

**HOWELL TOWNSHIP ZOOM PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES**

Howell Township Hall

August 25, 2020

6:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Martha Haglund Vice-Chair  
Wayne Williams Secretary  
Matthew Counts Board Rep  
Carolyn Henry Commissioner  
Peter Manwiller Commissioner  
Glen Miller Commissioner

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Andrew Sloan Chairman

Also in attendance: Zoning Administrator Joe Daus  
Township Planner Paul Montagno

Vice-Chair Haglund called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The roll was called by Zoning Administrator Daus.

Meeting was conducted by Vice-Chair Haglund.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

**MOTION** by Henry, seconded by Manwiller, **“TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 25, 2020 AGENDA AS AMENDED: ADD NEW BUSINESS A – DISCUSSION ON TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS AT OAK GROVE ROAD AND M-59.”** Discussion followed. Motion carried with unanimous consent. .

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION** by Manwiller, seconded by Williams, **“TO APPROVE THE JULY 28, 2020 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED: ADD THE TITLE, “COMMISSIONER” TO PETER MANWILLER’S COMMENT IN THE CALL TO THE PUBLIC.”** Motion carried with unanimous consent.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

**TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT:**

(Commissioner Counts reported on the following items)

- Approved repairs for the Aeration Basin at WWTP. Last time this was done was in 2005. It is a lengthy and expensive process.
- Approved some maintenance and repairs at the Township Hall. There is a crack in the drainage system and 4 toilets need to be replaced.
- Deputy Supervisor Kilpela went over the financial report for the year ending July 31, 2020. We are in good financial standing.
- Doing some road improvements.
- There is a group opposing the Annex Group project that would like to be placed on the Board Agenda. There is informational on the website including a timeline for this project.

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REPORT:**

- There was no August Meeting.

**ZONING REPORT:**

(Zoning Administrator Daus reported on the following items)

- See agenda item #7 report.

**HOWELL TOWNSHIP PARK'S REPORT:**

(Commissioner Haglund reported on the following items)

- The Fillmore County Park of Livingston County will be having it's Open House on September 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 A.M. It is located at Kellogg and McClements roads in Genoa Township. It has some trails available and in the next phase there will be some ballfields.
- Hopefully, looking forward towards Sleepy Howell.

**REZONING REQUEST:**

CHESTNUT DEVELOPMENT, LLC

Township Planner Montagno explained the request from applicant, Chestnut Development, LLC for rezoning a 20 acre parcel, #4706-29-200-029, located south of Grand River on Burkhart Road. The current use is for crop farmland. The current zoning is (HC) Heaving Commercial and the applicant would like to rezone to (MFR) Multiple Family Residential. The two neighboring parcels are vacant at this time. The Antique Mall is directly south of this parcel. The future land use in the Master Plan is Innovation Zone or now being referred as Industrial Flex Zone. The Flex Zone will allow larger format commercial uses and light industrial uses. The proposed re-zoning would allow for multiple family residential for the purpose of providing mixed housing within the Township. The Planning Commission's purpose is to look at the proposed findings within the Zoning Ordinance, 1) Is the re-zoning consistent with the policies within the area of the Township Master Plan? Planner Montagno stated the proposed re-zoning use is not within the future Master Plan land use. 2) Is the use allowed under the proposed re-zoning compatible with other zones in the surrounding area? Planner Montagno stated that the surrounding area is planned for heavy commercial/light industrial use. 3) Will any public services or facilities be inadvertently be impacted by the development under the proposed zoning? Planner Montagno stated although the water/sewer can accommodate its needs, family housing needs are different than industrial use including parks and recreation, potential schools and local commercial amenities. 4) Will the proposed zoning use be equally or better suited than the current zoned use? Planner Montagno stated that the proposed residential zoning use would be surrounded by heavy commercial uses. Township Planner Montagno took questions from the Commissioners.

