

**MINUTES
ALPINE TOWNSHIP BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 20, 2006**

06-36 REGULAR MEETING

The Alpine Township Board met on Monday, March 20, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. at the Alpine Township Hall, 5255 Alpine Avenue, Comstock Park, Michigan. Board members present: Supervisor Marta Brechting, Clerk Jean Wahlfield, Treasurer Jan Brechting, and Trustees Ron Cordes, Jim May, Sharon Steffens and Ted Wallace.

Supervisor Brechting called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Brechting placed three additional items to the agenda under **Pending and New Business** which were 6G: Groundskeeper, 6H: Community Development Block Grants Payment Request, and 6I: Discussion of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Initiative.

J. Brechting offered a motion, supported by May, to accept the Agenda with the three additions noted. Motion carried 7-0.

06-37 CONSENT AGENDA

Supervisor Brechting noted that her Budget Amendments dated March 20, 2006 are not correct and under Cemetery Grave revenues the amount should be \$850 instead of the \$8,000 as indicated.

Steffens made a correction to the Special Meeting Minutes of February 7, 2006, page 4, in section 06-19, Supervisor's Review of Personnel Issues, second paragraph, first sentence, "Historical Society" should be changed to "Historical Commission."

Steffens offered a motion, supported by May, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of February 7, 2006, Regular Meeting Minutes of February 20, 2006, Consideration of Vouchers, Consideration of Budget Amendments as corrected, Receipt of Alpine Fire Department 2005 Annual Report, Resolution #06-08 - Reaffirm CNC Precision Machining for 15 Year Renaissance Recovery Zone Abatement, and Receipt of Correspondence. Motion carried 7-0.

**06-38 PUBLIC HEARING & CONSIDERATION FOR AMBASSADOR STEEL
TAX EXEMPTION - 5402 RUSCHE DRIVE NW**

Jeff Wyngarden and Linda Heyerly, representatives from Ambassador Steel, requested that the Board consider establishing a new abatement district and IFT for construction of the new building in addition to machinery and new equipment. Heyerly informed the Board that the Ambassador Steel currently employs 11 individuals and anticipates hiring an additional three people when the building is complete.

J. Brechting stated that Ambassador Steel's request is for \$2,075,000 for the new building and equipment. Wahlfield verified that the payback agreement must be signed as part of the abatement approval process.

May offered a motion, supported by J. Brechting, to open the public hearing. Motion carried 7-0.

There were no comments from the public offered at this time.

Steffens offered a motion, supported by May, to close the public hearing portion of the meeting for Ambassador Steel. Motion carried 7-0.

J. Brechting informed Wyngarden and Heyerly that a new State law does not require an approval or release if the business had previously received a tax abatement from the former municipality to be submitted to Alpine Township.

J. Brechting offered a motion, supported by Wahlfield, to approve Resolution No. 06-05: Establishing an Industrial District at the Request of Ambassador Steel Corporation for property located at 5402 Rusche Drive NW (41-09-24-327-005). Motion carried 7-0.

May offered a motion, supported by J. Brechting, to approve Resolution No. 06-06: Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate for Ambassador Steel for the construction of a new building and personal property at 5402 Rusche Drive NW (41-09-24-327-005). Motion carried 7-0.

J. Brechting offered a motion, supported by Steffens, to approve the Property Tax Abatement Agreement No. 06-08 with Ambassador Steel and Alpine Township which outline's payback procedures should Ambassador Steel leave the district prior to the end of the 12-year abatement period. Motion carried 7-0.

06-39 PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Brechting explained that she is aware that members of the audience wish to provide public comments to address the Wal-Mart rezoning which has been recommended for approval by the Planning Commission and the Doorenbos rezoning recommended for denial. She explained that typically public comments are not allowed during a first reading but input from the public will be allowed when the Board reaches the Wal-Mart agenda item under Pending and New Business. Supervisor Brechting reiterated that this meeting is not a public hearing but she would allow brief comments from the public.

There was no public comment offered at this time.

