

**VILLAGE OF SPRING LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES
February 25, 2014
7:00 PM**

**Barber School Community Building
102 West Exchange Street
Spring Lake, MI 49456
49456**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Bohnhoff, Boon, Miller, Van Leeuwen-Vega, VanStrate, and Yasenak.

Absent: Johnson and Kauchek

Staff present: Carmine Avantini, AICP of CIB Planning, Jennifer Howland, Village Planner, and Maryann Fonkert, Administrative Assistant.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Bohnhoff, support by Van Leeuwen-Vega, to approve the agenda. All in favor, motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of the November 26, 2013 regular meeting.

Motion by VanLeeuwen-Vega, support by VanStrate, to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2013 regular meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Alden Place Building Elevations: Consideration of proposed building elevations for single-family homes fronting on Savidge Street at Alden Place.

Chairwoman Miller introduced this item and asked Village Planner, Jennifer Howland if she would give an overview.

Howland explained to the Commission that Mr. Chris Vander Hoff, developer of Alden Place PUD, was requesting approval of single-family home building elevations for the remaining building sites fronting on Savidge Street, unites 11, 16, 17, 18, and 19. Howland said that the 2011 PUD approval included a condition that these building elevations be submitted for separate approval to the Planning Commission at a later date. Howland also said that a review of the minutes from the 2011 approval indicated that the intentions for the proposed homes fronting on Savidge Street would have their major front facing

Savidge Street, a garage and rear entrance off Rachael's Way, and one square foot stone pillars on the porches.

Howland told the Commission that Mr. Vander Hoff was proposing that the homes face Rachael's Way with a garage to match the other homes in the development and the side facing Savidge Street would have a screened in porch. Howland also explained that the architectural details would match existing homes in the development and maintain the required 5 foot side yard setback.

Mr. Chris Vander Hoff explained why he was asking to reverse the direction the homes faced and the process he went through to get the designs. Vander Hoff said he had integrated the Victorian look while still maintaining the cottage feel inside the plat by keeping the front, facing Rachael's Way, lower and then a two story, with a steeper pitch, facing Savidge. Vander Hoff said, with the extensive landscaping and that they were set back from the Victorians, that not much of the back of the homes would be visible from Savidge Street.

There was discussion regarding the view from Savidge Street if the homes faced Rachael's Way with a 12 foot by 12 foot square porch on the back. There was also discussion on the size and materials that would be used for the screened porches such as more stone and other detail to make them more substantial looking.

On a motion by VanStrate, support by Yasenak to approve the proposed building elevations for single-family homes fronting on Savidge Street at Alden Place. Motion carried.

Yes: 4

No: 2 (Miller & Van Leeuwen-Vega)

Marina Bay Building Elevations: Consideration of proposed building elevations for residential duplexes at Marina Bay.

Chairperson Miller introduced this item and asked Howland if she would give the Commission an overview.

Howland explained that Mr. Chris Vander Hoff, the developer of the remaining portion of Marina Bay PUD, was requesting approval of the building elevations for 2 residential duplexes. Howland said the Final Development Plan had been approved in July 2013 and the locations of the 2 duplexes had been shown on the approved Plan, but the elevations themselves were not available at that time. Howland said that Vander Hoff had since developed the building elevations to be compatible with the approved single-family home building elevations with common features that include the same color palate, vertical vinyl siding, cultured stone accents, standing seam metal accent roofs, and architectural shingles on the main roofs. Howland also said that the proposed residential duplexes would fit within the footprints show on the approved Plan.

After some discussion regarding changes from the previous design, the Commission agreed they liked the elevations.

On a motion by Boon, support by Bohnhoff, to approve the proposed building elevations for residential duplexes at Marina Bay. All in favor, motion carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Spring Lake Township Administration Office and Fire Station Planned Unit Development

Rezoning Request: The Village of Spring Lake Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider a request from Mr. Gordon Gallagher on behalf of Spring Lake Township to approve a rezoning request and Preliminary PUD Development Plan for the Spring Lake Township Administration Office and Fire Station project. Proposed is a rezoning from SFR-A, Single-Family Residential to P, Public and Semi-Public/PUD, Planned Unit Development. The location of the request is 106 North Fruitport Road, Permanent Parcel Numbers 70-03-14-451-010 and 70-03-14-451-014.

