

**ALPINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, October 15, 2009**

09-44 CALL TO ORDER/ APPROVAL OF MINUTES/ PUBLIC COMMENT

The Alpine Township Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 7:30 PM at the Alpine Township Center, 5255 Alpine Ave., NW, Comstock Park, MI 49321 with due notice. Present were Chair Greg Madura, Vice-Chair Nelda Johnson, Secretary Jerry Byrne, and members Max Dunneback, Ron Cordes, Bruce Lee and Matt Van Heulen. Also in attendance were Township Planning Director Sue Thomas and Recording Secretary Patricia Kolkman.

Madura called the meeting to order at 7:25 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked if there were any corrections to be made to the minutes of the September 17, 2009 Regular Planning Commission Meeting.

Cordes moved, with support from Lee, to approve the minutes of the Regular Planning Commission meeting as presented.

Ayes : 7

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Madura noted that since there were no audience members, it would not be necessary to open Public Comment at this time.

09-45 PUBLIC HEARING: Zoning Ordinance Amendments:

Section 2.39(b) Permitted Yard Encroachments and
Section 20.08 (k)(1) Temporary Signs

Madura asked Planning Commissioners if they had any comments regarding the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments as presented. Thomas explained that the first amendment would allow for encroachments to add a barrier free ramp for access and would be limited to the minimum allowed in the Michigan Barrier Free rules. She added that the Planning Commission should remember that the Americans with Disabilities Act only provides guidelines and it is the Michigan Barrier Free rules that provide the standards that must be met.

The amendment regarding temporary signs would address the feedback from local businesses regarding the Sign Ordinance amendments adopted two years ago. After discussion, it was agreed that the period of time allowed for temporary signs should be lengthened, and the fees for the signs reduced. The amendment presented extends the allowed time for a portable or temporary sign from 4 7-day signs, with a 28-day maximum per year, to 3 10-day signs, with a 30-day maximum. The Commission discussed recommending to the Township Board reducing the cost of a temporary sign from \$125 to \$75. Thomas will submit the text amendments to the Township Board along with the recommendation that the Board consider the fee reduction.

Commissioners agreed with both the content and language in the amendments.

Johnson moved, with support from Van Heulen, to open the public hearing.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

There being no public comment offered, **Johnson moved, with Van Heulen's support, to close the public hearing.**

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Johnson then moved, with support from Byrne, to recommend to the Township Board adoption of Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Section 2.39 (b) "Permitted Yard Encroachments" and Section 20.08 (k) (1) "Temporary Signs" as presented, and that the Township Board also consider reducing the fees associated with permits for Temporary Signs.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

09-46 Discussion: Draft revisions to Chapter 23, Zoning Board of Appeals.

Thomas explained that the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006, which was amended in 2008, requires that a municipality include a number of topics in its Zoning Ordinance: Membership, removal from office, record keeping, conflict of office, public noticing requirements and the circuit court appeals process.

She added that she reviewed the chapter in its entirety and made suggested changes, some of which (use variances, for example) are being reviewed with our Township Attorney. This chapter revision is included in Commissioners' packets for discussion, and then she commented on various portions of the chapter. She said that because Alpine Township has processed use variances in the past, it is allowed to continue doing so under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, but she recommends that another process be used.

Since the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act also impacts other chapters in the Zoning Ordinance, Thomas will continue to review each chapter and provide drafts to the Planning Commission as they are completed. She added that the Special Land Use Chapter will also require revision.

09-47 PUBLIC COMMENT/COMMISSIONER COMMENT/ COMMITTEE UPDATES

No public comment was offered. Van Heulen commented that the Sonic restaurant project appears to be well under way. Madura said a neighbor of his had been hired and was told she would begin before the end of October.

No committee reports were given.

09-48 STAFF UPDATE/ ADJOURNMENT

Thomas said she had considered proposing that the November meeting be cancelled, but two new applications have been submitted for consideration.

Cordes moved, with Byrne's support, to adjourn at 7:45 PM.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion carried.