06-40 COMMISSION REPORTS

Planning Commission - May: At the February 23rd meeting, the Wal-Mart conditional rezoning request was tabled, the Doorenbos property (4454 and 4458 Bristol) rezoning request was denied, the DeBoer Special Land Use Permit Extension to operation a sand mine was approved, and the Thomas property located at 671 8-Mile was recommended for rezoning. At the March 16th meeting, which May was absent, the Wal-Mart conditional rezoning was recommended for approval, the Planning Commission tabled the SLU permit request from Steve Benner, and CEI Industries' Site Plan Review was approved with additional parking and conditions.

Zoning Board of Appeals - Wallace: There were no requests for the February meeting.

Historical Commission: The Open-House featured Rick Cederholm's trip to Ireland with 26 guests in attendance. The interior refurbishing and painting of the museum is looking great as well as the Veterans display.

Sewer & Water - M. Brechting: There was no meeting in March. M. Brechting reported that Dykema Excavating has completed their part of the project.

Library - DeMeester: An update was received regarding the library renovations. KDL has designated **My Sister's Keeper** for the county-wide adult book club. The county-wide book for children is **Donut Head**. The Alpine Branch had an 8 percent circulation increase in January and a 7 percent circulation increase in February over last year.

06-41 FINAL READING - JASPER REZONING - 4719 PEACH RIDGE - A TO RA

J. Brechting offered a motion, supported by May, to approve the rezoning of the Thomas Jasper property located at 4719 Peach Ridge Avenue (41-09-28-300-024) consisting of 10.03 Acres to Rural-Agriculture and order publication of the same. The motion carried 7-0 in a roll call vote.

06-42 FIRST READING - THOMAS REZONING - 671 8-Mile - R-1 to RA

Supervisor Brechting commented that this is the First Reading for the Thomas rezoning for property located at 671 8-Mile from R-1 to RA as recommended by the Planning Commission. The rezoning will allow the property owner to construct of a larger accessory/pole building.

06-43 FIRST READING - DOORENBOS REZONING - 4454 and 4458 Bristol - A to R-1

Supervisor Brechting commented that this is the First Reading for the Doorenbos Rezoning for properties located at 4454 and 4458 Bristol from AG to R-1. The Planning Commission's recommendation was to deny the Doorenbos rezoning request for the two parcels.

The Supervisor allowed Attorney ~~Timothy~~ **Don** Visser to speak on behalf of property owner Doorenbos and he addressed the Board on the recommendation to deny the rezoning request. Visser felt that much confusion was created when the multiple number of parcels owned by Doorenbos were submitted for rezoning approval. Visser explained that the current request has been refined to the 50 acres on the SE corner of Bristol Avenue and Alpine Church Road. Visser presented a zoning map from the 1950's which demonstrated that the property has always been envisioned for residential use as reflected in previous Master Plan documents and due to the availability of public sewer and water. He respectfully requested that the Doorenbos property be rezoned in accordance with the Township Master Plan.

At this time Supervisor Brechting offered the members of the audience a chance to provide brief comments on the Doorenbos rezoning and no comments from the public were offered.

Steffens commented that she felt the Planning Commission's Findings of Fact to recommend denial of the Doorenbos rezoning were weak, would not stand up in court, and would not meet the requirements of State law. Steffens suggested that this issue be referred back to the Planning Commission for review and a revised report. May, as the Township Board representative on the Planning Commission, agreed by stating that some members of the Planning Commission were absent at the meeting when the motion to deny of the rezoning was made. He also noted that the Commission addressed the Doorenbos request as well as several other agenda items on that same evening. Cordes agreed that the more concrete Findings of Fact are needed from the Planning Commission. Board members briefly discussed the Planning Commission's Findings of Fact and the intervals between the next Township Board and Planning Commission meeting.

May offered a motion, supported by J. Brechting, stating that since it appears that the Township Board is considering taking action contrary to the recommendations of the Planning Commission, moved that the Doorenbos rezoning matter be referred back to the Planning Commission for a report by the Planning Commission in accordance with the Township Zoning Act and that the Township Board receives such report by April 24, 2006. The motion carried 7-0.

06-44 FIRST READING - WAL-MART REZONING - 3940 & 4100 Cordes - AG to CR-C-2

Supervisor Brechting noted that the rezoning request is for 5 acres of property located directly behind the existing Wal-Mart store and that the request is not in compliance with the Master Plan. The Planning Commission has recommended a conditional rezoning from the existing Agricultural to Conditional Rezoing-C-2 which includes the extension of Henze Avenue.