Chairwoman Miller introduced this item and asked Carmine Avantini if he would give an overview.

Avantini explained that this meeting would hold a Public Hearing regarding the request by Spring Lake Township to rezone the subject property to Public, Semi-Public/PUD. Avantini said the Township had been before the Commission twice before in a workshop format and the next step in the process was to conduct a Public Hearing, take comment and discuss the application amongst the Commission and ultimately make a recommendation to the Village Council.

Gordon Gallagher, Spring Lake Township Manager, thanked the Commission for their attentiveness and willingness to be open-minded with this project. Gallagher said that Spring Lake had been remarkably successful with grants over the last five years, and because they were hoping to begin seeking grant funding for this project, it was the Township's hope that the Commission would look favorably on their request. Gallagher explained that they had brought several individuals with them in hopes of answering any questions that the Commission and audience had. Gallagher acknowledged the support for the project from the Spring Lake Township Board and Officers of the Spring Lake Fire Department, with special recognition to Jim Koster for his dedication serving on the Spring Lake Fire Department for over 40 years. Gallagher then turned the presentation over to Brian Sipe, Fire Marshal.

Brian Sipe, Spring Lake Township Fire Marshal, explained that the Spring Lake Fire Department takes pride in the service they provide to both the Township and the Village. Like most successful organizations, they continuously look at areas they can be more efficient and effective. One area they have been focusing on for some time was with their fire stations. Sipe explained that they currently operate out of three (3) fire stations: Station 2 – 174th Ave., Central Station – Buchanan St., Station 1 – 148th Ave. Sipe said that this past year they completed a renovation of Station 2 to meet their needs on the West side of their service area and now we're focusing on the other two stations. Sipe explained that as they evaluated their stations, they focused on two key questions: Do they meet the needs of the department and do they meet the needs of the community?

Sipe explained that looking at the existing stations, the Central Station was built in 1965 and was a combination fire station and Township Hall and for a long time it had met their needs very well. However, over time the Township had grown and the needs on the administration side have grown as well and because of this growth, they had been left with use of only the apparatus bays; the building can't effectively hold both. Sipe said space was one thing but what happens when you can't fit your fire trucks in the bays? This was the challenge they had been presented. Sipe told the Commission that over the years fire truck manufacturers have been building fire trucks bigger and bigger and the Fire Department is now at a point where they can't get their newer fire trucks (2007 & 2003) to fit in the station. They have held on to the current fire truck in that station longer than expected because they wouldn't be able to get another truck to fit in there and they need a fire truck in the Village to meet ISO criteria.

Sipe explained that in 1997 Spring Lake Township took advantage of buying an emission testing facility built by the State on 148th Ave. In the short-term this had provided them the space to upgrade their fleet of apparatus, what it didn't account for was their operational growth. There was limited office space, no sleeping quarters, no kitchen area, or spaces that would allow them to expand their service and capabilities.

Sipe said that aside from the mentioned challenges, another challenge that presented itself was the logistical aspect. Operationally it's advantageous to get as many firefighters on trucks as possible because it provided crew integrity and allowed them to be more efficient arriving on the fire scene. Because they were a paid-on-call department, their staffing levels flex throughout the day due to work schedules, so you may end up with only a couple of firefighters at each station, which doesn't do much for getting multiple people on a fire truck.

Sipe explained that from a community needs perspective, they not only had to meet the needs of today but project what that future need was as well. The Township had experienced some growth over the years and this new location would continue to serve that area well. One area Sipe felt was overlooked was the growth of the Village, especially into the future.

Current

- a. Spring Lake Villas
- b. Alden Place

Future

- c. Marina Bay
- d. Senior Housing facility
- e. Brewery

Sipe said after evaluating the various components, they strongly believe that their operations would thrive by combining the two stations, which led them to the questions... where should that fire station be? and why? The Township wanted to make sure they were doing their due diligence so Sipe said they contacted Retired Fire Chief Dave Purchase, who had a wealth of experience in the fire service, could come in to their project with an unbiased look at the information to help sort through their data and research and find where the best location would be. Sipe told the Commission that Chief Purchase would present his findings and why the best location for the station was Savidge/N. Fruitport Rd.