- Applicant Steve Gronow from Chestnut Development LLC – Stated he has an existing development with the Township called Chestnut Crossing which is a multi-family housing project and another one under construction, located on M-59 and Tooley Roads. He would like to develop a 3<sup>rd</sup> project on Burkhart Road. Mr. Gronow shared a presentation on the Benefits of Multi-Family Housing in M-59 Corridor Area of Howell Township. He stated it is crucial to keep commercial and retail business thriving. He has a 6 month waiting list for families waiting to get in. Mr. Gronow stated that the retail Tanger Outlet Mall would be within walking distance of his project and would be compatible with Multi-Family Residential use. The LETS office would be very close. It is close to the freeway. Pictures of the proposed housing of what the units will look like were shown. Mr. Gronow stated he believes that commercial facility development is down. He also stated multi-family housing is the demanding curve. He also believes it will be a benefit to the Township.

**PUBLIC HEARING – MOTION** by Manwiller, seconded by Henry, **“TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR REZONING RQUEST FOR CHESTNUT DEVELOPMENT, LLC, FILE #PC-2020-06, PARCEL #4706-29-200-029 FROM HEAVY COMMERCIAL (HC) TO MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (MFR) AT 7:00 P.M..”** Motion carried with unanimous consent.

- Judith Minton, 552 Olde English Cir. – Had question for the developer. 1) Wanted to know the number of units for the proposed project. [90 units.] 2) Wanted to know if there are current industrial uses in the proposed area. [Yes.] 3) Wanted to know what type of buffer would be put in between the industrial and the housing. [In this type of housing development (temporary housing) there is not a need for a buffer. Plus the type of industrial that is next or across from the project do not do business late at night and one side is vacant.] 4) Wanted to know the average rental range. [Approximately \$1,350.00 a month.] 5) Wanted to know if the developer is looking at the Township for some type of tax abatement. [No.] 6) Wanted to know about the square footage of the units. [The units are about 1,400 square feet.]

- Michael Tipton, 552 Olde English Cir. – Asked the developer. 1) Wanted to know exactly where the project is proposed to go in. [North of the Antique Mall on Burkhart Road.] 2) Has concerns about the surrounding businesses being next to a housing development. [Most people are not that concerned when renting temporary housing. Most are not there r long term.] 3) Wanted to know about the flight patterns from the airport. [This should not be an issue.] 4) Wanted to know from Zoning Administrator Daus if he has had any correspondence about this project. [No he has not received any.] 5) Wanted to know when the meeting was changed to an electronic meeting. [It was posted as a Zoom meeting. Trustee Counts added that in the notice in the paper it showed it as a Zoom Meeting. Mr. Tipton believes that it was changed over the weekend from live to zoom on the website. Zoning Administrator Daus stated he did not change the notice and does not know of anyone else who would have. 6) Mr. Tipton stated he believes that developers should have all taxes paid current. [Developer Gronow stated his taxes are paid current.]
- Judith Minton, 552 Olde English Cir. - Wanted to know when there is a re-zoning being requested are the neighboring property owners directly notified of the request other than the posting in the paper. [Yes, anyone that is within 300 feet is sent a notice.]
- **MOTION** by Williams, seconded by Henry, “**TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR REZONING REQUEST FOR CHESTNUT DEVELOPMENT, LLC, FILE #PC-2020-06, PARCEL #4706-29-200-029 FROM HEAVY COMMERCIAL (HC) TO MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (MFR) AT 7: 14 P.M.**” Motion carried with unanimous consent.
- Questions and statements were taken from the commissioners. It was suggested by Township Planner Montagno to review the Master Plan. We are coming up on the time for the 5-year review of the Master Plan next year. At that time if the Planning Commission feels this has merit, it would be the time to make that change in the Master Plan and then review this request. Commissioner Henry stated that no one anticipated a pandemic that would force local businesses to close in Howell Township. She would rather see people coming into the Township than leaving it. Other commissioners stated a lot of work went into the Master Plan and putting the zoning as it is for heavier uses in nature rather than housing.
- Petitioner Gronow withdrew his application for rezoning parcel #4706-29-200-029 at this time until after the 5-year review of the Master Plan.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**COMBINED PRELIMINARY/FINAL SITE PLAN REVIEW – NEXTHOME STATEWIDE REALTY**

Applicant J.A.C. Property Enterprise LLC is proposing a 3,760 square foot metal, two story office building and parking lot within the Neighborhood Service Commercial (NSC) zoning district for the purpose to house real estate office space.