Mike DeVries from Atwell-Hicks representing Wal-Mart was directed by the Supervisor to proceed with a brief power point presentation demonstrating the rezoning request for the proposed new Super Center. DeVries pointed out that Wal-Mart is requesting a rezoning for property that is approximately 216 ft. deep to the west of the existing store. This would allow for the construction of a new Super Center store and include landscape buffering and sloping due to the extreme grade differences. Wal-Mart's wants to maintain its current location and feels that the rezoning fits within the concepts and design of the Township Master Plan.

DeVries offered the following:

1. The extension of Henze will be another access point for emergency vehicles.
2. Traffic projections on Cordes will increase but will be under the 25% capacity that Cordes is currently designed to handle.
3. Wetland impact will only be 1/3 acre and mitigation cost will be minimal.
4. Additional employees and tax revenue would be realized.
5. The construction phase of the project will utilize local contractors.
6. Wal-Mart and Sam's Club are slated to participate in the Alpine Avenue/Alpenhorn Intersection Improvement SAD. ~~if the rezoning is not approved.~~
7. Wal-Mart Corporation has agreed to pay for the extension of Henze Drive to Cordes.

Township Engineer, Bob VanderMale summarized the wetland issue for the extension of Henze noting that the initial survey has been completed. The final authority for wetland determination lies with the MDEQ, which will verify the total amount of wetlands impacted by a new road this summer and the subsequent mitigation requirements.

Supervisor Brechting allowed brief comments at this time during which the following remarks were noted:

Planning Commissioner Dick Sedlecky, 295 Lantern NW, emphasized the importance of the Henze extension occurring to relieve traffic congestion noting that this road has been planned for 12 years or more. This is a prime time and opportunity for the road extension to take place. The land to be rezoned is minuscule, however the extension of Henze to Cordes is the major the issue to be considered.

Becky Profit, 3642 Cordes, has lived on Cordes for 24 years and is opposed to the extension of Henze because Cordes will become dangerous for walkers and joggers. She noted that it will be difficult for residents to back-out of their driveways due to the many blind spots. No other Wal-Marts have rear access and she noted that most stores are open 24 hours a day. She stated that the value of her home will depreciate and asked the Board to please reconsider the need to extend Henze Road to Cordes.

Steve Dolphin, 3940 Cordes, questioned whether or not it was his property being rezoned and how close will Henze come to his property.

Terri Paul, 4409 Cordes, felt that the Township has not looked out for the residents' best interest or listened to their concerns. She is strongly opposed to the extension of Henze. Successful back-door streets such as 29th Street did not start out as residential roads or in residential neighborhoods. She requested that at the very least that Cordes be upgraded and improved if Henze has to be extended. She wanted to know what will happen if other stores want a back entrance. She stated that no adequate reasons have been given to ~~comprise~~ **compromise** her neighborhood in such a manner by increasing traffic.

David Scheidel, 4360 Cordes, stated that he is "pro-safety." He stated that the existing service drive systems should take care of the excess traffic. He wants the Township to make sure that improvements to Cordes occur for the safety in his neighborhood.

Al Beckstrom, 4891 Grettel N.W., commented that the Planning Commission has worked very hard on this project.

May stated that Wal-Mart did not request the extension of Henze, however Wal-Mart is willing to pay for the road. Wal-Mart has threatened to move out of the current location and build elsewhere leaving behind a "black store." The Township receives tax revenue and the Henze extension is on the Master Plan.

Supervisor Brechting stated that improvements will be made to Cordes Avenue and that she will work with residents and the K.C. Road Commission to accomplish the upgrades.

Steffens pointed out that the Road Commission would not allow for the Henze cul-de-sac to be extended. Wallace commented that Wal-Mart has been generous with the Alpine Fire Department in the past.

The Supervisor noted that the final reading on this rezoning will be held at the April meeting.

06-45 DISCUSSION & CONSIDERATION - ORDINANCE #06-05 PROHIBITED FIRE LANE PARKING

This existing ordinance from 1981 has been updated by the Fire Department and the Zoning Enforcement Officer. The proposed changes have been reviewed by the Township Attorney and violation of the ordinance will be considered a municipal civil infraction. Board members discussed the amount for the fine as noted in the ordinance and it was the general consensus of the Board to set the fine amount at \$50.

