

**TALLMADGE CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2025  
6:00 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – At 6:00pm, Mark Bennett called the meeting to order, and Joel Terpstra opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present: Mark Bennett, Kent Bollinger, John Bronkema, Michael Eppink, Karina Rollenhagen, Valdyne Schwallier and Joel Terpstra. Also present: approximately 50 members of the community.

**II. CONSENT AGENDA**

Valdyne Schwallier moved, Kent Bollinger supported to approve the minutes of August 12, 2025, regular meeting, and to approve the bills to be paid in September of 2025 as presented, and to accept as information the treasurer's report, legal update and correspondence if any. Motion CARRIED.

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - none

**IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - none

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING-TALLMADGE POINTE PUD FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN-** Pursuant to Section 14.07(d) the Planned Unit Development proposes 28 duplexes across parcels 70-10-24-200-024, 70-10-24-200-025, and 70-10-24-226-088 encompassing approximately 15.2 acres. **Michael Eppink moved, John Bronkema supported to open the meeting to the public. Motion CARRIED.**

**Public Comments:**

1. Tiffany Sipka - Crowley – Stands in strong opposition to the PUD. After attending the Planning Commission meeting, she has little confidence in the board's integrity or commitment to a fair process. She believes the board has no regard for residents' concerns about the proposed development. She is concerned about the density of the development. She is concerned about the long-term care of the development. She is also concerned about the traffic issues this development will amplify. She requests that we reject the project as it stands.
2. Jay Van Borst – Supports more housing across the board. Questions whether anyone can afford to live in these apartments? Supports more affordable housing options.
3. Jim Heyboer – Leonard – Concerned about traffic – the speed on Leonard is high. 75-100 additional cars will cause more concern. Has a traffic study been completed?
  - a. Mark Bennett – a traffic evaluation has been done. It indicated preliminarily that the additional traffic will not have much effect on current traffic on Leonard.
4. Nicole Olson – Crystal Ct – Concerned about high turnover of residents in our community. She would like to maintain the current sense of community. Concerned that the construction will attract thieves.

5. Tara Boersma – Leonard – Requests a comprehensive traffic study. She is concerned about traffic and limited sight distance on that section of the road. The elevation changes in that section of the road combined with the speed of traffic currently presents traffic hazards that will become worse with the proposed development. She requests a comprehensive traffic study before allowing the project to proceed.
6. Wanda McCullum – Tallmadge Woods Condos – Concerned about the turnover of renters. Also concerned about limited sight distance of traffic on Leonard when pulling out on Leonard from the side streets. Also concerned about pedestrian traffic without sidewalks from the proposed development to the corner of Leonard and Wilson.
7. Russ Moelker – Leonard – Appreciates the work of the Tallmadge elected officials. Questioned if the project was first presented to the Planning Commission and Board as a residential development.
  - a. Mark Bennett: this project has been in the works for several years and he doesn't really know what the initial submission was as far as what kind of residences. The project has been reintroduced as a rental property.
  - b. Russ Moelker – He read that a rental property over five can be considered a commercial property. And it's up against residential and high-density residential properties. It seems that 52 units is a commercial venture for some group. If you want to change over to residences, who in this room would buy a residence inside other rentals? You wouldn't. This will probably remain rentals forever. You don't close it up and put it all for sale as residential properties. We've tried to keep Ottawa County as rural as possible, and single-family homes. You've allowed for the rentals on Johnson and the trailer park. This is quite different. He sympathizes with those that live on Crowley Drive and have to look at this across the street. Concerned that Tallmadge Pointe is a commercial rental venture and not what Ottawa County seeks to preserve the rural atmosphere.
8. Spencer Boersma – Crowley – Questions the integrity of the project. He was approached door to door, and his main question was if it was a rental property or owner occupied, and he was told that was owner occupied. At the last Planning Commission meeting Joel Terpstra asked if this project was always going to be rental and the answer was yes. There is a clear lack of transparency with what is going on. He is not in support of the plan as it sits today.
9. Robin Boersma –Crowley Drive - At the Planning Commission meeting on July 22, 2025, she didn't feel that the residents were heard from by the PC. Her main concern is the high density, and she suggests a smaller development and that it not be rentals. She believes her property value will drop as a result of this new development.
10. Deb Campbell – Lauren Lane – Concerned that this is a rental development and the quality of life in the neighborhood. Her neighborhood is a fabulous place to live, and they all take pride in ownership. She is concerned that the renters will not take the same care with their homes, and it will poorly affect the neighborhood.

