

Minutes

THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Thomas Township Public Safety Building
8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609
July 17, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

John Bintz called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in addition to Mr. Bintz were: Ruth McDonald, Rod Iamurri, Dale Halm, Diane LaMountain, Rick Lorentzen and Chris Thompson. Also present were Dan Sika, Director of Community Development and Susan Coggin, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer.

Members Absent: None.

2. *Pledge of Allegiance.*

3. *Approval of Agenda:*

It was moved by Mrs. McDonald, seconded by Mr. Halm to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. *Approval of Minutes:*

It was moved by Mr. Thompson, seconded by Mrs. McDonald to approve the minutes of June 26, 2013 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

5. *Communications – Petitions – Citizens Comments – None.*

6. *Hearings* - None.

7. *Presentations* – None.

8. *Sign Board of Appeals* – None.

9. *Old Business* – None.

10. *New Business*

A. *Discussion Only – Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Accessory Uses*

Mr. Sika stated that over the past two decades, more people have been designing extensions onto the home in the form of outdoor living space in most cases decks. These areas are typically constructed off the rear or side of the home with direct access to the inside by way of a doorway. The following sample regulations define the placement and design of outdoor living space decks in order to eliminate conflicts with other uses on a parcel.

Outdoor Living Space Decks, Defined: An area directly attached or detached to a residential home that is intended to extend the living area to the outside by way of open space decks. This area must have direct access to the home in the form of a door which opens onto the outdoor living space deck. In addition, these areas must meet all of the setbacks as if it were a part of the principal dwelling.

Mr. Sika further stated that upon approval by the Planning Commission, this proposed ordinance amendment will be published for a public hearing for the next available scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

The Planning Commission instructed the Community Development staff to prepare the proposed ordinance amendment for public hearing at the next available Planning Commission meeting.

B. Discussion Only – Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Motorized Race Tracks.

Mr. Sika stated that the Community Development office was contacted recently regarding the possible location of a motorized race track within Thomas Township. Upon researching the current ordinance, we found that motorized and non-motorized race tracks are not addressed. We contacted Cindy Winland of Crescent Consulting regarding these types of operations. Her opinion was as follows:

“I would suggest that a race track is comparable to a shooting club in impact (noise, size and number of people on an acre) and could be permitted by Special Use Permit in an A-1 and A-2 zoning district as the shooting clubs are currently allowed; however, I would not permit it in an E-1 zoning district because it disturbs the ground, unlike a shooting club.”

Due to the excessive noise, dust and possible traffic that could be generated by a motorized race track, i.e. off road motorcycles, dirt bikes, etc., it would be our recommendation that this type of use only be allowed in an “M” zoning district with a special use permit allowing the Planning Commission to place specific regulations such as hours of operation, dust control and setbacks with buffering to protect adjoining properties just to name few.

A non-motorized race track, i.e. BMX racing bikes, would generally not create the excessive noise that a motorized race track would generate; however, due to the potential of dust and large amounts of traffic that could be generated, it would be our recommendation that this type of use be allowed in an “A” zoning district with a

special use permit again allowing the Planning Commission to place specific regulations such as hours of operation, dust control and buffering to protect adjoining properties.

Mr. Sika further stated that upon approval by the Planning Commission, this proposed ordinance amendment will be published for a public hearing for the next available scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

The Planning Commission instructed the Community Development staff to prepare the proposed ordinance amendment for public hearing at the next available Planning Commission meeting

C. Discussion Only – Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Regarding Public Road Dead-End Driveway Regulations.

Mr. Sika stated that At the May 15, 2013 meeting, the Planning Commission discussed driveway locations at the end of dead-end roads. Due to the economy, many dead-end streets that were developed with the intension of extending subdivisions developments are now being developed as single family homes creating difficulties with the development of driveways at the dead-end streets. The following is a sample amendment to better define public road dead-end driveway regulations:

Public Road Dead-End Driveway Regulations: In the event that a public road is terminated (dead-ends) with the intent of attaching to a future phase or development, the dead-end must not be restricted from the intended future extension for which it was designed. To achieve this, it is hereby prohibited to attach a driveway to the end of a public roadway dead-end for the purpose of constructing a one or two family dwelling.

If after site plan review the Planning Commission deems that a public road dead-end is no longer a viable connection to a future phase or development as it was originally designed and planned, the dead-end may be converted into a cul-de-sac with a minimum of forty-two (42') feet of driving surface. The surface must be designed to meet the minimum standard for a paved County roadway. If the attached dead-end roadway is curbed, the cul-de-sac must also be curbed with appropriate drainage. Utilities may also be required to be extended to the end of the cul-de-sac. At which time a driveway may be allowed to connect to the cul-de-sac.

Mr. Sika further stated that upon approval by the Planning Commission, this proposed ordinance amendment will be published for a public hearing for the next available scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

The Planning Commission instructed the Community Development staff to prepare the proposed ordinance amendment for public hearing at the next available Planning Commission meeting

D. Business of the Year Awards Update.

Mr. Sika stated that on June 26, 2013, the several Planning Commission members visited and presented the Business of the Year Award to the following:

- Wanigas Credit Union – Awarded Business/Organization of the Year Award.
- Bob Evans Restaurant – Awarded Business/Organization of the Year Award – Honorable Mention.
- Gratiot Animal Hospital – Awarded Business/Organization of the Year Award – Honorable Mention.

11. Receive and File All Correspondence – None.

12. Adjournment.

Motion by Mrs. LaMountain, seconded by Mr. Iamurri to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. ***The next meeting date is Wednesday, August 21, 2013.***

Respectfully submitted by Susan Coggin, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer