

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Thursday, March 12, 2015**

**PC15-09      CALL TO ORDER OF THE SPECIAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING/  
TB 2015- \_\_ OPENING REMARKS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held a special meeting on March 12, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Ave., NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321. Present: Chair Bruce Lee, Vice Chair Mike O'Malley, Secretary Lisa Frizzell, Ron Cordes, Dawn Swafford and Chuck Jakems. Mike Kayner was absent and excused. Planner Sue Becker and Recording Secretary Rose Kogge. Chair Bruce Lee called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Lee thanked everyone for attending the meeting and explained the reason for the special meeting. The Master Plan is a document that lays out the vision of Alpine Township's desired future; it is a plan that looks forward for the best interest of the Township and its constituents and is updated every 5 years. The future of the Hachmuth plat has been discussed before by previous Planning Commissions and was brought up again, so the Planning Commission thought we should ask the residents what they think of possibly planning the area for future commercial use. We have completed reviews on several other areas of the Township with the residents that live in the areas, and Hachmuth is the last area to review. Chair Lee said he wants to be clear that no one has approached the Township to purchase this property. The Planning Commission is not discussing a zoning change, only contemplating a future land use designation change to Commercial Planned Unit Development. The Planning Commission has no desire for negative impacts on the neighborhood. It is a prime property on Alpine and we as Planning Commissioners would not be doing our job if we didn't look at this. When the public comment is complete, Planner Becker will let you know what the next steps are. At this time Chair Lee asked for anyone in the audience that would like to speak to come to the podium.

Mike Beaudry, owns property at 621 Hachmuth. Said he has received a post card from an investment company that wondered if he would be interested in selling his property. He said as a real estate investor himself he would be interested in adding more value to this area. He commented that he understands it is all the neighbors agreeing as one unit to changing the planned area to commercial or it does not happen.

Laura Wagner, 699 Hachmuth. Has lived there for 23 years and have made nice upgrades to our home. She likes the neighborhood, it's quiet and private. What's the incentive for me to leave? How does the Planning Commission proceed with this? Is our neighboring City of Walker going to develop more property by Snap Fitness? What about traffic on 4 Mile, what business could you possibly see on that corner? What is the benefit to the community?

Chair Lee commented that the Planning Commission is proposing that if the area were to develop commercially the entire neighborhood would have to develop not just some of it. Everyone in the plat has to agree leave the plat as it is, or change it. It has to be all or nothing. Planner Becker commented that the City of Walker has no plans to commercially develop the property east of Snap Fitness on the south side of 4 Mile Road. Lee said businesses like a lot of

traffic and if any plans were turned in for review the Planning Commission would decide if the business plan was a good fit.

Chair Lee read a letter from Tracy Sommer, owner of 616 and 700 Hachmuth, and is opposed to any changes.

Dan Bialk, 762 Hachmuth. Not opposed to changing the planned use. I may want to sell my house in five years and how could I do that if the use is changed because buyers may not be interested in a house if they want to live there; an uncertain future. It is sometimes noisy and my house vibrates when big trucks go down Alpine.

Chair Lee commented again that this is not a zoning change, it is just a possible future planned use change to commercial use.

Lucille Olson, 759 Hachmuth. Stated she is not sure what to think, yes or no. Said it is noisy because she lives at the end of the cul-de-sac (next to Mr. Bialk), but she is used to the noise.

Kay Hofacker, spoke on behalf of her father Lynn Bowers of 730 Hachmuth. He is opposed to changing to commercial. Planner Becker commented that she also spoke to Lynn Bowers and he said his daughter would be speaking for him. Bowers also commented "you can walk anywhere from this neighborhood, it's a unique neighborhood and don't screw up a good neighborhood."

Robin Rudden, formerly resided at 646 Hachmuth. Rudden was on the Alpine Township Planning Commission for six years during the development of the 1998 Master Plan. She said she thinks residents don't understand that this is not a zoning change. Rudden said she loved this neighborhood. The houses are built solid, there is water and sewer, the area has a variety of people and is great for everyone, is close to the highway, White Pine Trail, Post Office, library and the ball park and is walkable. You don't want to change the Master Plan if there is so much (88%) owner-occupied housing in a neighborhood. Three homes sold in the last year, this is a very stable neighborhood. Please leave it alone. This is not a good time to change the future land use designation because it is a stable neighborhood.