11. David Young - Lauren Lane –Against this project for these reasons: 1: High number of units in a small 15 acre piece of land, which a third is wet lands, 2: The rental situation for 5 years, of which no explanation has been given for how that will work 3: Turning onto Leonard from Lauren Lane, will there be a berm on Leonard so they don't have to look at the development?
12. Jerry – There are 3 intersections that are coming together and a hidden hill combined with cars going at astronomical speed. Also heard there is another complex proposed in City of Walker near the intersection of Leonard and Wilson. There is going to be potentially 100-150 cars coming into the intersection from the Condos, Lauren Lane and Crowley, and now this new complex and it's going to be a big traffic jam. You have a big problem already on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and it's going to get to the point where someone will have to really get hurt before someone decides how they're going to handle that. Once the apartments go on, who is going to manage them, who is going to take care of them. How are we going to take care of the riff raff.
13. Ray Dolman – Aleigha Drive – Concerned about the density and design of the project. There will be too many cars parked in the development. It is not compatible with the surrounding area and homes. Leonard isn't safe when pulling out onto or off of Leonard. Speed of traffic and limited sight is dangerous.
14. Lee Pat – Lauren Lane – Is there any part of Tallmadge Township that has density like this?
  - a. Mark Bennett – the area of Johnson and Kenowa and Kensington Preserve has the density there

Lee Pat – Tallmadge Township is known for being a rural place, more so than other townships in the county. Everyone has mentioned that density is a primary concern. He asks the Board to consider that.
15. Judy DeMar – Crowley - Question regarding the Fire Lane emergency egress, is that on Crowley?
  - a. Mark Bennett – proposed to come onto Crowley just about at the intersection with Leonard. Right at the entrance of Crowley.
16. John Van Ort – Crowley – Originally told this project would be owner occupied units. He has a problem with it being rental units, parking availability and that will look junky like Sessions Drive. Please consider putting 36 building lots in there instead. Also concerned with the traffic on Leonard Street. Did their own traffic study three weeks ago – 84% of the cars in one full day were going 59mph or higher. With that hill on Leonard, you can't see anyone coming over that hill until it's too late. If you add another 100 cars to that area, we're going to have even more trouble. We have to address the traffic on Leonard. Afraid that someone is going to get killed. Leonard is not built for this proposed development.
17. Bill – Johnson – Residents have to shoulder a lot of the development costs. Question is: out of this project; how much are the residents going to have to cover? To him, they should have no part in bearing the costs.
18. Jason Wohl – Lauren Lane – has the developer asked for any tax abatements?
  - a. Mark Bennett – I am not aware of any

Jason Wohl - At the Planning Commission meeting, Joel Terpstra compared the proposed development to the one on Lake Michigan Drive. Jason doesn't think you can compare the two developments because the

one on Lake Michigan Drive is in a commercial setting and this proposed development is in a residential area. I don't think this belongs. All of you have been elected by us. Which one of you would like this in your back yard?

19. Bria Powerhouse – Lauren Lane – Concerned how the rental property will affect the neighborhood. Moved to Tallmadge Township to get away from the lack of safety in her neighborhood.
20. Annette Blaire – Her property drains into the PUD property. She is concerned it will flood her property permanently. How will they make sure it drains properly? Tried to show this drainage map before at the Planning Commission meeting and they assumed once they put up all the new buildings that it's going to drain better. How? I want to make sure they don't permanently flood my property.
  - a. Mark Bennett – if you care to leave that with the board, I can share it with the board.
21. Missed name – Concerned about density and traffic on Leonard. Pride of ownership is a huge thing in this community, and rentals will decrease that.
22. Al – Tallmadge Woods – Concerned that Leonard cannot handle the increased traffic density from the proposed development. The rentals on Johnson and Lake Michigan Drive are on streets that are much more able to handle the increased traffic density.
23. Mary Heyboer – Leonard – Rental property owner – rental property is a whole different thing. There's a lot of turnover, they are a lot of work. She had no idea about this project until a neighbor told her. She didn't get anything in the mail, so she doesn't know how that works. We should tell a lot of people about these projects. If this project was residential, that would be a little better. What will happen to the 4 empty lots on Leonard? A traffic study sounds like it wasn't done. If it ends up rental, we're in big trouble down the road. It's a lot of people. We're going to have to beef up the fire department. We're going to have to raise our taxes. How are you going to cover all the services? She agrees with all of her neighbors.
24. No Name – what is going in on the 4 lots on Leonard? And what has been brought to the township?
  - a. Joel Terpstra – they're zoned R-2, so they will be duplexes, or single family. Nothing has been brought to the township. I bought 3 of those lots a year ago. They were zoned 15 years ago to Residential R-2.
  - b. Mark Bennett – a property owner can do that. They can cut down trees and move dirt.
25. Matt Boelema – Lauren Lane – Supportive of housing – Not for rentals.
26. Karen Meerman – Wants to support her neighbors and state that she is against the project for sure.
27. Tom Bloukamp – wants to keep property rural
28. Annette Blaire – No one wants this project. It's going to cost the taxpayers money to allow the township to put a lot of people in a small area. Will the board listen to the residents or the big money of the developers? Listen to the people in the community – don't listen to the big money. We're the ones that pay the taxes.
29. Jason Wohl – How do we look at the conflict of interest on the Planning Commission and the three guys that had to recuse themselves from that?

