

FRENCHTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
November 16, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call: Dennis Staelgraeve Tim Stiff
Brian Dotson Chris Collins
Bill VanDaele Don Abrams
Absent: Fred Calkins

SIG *Fred Calkins*
APPROVED
As Amended pg 3

Also present: Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning, Marketing & Economic Development

Dave Uhl, Director of Economic Development and Public Safety, Frenchtown

6 interested citizens in person.

A quorum being present, Dennis Staelgraeve called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was held under the Open Meetings Act.

Item No. 1 Call to Order.

Item No. 2 Pledge of Allegiance.

A Pledge of Allegiance was conducted.

Item No. 3 Roll Call.

A Roll Call was taken. Fred Calkins was absent.

Item No. 4 Approval of Agenda

Moved By: Abrams Supported By: Stiff

A Motion was made to approve the agendas.

MUC

Item No. 5 Approval of Minutes of September 21, 2023.

Motion

Moved By: Abrams

Supported By: VanDaele

A Motion was made to approve the Minutes as presented.

MUC

Item No. 6 Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items Only.

Motion

Moved By: Collins

Supported By: Abrams

Motion to open the public hearing at 7:04 p.m.

MUC

Bill Connor, 1883 Stumpmier Rd., spoke about the campground text amendments. He stated that the ordinance on the books is not enforced at Camp Lord Willing by limiting the number of days allowed in a campground to 42 days. He stated that people live at Camp Lord Willing year-round when that is not what is permitted. He heard that there may be a new owner and just would like to see the Township enforce the ordinance.

Mr. Connor provided photos for the Commission to view.

Jon Guerke, 1822 Stumpmier Rd., stated that he doesn't have any issues with the current owners of Camp Lord Willing or the campground itself, but the activity that takes place at the campground is not good. The RVs are being used as permanent homes. The property needs to be improved and the pond needs to be cleaned out.

Motion

Moved By: Collins

Supported By: Abrams

Motion to accept the photos for the record.

MUC

Motion

Moved By: Collins

Supported By: Dotson

Motion to close the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

MUC

Item No. 7 New Business.

A (1). Public Hearing – Special Land Use: To hear and consider a request for a Special Land Use permit for a Vehicle Repair Facility, located at 1600 N Monroe Street. The Parcel number is 07-760-015-00 and the property is zoned C-2, General Commercial.

Motion

A motion was made to accept and place on file the Legal Notice and supporting documents published in the Monroe Evening News on October 31, 2023, along with the Affidavit of mailing for the Parcel 07-760-015-00. A total of 31 mailings were sent for the subject properties.

Moved By: Calkins *Collins*

Supported By: Abrams

MUC

Kelly McIntyre, CIB Planning gave a presentation on request and reviewed the standards for Special Land Use. The applicant is proposing a 'Ding and Dent' shop, repairing dents and hail damage with a special tool. No sanding or painting is required. All repairs are made by appointment only and a majority of the business is done with dealerships in the area. The business will have 6 employees-however 5 of those employees are typically driving cars back and forth to dealerships. Ms. McIntyre went through the standards of Section 4.06, Vehicle Repair Facilities. Ms. McIntyre stated the standards are met in that the applicant has verified that all work will be done inside the building and that no vehicles will be left outside overnight. Ms. McIntyre noted that the paved area behind the building (east side) should be striped and used for employee and guest parking.

Ms. McIntyre recommended that the Planning Commission approved the Special Land Use application conditioned upon the following: the submittal of a sketch plan with designated parking areas identified and parking space striping for administrative review, a copy of the State of Michigan vehicle repair license be provided to the Township for records, and that the review and approval from all applicable consultants, departments, and agencies be obtained.

Applicant/business owner Keith Durard, 12678 N. Lakeshore Drive, LaSalle, MI 48145, was present to answer questions regarding the business operation. He stated that repairs are all done inside and are typically in and out within 2-3 days. He is purchasing the building and has plans to fix it up.

Motion

A motion was made to accept and place on file the documents for the application.

Moved By: Abrams

Supported By: Collins

MUC

A public hearing was opened at 7:28 p.m.

Motion

A motion was made to open the public hearing at 7:28 p.m.