- Township Planner Montagno went over the several changes that have been made. The proposed building is approximately half the size of the previous request which requires less parking spaces. The building and parking lot are now within the setback requirements. The retention/detention pond is showing to be located within the front yard which is not consistent with the zoning ordinance. The question is that the neighboring retention/detention pond is in the front yard but was done with a variance. See Site Plan Review from Township Planner Montagno dated August 14, 2020 for full review. Questions and statements were taken from the commissioners. The applicant stated his belief of how the Township Ordinance reads about retention/detention ponds. Vice-Chair Haglund with the consensus of the other commissioners suggested taking this issue to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to see if this will need a variance or for an interpretation. The applicant talked about the type of metal building he is proposing.
- **MOTION** by Miller, with a friendly amendment by Haglund, seconded by Williams, “**TO APPROVE PRELIMINARY/FINAL SITE PLAN FOR FILE #PC-2020-05, PARCEL #4706-26-100-040, NEXTHOME STATEWIDE REALTY, WITH THE CONDITION THAT APPROVAL WOULD BE SOUGHT BY THE ZBA ON THE DETENTION POND IN THE SETBACK. ALSO APPROVAL IS RECEIVED FROM ALL OUTSIDE AGENCIES AND THAT THE ISSUES FROM THE PLANNER’S REPORT DATED AUGUST 14, 2020 BE RESOLVED AND ISSUES FROM SPICER TOWNSHIP ENGINEERING REPORT DATED AUGUST 18, 2020 BE RESOLVED.**” Discussion followed. A roll-call vote was taken: Miller – yes, Counts – yes, Haglund – yes, Williams – yes, Henry – no, Manwiller – yes. Motion carries 5 to 1.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**DISCUSSION ON TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS AT OAK GROVE ROAD AND M-59**

Vice Chair Haglund stated she has talked with Township Planner Montagno about a traffic study at Oak Grove Road and M-59 about how Howell Township Planning Commission can be proactive with this issue. Township Planner Montagno stated that provisions with site plans that allow request for road studies. Livingston County Road Commission has jurisdiction over public roads within Howell Township except for I-96 and M-59 which falls under MDOT. Corner of Oak Grove and M-59 would come under both of these authorities. These usually or only happens when funds are available. With a site plan, these studies will determine if there are warrants for improvements and at the possibility at the developer's expense. Commissioner Counts who is a Board Trustee stated that the Board has asked for Traffic Studies at this intersection. A traffic study was done. MDOT's answer is they do not see warrant for change at this time based on the traffic flow. If they added a left turn lane from Oak Grove Road it would add lengthy times at the light for other directions. Zoning Administrator Daus added that after this study was done, they did do a change of light timing. It was suggested that after the Annex Group does their own traffic flow study, and one from the Westview Capital from their proposed project, then another traffic study done by MODT might be necessary. It is the consensus of the Commissioners that all these studies include not only traffic studies from the developments entrances/exits but also all the way down to the M-59 intersection.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

None.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

- Michael Tipton, 552 Olde English Cir. - 1) Stated that the Board did a resolution to get a Traffic Study done by MDOT and it took them over a year to get the report back. They would not do a study on Sunday when that is time for most traffic. 2) Wanted to know if the Commissioner has seen the letter signed by 50 residents who have issues about the project going in behind Kroger. Mr. Tipton stated several concerns he has about this project including a drainage issue with the city of Howell. Vice-Chair Haglund thanked Mr. Tipton for his comments and his issues will be looked into.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** by Counts, seconded by Miller, **"TO ADJOURN."** Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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Andrew Sloan, Chairman

As Presented:     X    

As Amended: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Wayne Williams, Secretary

As Corrected: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated:     09.22.2020    

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Debby Johnson, Recording Secretary