- a. Mark Bennett – it depends on the project itself and how directly involved they are with the project.
- 30. Mary Heyboer – Leonard – asked about how the process of the Public Hear and the First Reading works
  - a. Mark Bennett – explained the process – no vote will happen tonight.
- 31. Doug Kloostra – One of the developers on the project. About 6 years ago they put a proposed plan together. Regarding the traffic study, since the last meeting they did a traffic evaluation and found that it has such a minimum impact on the current traffic that they didn't recommend a full traffic study. If we would like a full traffic study, he can work with that. What he cannot deal with is the speed on Leonard coming over the hill. He worked with the Ottawa County Road Commission, and their best suggestion was to adjust Crowley and align it with Lauren Lane and they got a lot of pushback on that. So they revised the plan and moved the driveway to the East and put in a deceleration lane to deal with the traffic. They have worked with engineering firms to address soil and grading and water management. The project was approved for a higher density (64 units) and they came up with a lower density plan working with the planning commission, it's a medium density project. It has water and sewer, and he believes it is a great buffer coming from the trailer park into the township. It's a great spot for potential development. He lives and works in Tallmadge township and wants to invest in Tallmadge township. He thinks it's a great looking project and hopes to get support from the board to continue. There is a lot of green space and water retention. There will be a buffer of a 5 foot berm with trees and landscaping along Crowley. There will be a property management and lawn care company that will take care of the greenspace.
  - a. Kent Bollinger – in terms of drainage is the retention pond supposed to do all the work?
  - b. Doug Kloostra – yes there is a retention pond and a natural culvert back there
  - c. Kent Bollinger – is that a 20-year plan?
  - d. Dave Hanko – The design has been reviewed and approved by the Ottawa County Water Resources Department. It has been designed for the 100-year flood. EAGLE did a preliminary study, and it was presented to the Planning Commission.
- 32. No name: Why is this being presented as rental versus residential ownership? Would you want this in your backyard?
  - a. Doug Kloostra – it's a condo development. It came up as rentals because we looked at how long do we hold onto it and what's our exit strategy. We said in 2 – 5 years we would sell it off. It will be a condo development of individually owned units at the end. It was never going to be single family homes or anything like that. The condo association will be formed after 50% of the units have been sold. The developer will manage it until that time.
  - b. No name – if you can't sell in 5 years, it will continue as rentals?
  - c. Doug Kloostra – it could. Our plan is to sell them.
- 33. No name – I am going to ask the board to please listen to us. We live here. Please hear us and not the person who has not one ounce of consideration for

what he has heard tonight and is making it sound as if our concerns are not valid.

- a. Mark Bennett – we are. We most definitely are. You have to understand though, that we have to make sure that we are fair and equitable to the other property owners, and he is a property owner. So, we're interested obviously in what you have to say and we're taking that into serious consideration. But we also have to listen to the other property owners and be mindful of their rights as well. So, it's definitely a concern.
34. Spencer Boorsma – Fire Department access of the easement without resident signoff doesn't seem logical.
35. Dave Hanko – Johnson – 25 years ago we moved to Tallmadge Township. My daughter is moving out this weekend. She is getting an apartment at Kensington Woods, a beautiful rental property. He is glad she is staying in Tallmadge Township. She chose it because it is a beautiful, well maintained apartment complex.