Moved by: Collins

Supported by: Abrams

Linda Gartner, 31 Dexter Streets, lives at the corner of the alley behind the subject property and Dexter Street. She had questions regarding who maintains the alley. It is unclear- but technically is an abandoned street. She said she doesn't have a problem with the business and appreciated that the applicant plans to fix up the property and designate a parking area.

The public hearing was closed at 7:37 p.m.

Motion

A motion was made to close the public hearing.

Moved by: Abrams

Supported by: Collins

Board Members discussed.

No further discussion

Motion

A motion was made to approve the Special Land Use application for a Vehicle Repair Facility, located at 1600 N. Monroe Street (parcel number is 07-760-015-00) conditioned upon the following:

1. the submittal of a sketch plan with designated parking areas identified and parking space striping for administrative review;
2. a copy of the State of Michigan vehicle repair license be provided to the Township for records; and
3. the review and approval from all applicable consultants, departments, and agencies be obtained.

Moved By: Abrams

Supported By: Collins

Roll Call Vote: Dennis Staelgraeve -yes Brian Dotson yes- Bill VanDaele- yes
Chris Collins - yes Don Abrams – yes Tim Stiff - yes

B (1). An application for construction of a single-family residence on non-conforming lots or parcels of record shall be submitted to the Building Official for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit.

1. In reviewing the application, the Building Official shall determine that all requirements or criteria related to the non-conforming aspect of the lot or parcel are met.

2. Further the Building Official shall determine what additional information and/or approvals must be submitted or obtained to ensure compliance with this Ordinance and that the general public health, safety, and welfare of the existing and future residences of the area will be preserved.

a. Discussion of R-1-R zoning district text amendments:

Ms. McIntyre explained that the “Beaches” area has a disproportionate number of “nonconforming” lots—lots that do not meet the current lot size minimum or lot width. To allow the development of the platted lots in the area, provisions were added to the 2023 Zoning Ordinance update to address this issue. Specifically, the standard permitted use of any lot or parcel with a width is not less than forty (40') feet and lot area not less than five thousand (5,000) square feet. This would essentially allow infill development and also permit alterations to houses on lots that are considered non-conforming (as long as they meet the 40 foot, 5,000 square foot standard) without having to obtain a variance. The problem that still exists is the requirement to meet the setbacks and lot coverage- as these remains is not reduced from the current standard.

McIntyre explained that she and Gary Dahl, Building Official, examined existing vacant/undeveloped parcels-in the field and via GIS.

The proposed revised standards further reduce the lot size minimum to 4,000 square feet, reduce the minimum usable floor area to 900 square feet, increase the maximum lot coverage, and allow a slight reduction of side yards.

McIntyre explained that meeting the required setbacks, especially on corner lots, are difficult. With that in mind, additional changes were proposed for the 40'x 100' corner lots allowing a designated front yard setback of 20 feet and a secondary front yard setback of 10 feet.

Commissioner Staelgrave stated that meeting the two front yard setbacks on a corner lot pushed a house into a corner and made developing the lot (meeting other setbacks and lot coverage requirements) not feasible.

Commissioner Collins suggested that the entrance to the house/front of the house be the designated “front” yard and the 20 foot setback be applied to that frontage. Commission Abrams thought that was a good idea.

Commissioner Collins also noted that this would allow existing houses on those smaller lots to rebuild etc. without going to the ZBA.

Collins also suggested that the Resort District Authority be used to define the area, as Stoney Point is not R-1-R but has nonconforming vacant lots as well.

Motion

A motion was made to accept and place on file the letter provided by Fred Calkins to the Board. As Commissioner Calkins was not in attendance, he wanted to share his thoughts on the matter.

Moved By: VanDaele

Supported By: Dotson

MUC

The Planning Commission gave Ms. McIntyre direction to bring back the revised text and map (boundaries of the RDA) so that this could be applied as an "overlay."

f. Old Business.

No discussion.

g. Public Comment on Non-Agenda items.

No discussion

Commissioner Collins updated the Commission that the Telegraph/Dixie Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) work is coming along nicely. The board had a workshop on the Telegraph Road area (previously having done the Dixie area in September). He also commented that the Township had made progress with the County (to support the CIA and allow Township to capture the taxes).

h. Adjournment.

Motion

Moved By: Stiff

Supported By: Abrams

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

MUC