Chief Purchase explained to the Commission that he was asked by Spring Lake Township to take a look at relocating the fire station to this location and that this location served both the Village and the Township with very little impact in service. Purchase said they had worked closely with the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) to ask for their review of this site. The ISO generates a Public Property Protection Assessment with ratings on a scale of 1 to 10. The Spring Lake Fire Department was currently at a rating of five (5). Purchase said a ten (10) rating is basically no fire station at all and a one (1) rating was the best fire department in terms of providing fire protection. Purchase said this rating was important because insurers base their premiums for home owners and businesses on it and according to the current agreement between the Village and the Fire Department, the Fire Department must maintain an ISO rating of five (5). Purchase said one of the things that greatly impacted that rating was the location of fire engines within 1.5 road miles of the protected property. When the fire engines are outside the 1.5 road miles you begin to lose credit for the engine company which has the affect for downgrading the ISO rating. Chief Purchase showed the Commission maps that were used to review the three current stations. Purchase then showed a map that combined the Buchanan Street Station at the 148th Street Station, and in doing so, a portion of the Village would be outside of the 1.5 road mile coverage, which was not to say they couldn't respond there, but for better ratings and better service the proposed site would have no impact to the Village or the Township's ISO rating.

Neighborhood Impact/Noise

Sipe said in the past workshops, they got the sense that there may be some hesitation for putting a fire station in a mixed residential area, with noise potentially being a factor. Sipe said they were sensitive to being good neighbors, and would continue to be, but they didn't want to lose sight of what positive impact this location would bring to the entire community.

Sipe said in regards to noise, this could be a challenging subject.

- A. State Vehicle code and State Protocol dictates how they respond to incidents in regards to lights and sirens
- B. Want to make sure they were sensitive to those on the other end of the calls. What if it was your husband or wife, your child, or maybe even you, who needed immediate care?. Sipe felt that the sound of the sirens would not be hindrance. In fact, they have found that sound becomes a sense of comfort in time of crisis as it signifies help was almost there.
- C. With that being said, Sipe said they believed they could show that there would be minimal impact in regards to noise at this location.
- D. First Sipe said he would like to explain how they operate and respond to calls:
 - A. Chief responds M-F 8a-5p
 - i. Limited response out of the station due to inspections, meetings, various activities.
 - B. 7p-7a during weeknights and 7a-7a during weekend one of their fire officers takes the EMS response vehicle home.This information becomes important as they looked at the amount and types of calls they respond to.
- E. Looking at responses, Sipe showed the Commission graphs of the type of calls, time of day calls were received and breakdown of the emergency calls out of Station 1. Sipe explained through the graphs that the response out of the new station would have limited impact in regards to noise simply due to the type of calls they run and how they operate.
- F. Being able to control the light at Savidge/Fruitport would also play a big part.
 - A. They were also exploring the option to put a notification light farther up N. Fruitport Rd. which will go off/blink when they control the main light at Savidge/Fruitport Rd.

Sipe explained why in a residential area?

- A. Given the opportunity to travel around the County, State, or even throughout the nation, you would find fire stations built in and/or around residential settings.
 - a. Why?
- B. Much of the decision came down to where they responded to the most calls.

Sipe said at this time he would like to turn things over to their design team who would further discuss their experiences of designing fire stations in residential areas and expand on the scope of the project.

Dave Ross, Chief Design Officer for CR Architecture and Design, showed the Commission examples of fire stations adjacent to residential areas and how they responded to the character of the neighborhood.

Pete LaMourie of Progressive AE, explained that he was a traffic engineer and that one of the first things they did was talk to MDOT and the Ottawa County Road Commission. LaMourie said because of traffic issues at certain times, MDOT was more comfortable with Savidge Street being a right-in, right-out only drive way with the main entry/exit for the fire station to be on Fruitport Road. LaMourie said he felt one of the benefits of this location was proximity to the signalized intersection and being able to control it. LaMourie showed the Commission a graph comparing the usage of other potential

businesses for this site, such as a medical or dental office, at peak hours showed trips to be at least 50% higher than the proposed use.