Chair Lee asked Rudden if she made the motion in 1998 to keep Hachmuth as it is and not have four of the lots be Master Planned for non-residential uses, she said she did.

Jean Gargus, 646 Hachmuth. Leave Hachmuth alone. I love this neighborhood; we have a neighborhood party every fall. You can rely on neighbors to watch your home if you go away. Twelve years ago my kids played on the street. There are new families and kids in the neighborhood. I can't imagine moving!

Joe Young, 599 Hachmuth. Leave it alone. I live on acreage in the far corner just outside this plat. Would I ruin the whole thing if I wanted to sell? He is not in the actual Hachmuth plat, but is on the end corner with a two-track dirt driveway to his home. Planner Becker commented that Young's property can be included in this decision or not. Young likes living there, the only negative is that York Creek Apartments are very close and there is no transition to it, and people walk across his property daily.

Jody Ryan, 657 Hachmuth. Wants Hachmuth left alone, is ok with the concept of the entire neighborhood developing, or none of it. Has lived here 15-1/2 years and said her daughter cried when she heard about this meeting because she does not want to move. Wondered what does medium density residential uses mean for future land uses in the City of Walker.

Lee commented that PUD's are looked at by the Planning Commission and Township Board and the uses are pretty much anything you see on Alpine Avenue now. Jakems commented that an investor could possibly try and buy two or three houses on 4 Mile then come to the Planning Commission and want the use changed. If it is already Master Planned commercial it makes this a little easier. If a developer gives the neighborhood an offer, it is between you and the developer.

Jeff Acklin, 683 4 Mile Rd. Leave alone, we just bought our house one year ago. The neighborhood is great!

Jason Kelley, 714 Hachmuth, and 713 4 Mile Rd. I'm ok for the change to planned commercial use. We moved here three years ago with our three boys and this is a great community and neighborhood. I'm ok if you want to master plan this as commercial. If someone wants to give me a ridiculous amount of money, I'll take it.

Dave Ryan, 657 Hachmuth, Are there any financial studies of how much commercial sites typically sell for? If this Planning Commission is committed to the entire neighborhood being developed or none of it, could someone still come in and develop half the lots? Chair Lee said no. Mr. Ryan stated he views a future land use designation change to commercial as a deterrent for someone buying our homes to live in. What if a future Planning Commission allows part of the neighborhood to develop? That would be an issue! Another Planning Commission or Township Board could do something different than what you are proposing.

Township Supervisor Alex Arends thanked everyone for attending and applauded everyone for talking so nicely about their neighborhood. Chair Lee also thanked everyone for attending and said we would not have known what it is like to live in your neighborhood otherwise and appreciate you letting us know. We didn't think you wanted to stay and it's nice to see you like living there. By a show of hands we see the majority of you want us to leave the Hachmuth Plat planned as residential. To answer another question; There is no change in taxes this is just planning for future land use.

O'Malley commented that the audience was well heard tonight as the Supervisor (Alex Arends) and Township Board member (Ron Cordes) were both in attendance tonight and that's who the Planning Commission has to answer to.

Chair Lee commented that we are not trying to sell your property, the Planning Commission is just trying to make good future plans. If a developer comes in we would want to let them know the entire neighborhood may develop or none of it. If the property is rezoned you would absolutely be notified. Rudden asked if five properties sold now and people asked for re-zoning what would happen. Chair Lee replied that we would look at the Master Plan, it is planned residential so it would make it harder to do.

Robin Rudden stated that the option is always out there to leave the current Master Plan as residential and for someone to ask to change it to CPUD in the future when the timing for development is right.

Chair Lee said everyone is welcome to come back next Thursday, March 19, when the Planning Commission will finalize the draft Master Plan Update, then the Township Board has to approve distributing the draft to everyone. The public hearing on the draft of the Master Plan will likely be May 21st at the Planning Commission meeting. The Township Board likely will make their final decision in June or July.

Planner Becker would like to let the entire neighborhood know by letter what the Planning Commission decides to recommend to the Township Board. She asked if Commissioners could meet April 6th, with the Township Board members to review the draft Master Plan.

**PC15-10      ADJOURNMENT**  
**TB2015-**

Jakems motioned, supported by O'Malley to adjourn at 8:53 PM  
Ayes: 6                      Nays: 0                      Motion carried

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**Lisa Frizzell, Planning Commission Secretary**

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**Rose Kogge, Recording Secretary**