**Joel Terpstra moved, Michael Eppink supported to close the Public Hearing. Motion CARRIED.**

**Board Comments on: TALLMADGE POINTE PUD FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

1. Mark Bennett: He is honored that residents came in to express their opinions on the project. Concerns of the residents are appreciated. He has lived in Tallmadge for 38 years, about 1 mile south of Leonard and Crowley. Tallmadge is extremely important to him. The concerns of the residents are very important. He can see exactly where they are coming from. We as a board do have to make some tough decisions. Two things: He is not concerned about the quality of the build of this project because we have experience with this builder and the building would be top notch. He believes this would not become a West Leonard property. He is concerned about the traffic and would like to see a full traffic study. The developer was gracious enough to do a trip generation study, which he believes is accurate. He would like to see a full traffic impact study. He is also concerned about the density of the project. He thinks it is a nice project on the face of it, but he has concerns about the density. We may, based upon the actions of the board tonight, have some requests of the developers before we move forward, but that is something we can discuss openly here as a board before we adjourn tonight. He is interested in hearing from other board members.
2. Joel Terpstra – He is discussing it from the Planning Commission side of the table. So, landowners bring applications to us to do certain things with their property. We don't solicitate and go looking for developments. Although they do help with water and sewer rates and pay taxes to the schools. We set basically the standards for zoning, and we set a Master Plan. The Planning Commission felt that this was in line with the Master Plan, being that 20 – 50 years ago, previous boards had designated areas in Tallmadge Township to be higher density. This is an area that was targeted to be higher density. Whether it's 80 units or 10 units, that can always be debated on what's the magic number. The Planning Commission looked at the Three C's - is it Capable of supporting the project with water and sewer, Compatible – are there other projects around the area that have higher residential density than single family homes, and is it Consistent with what

the Master Plan outlook is 20 – 50 years ago, up to today and into the future? The applicant did bring the proposal to us multiple times during the 2018-2019 range. He did ask the developer if it was always planned on his end to be a rental unit because so much time had passed that he forgot what the original proposal was. The developer's response was that it was always meant to be a rental property. Joel did support this by recommending to the Board of Trustees that this project be adopted based on the fact that it does meet the criteria of the Three C's mentioned earlier, in his opinion as one person on that seven person board. Yes, two or three people had to recuse themselves. One is an attorney for one of the family members, and one is an engineer. So, your best planning commissions are a mixture of engineers, lawyers, builders, developers, because that is what stands behind the planning side of things. He doesn't have any conflict of interest in this development at all. He is not building anything as a builder. He does not own any of the land that they're talking about, so it has no effect on him. He does hear the comments of the residents, and it is a hard position to sit on this board because very few people ever come in support of anything. It's always the opposite. On the flip side, there is a landowner that is technically all of your neighbors. He is coming here wanting to do something with his or her property. So, all of that was evaluated during the process of the Planning Commission. He does agree with Mark and thinks it would be wise to do a full-on traffic study. He doesn't think it will have much of a different outcome because the PC has required that many times in the last decade and you'd be surprised how little impact residential neighborhoods actually have overall if you trust the results from the study. We should make sure that the township engineer agrees with the report or disagrees with it. We should make sure that they sign off on it. In terms of density, we require that every developer comes to the PC with a parallel plan which shows what the maximum they can have is and what they propose. In a PUD there's a tradeoff normally, "give me a green space and a walking path and we'll give you 37 more lots". None of that was asked of this developer for what it's worth. He came in and felt that 56 units was what made the project economically viable and that's what we react to. In terms of the overall density, it was stated that it could be up to 64 units, so there was some consideration there from the developer. So that summarized the Planning Commission's point of view for the last 6 or 7 years.

3. John Bronkema – I haven't lived in Tallmadge Township all my life, I spent 30 years in the Navy. My mother has lived here. What I like about the Township is that it's a quiet, rural nice place to live. I understand that we have a Master Plan and this is a good year to be looking at it again. I have been consistent since I have been on this board that I don't really see a need for new development. When we have development, it needs to be quality and add value to the township. I understand that property owners, the ones that own this property, have rights and I am cognizant of their input and what they would like to do. In my opinion we need to be careful of continuing to increase the number of residents in Tallmadge Township. We don't need a bigger tax base. It's already congested enough. I agree that it's going to add more of a traffic burden in that area. I understand that we do have a Master Plan and it's good that we're reviewing it this year to see if what we laid down 40-50 years ago is still what the majority of the residents would like to see Tallmadge Township be in the future. I recommend that if anyone is interested, they should get involved in looking at the Master Plan.