Ross showed slides of the proposed site plan explaining what was new or changed since the last meeting. Ross said they had moved the dumpster and added more screening using mixed materials in the screening of shrubs/hedges, wood fence and masonry. Ross said there would be one monument sign at the right-in, right-out on Savidge Street and there would be some signage on the building in a few places. Ross explained the lighting and landscaping around the building following with the Village theme as he showed and animated model. Ross said that this was not the final design so not everything was included.

Avantini explained that in his letter dated 11/5/13, entitled Spring Lake Township Fire Station Planning and Zoning Analysis, the Master Plan and supporting documents indicate that the Village anticipated redevelopment of the subject site at some point in the future. What was not discussed, however, was what those uses should be. Avantini said it was reasonable to expect that a transitional use between the Burger King and adjacent single-family residences would be appropriate. Avantini also said the Master Plan, Downtown Plan and Design Standards are clearly not in support of commercial sprawl, preferring that new retail uses be concentrated in the downtown area and a municipal office use could provide that transitional use and a fire station, with appropriate control over operations, would also be compatible with the abutting single-family residential neighborhood. Avantini explained that there were three potential uses that he felt were the best fit for that area. These three uses were an Eastern Entryway District, Office district or Public/Semi-Public and of these three uses Avantini felt the Public/Semi-Public had the least intense uses that you could get at this site. Avantini said that he was not an advocate for the applicant but he had spent many months beating up on the applicant telling them what was and wasn't appropriate and the applicant had made those adjustments. Avantini said that based upon his assessment and comments found in the 2/17/14 letter, he recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval for the request to rezone the subject site from SFR-A, Single-Family Residential to P, Public and Semi-Public/PUD, Planned Unit Development. This recommendation was based on the application submitted, including the supporting documentation and Preliminary PUD Development Plan.

Motion by VanStrate, support by Boon, to open the Public Hearing. All in favor, motion carried.

Darcy Dye, 114 N. Fruitport Road, said that as a resident looking at the visual screen, it didn't look like a transitional project but more like the Township marching into the Village corner. Ms. Dye also pointed out a few discrepancies in the schematics stating that her house did not have an L extension on it, rather it was a postage stamp size square that would fit into two bays of the fire station, only filling about 50% of the space. Ms. Dye also said their house was on the green site with 44 trees, many of them old grove trees, distributed throughout the site and the Township plans called for clear cutting their two parcels to make room for construction. Ms. Dye said the proposed plan called for a two lane paved road, 62 parking spaces and a turn-a-round designed to handle multi ton trucks. Ms. Dye said her home was roughly 22 hundred square feet and the proposed building was between 27 and 29 thousand square feet. Ms. Dye said her home was part of a quiet residential neighborhood in the Village proper and the Township was proposing a fortress size municipal building and fire station dominating the corner. Ms. Dye said that she hoped that, when making their decision, the Commission would use the Master Plan and PUD Ordinance which give clear guidance to the Village's long range vision for a balance between residential and commercial development.

John Nash, Spring Lake Township Supervisor, said that this property was the center of the fire and medical runs on this side of the lake and they did have to go to both sides of the lake because of

transportation time. Nash said the Township had looked at the proposed property for quite some time before it was purchased when prices went down and it became affordable. Nash also said he had talked to several residents that were all in favor of the project. Nash said he felt this was a great location and it was a financially very sound time to do this project.

David Dye, 114 N. Fruitport Road, said that at the east end of the Village, as it currently exists, were large 60 to 80 foot trees to set the scale but with the construction of the Township building the scale would be set by large 30 to 40 foot buildings with some screening and 15 foot trees. Dye said to maintain the scale of the east end of the Village, smaller buildings would be more appropriate that could maintain the character of the Village as well as maintain mature trees. Mr. Dye said the large building would be a continuation of the Township's commercial businesses to the east of the Village. Mr. Dye asked why the Township administration offices were added to the Fire Station plan.