Steffens offered a motion, supported by May, to approve Ordinance #06-05 Prohibited Fire Lane Parking and order publication of the same. The motion was approved in a 7-0 roll call vote.

06-46 DISCUSSION OF SEWER AND WATER ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Supervisor Brechting stated that the Sewer and Water Administration issues discussed in the past consists of more than just calculating permits. J. Brechting noted that no portion of the Sewer Administrators salary was every paid out of the sewer fund, the entire salary had come out of the general fund. The Board briefly discussed the issue and noted that further discussion will be planned for the next budget meeting with the Supervisor to investigate how other municipalities handle this issue and how much actual time is involved with the DPW and on this task. Wahlfield suggested the sewer and water responsibilities be included in the update of job descriptions. The Building Inspector suggested that the hourly wage be separated out from the Building Department Clerk wages.

06-47 GROUNDSKEEPER JOB DESCRIPTION

Supervisor Brechting provided Board members with the current job description for the Groundskeeper position as well as the last hourly wage paid. She stated that the purchase of a lawn-mower was budgeted for in the current fiscal year and felt that having a person employed by the Township would be beneficial. A groundskeeper would work at the complex and could oversee a community service worker. Supervisor Brechting stated that there was much repair work to done at the Sports Complex. Supervisor Brechting indicated that she has received information on several types of mowers and that by keeping the mower for two years the Township would benefit from the investment.

Steffens recalled that during the budget sessions for FY 2006 there was a comparison provided between employing

one person plus purchasing a mower or hiring a lawn care company. She also stated that she was not aware of a formal commitment or motion made by the Board to purchase a mower and hire someone at the Sports Complex.

J. Brechting expressed concern that if a person is hired to mow the complex and if the intent is to apply pesticides, the employee must be certified to do so. It was noted that an outside company could be hired for that specific job.

Supervisor Brechting explained that the purchase of a mower utilizing the State discount program would bring the average price to approximately \$7,500. Further discussion about the purchase of the mower will be held at the budget meeting next week. Supervisor Brechting will place an ad in the G.R. Press newspaper and at the Township for Groundskeeper job opening.

May offered a motion, supported by Wallace that the Groundskeeper hourly wage be set at \$11 per hour. There was no there discussion and the motion carried 7-0.

06-48 COMMUNITY BLOCK DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Supervisor Brechting explained that although the Township budgeted \$25,000 for the CDBG payment of the McConnell home, the request was only for \$20,000. It was the Board's consensus to pay \$25,000.

May offered a motion, supported by Steffens, to pay Community Block Development Grant \$25,000 for the repayment of McConnell house. Motion carried 7-0.

06-49 SWPPI

Supervisor Brechting stated that she received information about the SWPPI this afternoon. She explained that the Township is required to participate as part of the MDEQ waste water general permit for storm water discharges. She requested that the Board review the handout and be ready for discussion at the budget meeting.

06-50 SUPERVISOR'S REPORT AND BOARD COMMENTS

The Supervisor displayed a copy of the Harvester which is ready to go to print. She announced that Police Officer Nate Ertle will be replacing Officer Bill Whiting as the Township's new community policing officer.

The Supervisor will be set up a meeting of the Employee sub-committee which consists of Cordes, May, and herself to continue the review of the employee handbook revisions.

Supervisor Brechting will follow up on concerns regarding the Community Room's circuit breakers with Contract Electric. There have been some problems with circuit overloads. Wahlfield noted that typically renters are plugging too many appliances into one outlet.

May reported that the Fire Safety Seminar, hosted by the Fire Department, will be held at his farm on July 29 and 30.

Wahlfield reminded Board members about making reservations for the annual Road Commission dinner and meeting on by April 20.

06-51 PUBLIC COMMENT & ADJOURNMENT

Richard Sedlecky, 295 Lantern NW, requested that the Board members speak louder during their discussion so that they can be heard by everyone in the audience.

This meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Wahlfield
Clerk

Marta Brechting
Supervisor

Beth Alt
Recording Secretary