

**TALLMADGE CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
MAY 19, 2005**

Charles Gilson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members present: Shirley Bruin, Mary Gavin, and Charles Gilson

Members Absent: Toby Van Ess and Clifford Bronkema

The minutes of the November 8, 2004 meeting were approved as presented.

1. West Walker Sportsman Club is requesting a variance for a proposed addition to their existing building creating an expansion of a non-conforming use of the lot. This parcel number 70-10-13-300-073 is located at 0-601 Leonard Street NW and is zoned Rural Preserve.

Mark Theuw was present at the meeting on behalf of West Walker Sportsman Club. West Walker Sportsman Club began in 1954, and at that time the property was zoned Agricultural. The Township changed the zoning of that property to Rural Preserve in the mid-1980's, at which time they became a legal non-conforming use. The existing building was built in 2001, which replaced an old building. They now need more room.

Charles Gilson read the one letter that was received from a neighbor in opposition to the request. They were concerned particularly if it meant entertaining larger groups and more often. Mr. Theuw said they are not intending to entertain more people, it is just that they are overcrowded with the current members.

The meeting opened to the public.

Fern Pasholk of 0-12264 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue said her house is directly behind the WWSC property, and they have heard shooting at 7:15am and at 10:30pm on occasion. Mr. Theuw said the posted hours are starting at 9:00 am. Monday through Saturday, and at 10:00am on Sunday. The ending time varies according to the season, and coincides with the sunset. They also have shooting on Wednesday evenings from 6:00-10:00pm. They have gates up to keep people out during non-posted hours, and also check to make sure people on the grounds are members. If they are not members, they are trespassing, and are asked to leave. If they are members shooting outside the posted hours, their membership is revoked. The WWSC allows fishing on the pond located on their property. Mr. Theuw recalls one incident when a person was fishing on the adjacent Consumers Energy property and the WWSC locked him out.

Ms. Pasholk said that people come up Ponderosa Drive and then go through the Consumers Energy property onto the WWSC. Mr. Theuw said they are installing a new gate this summer to prevent that. He added that they call the police if nonmembers are on the property or if anyone is shooting during off hours.

Mr. Theuw said they are proposing an addition extending 24 feet on the east side of the building. That area is used as a reception area, including tables, chairs, and a desk, and they occasionally serve breakfast for the members. He said it currently holds 30-40 people, but it is cramped. They are not adding any shooting. When they rebuilt a few years ago, they had to make the restrooms larger in order to meet code, and that consequently took away from the reception area.

The neighbor was concerned about how many times per year they used the facility for weddings or others functions that would have music. Mr. Theuw said approximately once every 6-8 weeks they rent out the facility, however not all are wedding receptions. At times they have Sportsman banquets.

**Charles Gilson read from Section 21.07, Standards for Review. He noted that item #2 fit since the township changed the zoning after they had been there a number of years. He also said that the WWSC is unique, being the only club of its type in the township. They have plenty of room; the addition would not be crammed on a small parcel.**

**Ms. Pasholk said she has lived there about 10 years, and believes the shooting has increased since that time. Shirley Bruin said she has lived in the area for 48 years, and doesn't even hear the shooting. She and the neighbors present at the meeting moved in after the WWSC had been there for a number of years. Mr. Theuw said they have around 1100-1200 members, and that has not increased recently.**

**The meeting closed to the public.**

**Mary Gavin said she assumes they are running according to the law. She acknowledged that there seems to be a neighbor problem, however Mr. Theuw is willing to resolve these issues and, in fact, gave his phone number to the neighbor and asked them to call him or the police if there is a problem. Mr. Theuw said the WWSC does not want shooting outside of the posted hours either. Mrs. Gavin said the neighbor issue does not appear to be a township matter. She understands that they are a legal nonconforming use, and the need for a larger reception area.**

**Mary Gavin moved, Shirley Bruin supported, motion CARRIED to APPROVE the request based on the fact they have been in existence for over 50 years, and at the time they were established, they met all zoning requirements. Ayes: Charles Gilson, Mary Gavin and Shirley Bruin. Nays: none.**

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:10 p.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Denise L. Lanting, Secretary**