial would not stand up in a court of law and our attorney confirmed this as well. We do appreciate the recommendations and decisions you make and want to continue working together and hope you will understand this.

Sue Krieser, 974 Alpine Church St.: If the Planning Commission changes the Master Plan in this area of Alpine Church Street from High Density Residential to Low Density Residential, I'm stuck in a bind. I will have apartments on the right side of me and in back of me. I will not be able to sell my property, I would rather sell now if the apartment developer is willing to buy and they can make the apartments bigger. Please leave the Master Plan as is: HDR. Chair Lee commented this was an agenda item, and the public comment section was for non-agenda items. He said he would include these comments in the minutes.

15-25 DISCUSSION: MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Possible Future Land Use designation change from HDR to LDR along the south side of Alpine Church Street.

Planner Becker stated last month the Planning Commission directed her to notify all the property owners along the south side of Alpine Church Street for the possibility of changing the future land use designation from High Density Residential to Low Density Residential. Becker gave them the notice on April 30th, well before the Township Board had met on May 18th. Becker also gave the Planning Commission members a letter from the Fessenden family at 920 Alpine Church Street that expressed their feelings on the possible future land use designation change of their property. They respectfully requested the Planning Commission designate their property Low Density Residential.

Chair Lee said last month we made a motion to revisit the future Land Use designation and possibly change the map from HDR to LDR. We have heard residents speak against the HDR designation.

Cordes commented that after he listened to the comments made at the Township Board meeting earlier this week on the R-3 rezoning request, he realized the Township would lose in court if the zoning was not changed from R-1 to R-3. The points the Board made were good.

O'Malley said his concerns were that these people did not have the same opportunity as other people did in the areas that we considered changing the Master Plan. We did have a discussion before about this property; we started the procedure in April with the Hachmuth Street residents. They had a chance to discuss the possible Master Plan changes and voice their opinions; these (Alpine Church St.) residents did not.

Chair Lee commented that early in the Master Plan process we had looked at this property and decided to leave it HDR. That is the main reason no one was invited in to discuss it. At that time we did not realize the lots were so narrow and 65 feet apart. The property has been Master Planned HDR since 1998.

Jakems commented that we are dealing with a situation where there was an opportunity for a developer and nothing realistically could be done. The Township Board only approved the rezoning of Morgan's property, not the balance of the parcels left along Alpine Church Street. The question we have to decide is do we want to change the future land use designation of the other parcels or leave them as they are. The two Morgan parcels (942 and 960) are rezoned to R-3 and that is over, there is nothing more we can do.

Chair Lee said there is legal recourse for the homeowners to protest and appeal the rezoning decision.

Cordes felt that we would create a hardship for the remaining homeowners if we changed the future land use designation to LDR.

Chair Lee commented that with regards to the previous rezoning request, the Planning Commission members were looking at the effects on homeowners not the legal ramifications. The Township Board has to look at things differently including the legal aspect. That's why we

have a Township Board and a Planning Commission. Lee asked if this would change the Master Plan wrap-up.

O'Malley commented that when we surveyed the community members they were clear on two things – no more apartments and don't mess with agriculture. I feel the letter that was mailed on April 30th was to give these people a chance to vent and we did not give them the opportunity prior to the rezoning request being made.

Township Supervisor Alex Arends asked would you be doing the homeowners a favor if you change the Master Plan to LDR and then Mr. Morgan wants to build larger apartments and then cannot buy property because it is planned for LDR. This is something to think about. As far as Public Meetings the Planning Commission has to call them.

Swafford said she believes we should leave the future land use designation alone as High Density Residential. Morgan may not buy all the property and someone is going to be left there being his neighbor.

Kayner stated he agrees with what O'Malley says and the community does not want any more apartments.

Chair Lee reminded members to be respectful and professional. Lee asked if we can legislate no more apartments in the Township. The short answer is no. You cannot dictate/legislate home ownership.

Jakems made a motion, supported by Cordes that the Planning Commission drop the discussion of changing the future land use designation for the properties along Alpine Church Street from High Density Residential to Low Density Residential because the properties in the middle were just rezoned to R-3, High Density Residential and it would create a hardship for others if we changed the future land use designation.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 1 (Kayner) Motion Carried

Walkerview Development Update

Planner Becker updated Planning Commission members on the progress of the Walkerview development, in the City of Walker including a map handout. Walker has a Traffic Working Group that Becker has met with a couple of times. The City of Walker is also updating their Master Plan in this area as well. Phase I consists of 60 acres and is scheduled to begin construction in July 2015, taking 1-1/2 years to complete. Construction traffic maybe on 4 Mile Road and traffic studies predict 600 additional vehicles each way every day during peak traffic times. Phase II will consist of the balance of the acreage and could bring a total of 2000 vehicles daily during peak travel times. Traffic light installation at 4 Mile Road and Bristol will be done by KCRC. The Walker Avenue and 4 Mile Road intersection is a challenging intersection – no easy solution with the angles and creek; the Traffic Engineer for the developer recommends a traffic light. This development will have a big impact on Alpine Township.

15-26 COMMISSIONER AND STAFF UPDATES

Chair Lee asked what the next steps are for the Master Plan. Planner Becker stated that the Public Hearing for the Master Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan will be held next month. Becker expects a Public Hearing for Land & Company in July regarding the church and community center that is moving.

15-27 ADJOURNMENT

Cordes motioned, supported by Jakems to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 PM.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary Rose Kogge, Recording Secretary