

**TALLMADGE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
OF NOVEMBER 10, 2008**

Chairman Matthew Fenske called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members present: Dewey Bultsma, Matthew Fenske, Dick Temple, Donald Smith, Jim Szejda, Marvin Bennink and Toby Van Ess

Also present was Greg Ransford, Township Planner

The minutes of the October 13, 2008 meeting were approved as presented.

1. Private Road – Westside Building and Development is requesting Private Road approval for parcel number 70-10-02-300-002. This parcel is zoned Rural Preserve and is located at the end of 12th Avenue public and the beginning of 12th Avenue Private. This item had been postponed at the October 13, 2008 meeting.

Matthew Fenske noted that the Planning Commission had wanted to verify the applicant was requesting an appropriate number of splits. Greg Ransford responded that the number proposed would be allowed. Mr. Fenske then read correspondence from the Ottawa County Road Commission which believes it would be in the best interest of all and more efficient and safer to have the proposed private road “T” intersect with the existing private road rather than connecting to the cul-de-sac.

Marvin Bennink was concerned that this might not be allowed and referred to the Private Road Ordinance Section 104.C. Bill Wiersma said the original Private Road Ordinance was amended to address private roads which access off another private road. Greg Ransford said there are some outstanding issues, such as the number of cuts into the cul-de-sac and negotiating with the neighbors, nevertheless, Mr. Haisma has rights to that portion of the easement.

Toby Van Ess said the road to the south, 12th Avenue Private, crosses property they do not own. Wright Township had owned this property before Mr. Haisma so 12th Avenue Private has been crossing over even before Mr. Haisma owned it. Jim Szejda clarified that each property owner owns in front of their lot. Toby Van Ess feels the proposal would be the lesser of two evils. The road could come off of the cul-de-sac, but it makes more sense to “T” into the existing road and the Ottawa County Road Commission agrees.

Zack Voogt added that there would not be a whole lot of traffic and the Ottawa County Road Commission did feel this was the best option. Mr. Haisma said he talked to the neighbors and one is concerned about snow plowing and another wants to keep his existing easement to develop in the future. Mr. Haisma said they could work together in the future and has left those options open.

Dick Temple said the applicant would have to reapply if they want any changes in the future with the neighbors. There was discussion of screening for headlights. Dewey Bultsma asked what the radius was at the “T”. Mr. Voogt said it is a 20 foot radius.

Donald Smith moved, Dick Temple supported, motion CARRIED to APPROVE the request noting the following:

- It is the safest option and approved by the Ottawa County Road Commission
- There will be no parallel roads and would not be an additional cut into the cul-de-sac
- It is an unrecorded preexisting road over land that the applicant owns

- The request is approved with the condition that a double row of pines be staggered along the entire radius area
- There must be a maintenance agreement for the shared area

Ayes: Dewey Bultsma, Matthew Fenske, Dick Temple, Donald Smith, Jim Szejda and Toby Van Ess.

Nays: Marvin Bennink.

2. Setback Requirements.

Greg Ransford submitted an example of proposed setback changes per the request of Dewey Bultsma. Mr. Bultsma said his main concern was for the 75 foot front yard setback requirement in R-1. R-1 zoning without public water and sewer has a one acre minimum lot size and Mr. Bultsma feels that a lot of the back yard is lost with the current front yard setback requirement. Toby Van Ess added that Tallmadge has a lot of ravines, and the lay of the land can make it difficult. Dick Temple asked about streets that have an established front yard line. He said people do not typically use their front yard. Jim Szejda feels the noise factor should be taken into consideration, especially on roads such as 8th Avenue that experience a high volume of traffic.

Greg Ransford said another option would be to require an average of the setback of the two side neighbors. Donald Smith is concerned if there is a 75 foot established front yard setback, a new house would be out of place and block the site view of the existing houses. The Planning Commission agreed that front views were a concern. Marvin Bennink sees how this could be beneficial for properties of 1 acre or less, but feels new houses should be inline with existing neighboring properties. He feels it would be okay to consider allowing less than 75 foot front yard setbacks in new PUD's.

Greg Ransford pointed out that it is cheaper for driveways and utilities for new builds if they are closer to the road, and in his experience most new builds are proposed at the minimum allowed front yard setback, likely for that reason. Dewey Bultsma said roads like M-45 and 8th Avenue would not want a reduced front yard setback, but he was more concerned about private roads and secondary roads.

The Planning Commission asked Mr. Ransford to research a few similar townships and possible separate standards for Lamont. They are looking for language regarding alignment so as to not infringe on neighbors. They would possibly consider setback changes only in R-1 and R-2.

3. Matthew Fenske resigned as chairman of the Planning Commission due to the fact he has been elected Trustee for the Township Board. Toby Van Ess also resigned from the Planning Commission since he has been elected Supervisor for the Township Board. Mr. Fenske has been serving as the person that serves on both the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals, so another member is needed to sit on both of those Boards. Bill Wiersma thanked the Planning Commission for their years of service during his time as Supervisor.

Donald Smith moved, Dewey Bultsma supported, motion CARRIED to elect Marvin Bennink as chairman. **Ayes:** Dewey Bultsma, Matthew Fenske, Dick Temple, Donald Smith, Jim Szejda, and Toby Van Ess. **Nays:** none.

Dewey Bultsma moved, Dick Temple supported, motion CARRIED to elect Donald Smith as vice chairman. **Ayes:** Dewey Bultsma, Matthew Fenske, Dick Temple, Marvin Bennink, Jim Szejda, and Toby Van Ess. **Nays:** none.

Jim Szejda will remain as secretary. The Planning Commission will also need a member to serve on the Zoning Board of Appeals as well.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Somers, Administrative Assistant