Ron Lindquist, 18117 Alpine Court, Spring Lake, said he had also talked to several people and they want this location for an emergency operations center.

There being no further public comment, motion by Bohnhoff, support by Van Leeuwen-Vega, to close the public hearing. All in favor, motion carried

The Commission had concerns about the height and size of the administration building and the architecture not in keeping with the Village theme. There were also questions on controlling the diesel smell and if there had been a traffic study. They also wondered if the Buchanan Street building would be put back on the tax roll.

Gallagher said the expectation was that the Township would sell both the 148th Station and the Township Hall building, putting it back on the tax roll and felt that it would add more money to the tax roll. Gallagher said in regards to the diesel smell, the exhaust would be hooked to a hose and would be pulled into a capturing system until the trucks pulled out the door. Gallagher said the buffer was proposed at 10 feet currently, and for hours of illumination, the Township Hall hours were, in general, Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm with some evening meetings that usually do not last past 10pm. Gallagher said that one of the reasons the Township brought CR Architecture & Design in on this project was because of their ability to put pleasing architecture in communities. Gallagher said he heard the concerns about the height of the building and explained that the tallest portion of the building was the meeting space on the second floor and what was proposed was to have a vaulted ceiling similar to Barber School to have natural light from the high windows. Gallagher said as far as the question about the blinking light, they were not sure yet what direction that was going. Gallagher said, going back to the traffic study portion, that he was tremendously impressed with Pete LaMourie, that LeMourie had met with both MDOT and Ottawa County Road Commission and continued to share with the Township was that the benefit of that traffic light for emergency response was significant and the ability to control that light, whether it's on the 4th of July when the cars are backed up along M-104, so that those emergency vehicles can access that intersection. Gallagher said every other year, on every street throughout Ottawa County, traffic counts were done by the Ottawa County Road Commission. Gallagher said he wasn't sure if that was done specifically within the Village but it was done in the Township, so they had traffic counts along M-104, along Fruitport Road, along Fruitport Road between M104 and State Road, and along Fruitport Road from State Road further north, so they know what the traffic patterns look like, but the main thing they were looking at was how do they make sure they have adequate emergency ingress and egress from that site.

There was a question asked if the light at M-104 and 148th Avenue was controlled for the Fire Trucks. Gallagher said it was not, but they could probably ask for it to be controlled. Gallagher said he thought

the example that was really being talked about was when the trucks left the current station on Buchanan Street towards M-104, if there was traffic coming, how they access M-104 going east or west, and the challenge was, that even when you are an emergency vehicle and you have lights and sirens, you still have to obey traffic laws so they have to wait for someone to stop. Gallagher said he felt they had done the best job they could in showing that the 148th Avenue station was not the best location for serving the Village.

Mr. Ross explained that they still considered the design a "Conceptual Design" so there was lots of opportunity to make adjustments to style and detailing. Ross said the height shown was a worse case scenario and could be discussed since it was not a necessity to have that extra height for functional use on the meeting room. Ross also said there were still a lot of areas that had not been worked out yet and they were more than willing to challenge themselves to come up with designs that work for the Community.

Avantini explained to the Commission that this vote would be to approve or disapprove the rezoning of the subject site, and if approved, the Township would come back to the Planning Commission for approval of the PUD Development Plan.

Motion by Boon, support by Bohnhoff, to recommend approval to the Village Council, of a request from Mr. Gordon Gallagher on behalf of Spring Lake Township to rezone the subject site from SFR-A, Single-Family Residential to P, Public and Semi-Public/PUD, Planned Unit Development.

Yes: 3

No: 3 (Van Leeuwen-Vega, Yasenak, Bohnhoff)

7. CORRESPONDENCE

The Commission received a letter of resignation from Commissioner, Sherry Miller.

Also, received was a copy of a letter to Gordon Gallagher at Spring Lake Township regarding the proposed Administration Office/Fire Department building from Darcy Dye, dated November 27, 2013.

8. STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no statements of citizens.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 930 p.m.

Jennifer Howland
Village Planner

Maryann Fonkert
Administrative Assistant