4. Michael Eppink – I have lived in this area all my life right here at 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. About a month ago there was construction on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and they sent the traffic down to 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I said, “Who wants to live on a road like this?” We had semi-trucks, dump trucks, cars, people, city buses. I listened to every one of you – we do take your concerns very seriously and listen to what you have to say. Three quarters of you have a lot to say about traffic. I am concerned about traffic and what is going on on Leonard. It’s a very big concern. We will be discussing this.
5. Kent Bollinger – I’m a data guy. There were 25 speakers tonight and I can tell you one or two points that each person made as well as most of your names. I see three serious questions here. 1 – the traffic, clearly. There needs to be a study. I will be driving Leonard tomorrow. 2 – Communication – sounds like there was some serious miscommunication regarding rental property versus residential ownership property. Understands how integral that is to making us work as a community. 3 – How would I use this property as a property owner? Drainage concerns, support, materials, access for first responders. That is a big one – what happens to that main entrance? When that main entrance goes down and something happens inside the property now that falls back on us. Also, not having the foresight to see how that access is accomplished by individuals who need to do their job. Those are the three immediate concerns to me. I will spend time looking at this in the next 3-4 weeks. We have a very clear call from the community that we need to have some questions answered. Thank you all for being here – I mean that sincerely.

**Mark Bennett moved, Kent Bollinger supported that prior to proceeding with this project that we request 1) a full traffic impact study that is to be reviewed by the township engineer and the Ottawa County Road Commission and 2) we will work with the developer regarding the density of the project moving forward, 3) request that we have in our possession if we don’t already, a full water resource report from EAGLE regarding the runoff. We may have that. We just need to make sure we have it in its entirety, and 4) a full Fire Department report regarding emergency egress. Roll Call: Yes – Schwallier, Bronkema, Eppink, Bollinger, Bennett, Rollenhagen; No – Terpstra (only regarding the density part of the motion). Motion CARRIED.**

- B. PAINTING AND REPAIRS TO PARK BUILDING AND OFFICE-** Discussion and action regarding painting of existing park restrooms, pavilion, and west side of office building. **Kent Bollinger moved, Joel Terpstra supported to spend \$12,230 to make repairs as noted. Motion CARRIED.**
- C. FIRST READING – ZONING MAP AMENDMENT** of the Tallmadge Charter Township Zoning Ordinance, (rezoning) to the Zoning Ordinance from Steve Peterson to rezone approximately 10 acres of his existing property located at parcel number 70-10-05-100-013 from the Agricultural Zoning District (AG) to the Rural Preserve Zoning District (RP). The property to be rezoned is currently vacant. Property is located near 40<sup>th</sup> and Hayes.
- D. FIRST READING-ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT-**Keeping farm animals, specifically chickens. The proposed amendment recommends a reduction in the minimum acreage from 2.5 to 1.5 to possess poultry and fowl and recommends a reduction in the starting number of animals but maintain the ratio that currently exists.

The proposed amendment only applies to properties within the RP, R-1, and L districts as accessory use.

Amendment to include outdoor storage or processing goods, display inventory, or equipment. The amendment would include that limited outdoor storage would be appropriate through a special use permit in C-1 and C-2 districts.

## **VI SUPERVISOR AND COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

+ **Supervisor:**

+ **Planning Commission – Joel Terpstra:**

1. Recommended approval for Lavista Serene Venue on Lake Michigan Drive, a commercial rebuild
2. PUD for Tallmadge Point
3. Turned down request for a preliminary rezone to extend the multi family condominiums on Lake Michigan Drive off Sessions Point because they were going to be within 450 feet of Lake Michigan Drive which would put them in line with Mega Bev. This would have been too close to the road and didn't follow the Master Plan commercial area.

+ **Zoning Board of Appeals**

+ **Wright Tallmadge Fire Board and Fire Chief Report**

+ **Park Committee**

**VII Adjournment: Mark Benned moved, Karina Rollenhagen supported to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.**

Sincerely,

Karina Rollenhagen and Mark Bennett

*Karina Rollenhagen*  
*Mark R. Bennett*