

MINUTES

DRAFT

**THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
THOMAS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
8215 SHIELDS DRIVE, SAGINAW, MICHIGAN
FEBRUARY 20, 2019**

Members Present

R. Iamurri
J. Curry
D. Sommers
D. Bird
S. Yockey

Members Absent

R. McDonald
P. Lynch

Others Present

D. Sika, Dir. Of Community Dev
C. Watt, Plann’g Asst/Code Enf.
K. Kosik, TSSF Architects
S. Ireland, Frankenmuth C.U.

Mr. Iamurri called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Mr. Sommers, supported by Mr. Yockey, to approve the minutes of December 19, 2018 as presented.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Presentations:

- A. Site Plan Review for Hemlock Semiconductor, 12334 Geddes Road. Addition of S-407, Utility Building And demolition of the Silanes Building.**

Mr. Iamurri stated this is part of the expansion. They are simply executing the next step.

Mr. Sika explained that originally there was a building constructed at the north end which was thought would be used for by-product. This never happened and the building was never useful so it will now be torn down. There will also be the addition of a 300 square foot utility building. The legend shows they have readjusted dates of the construction schedule on their Master Plan. What they are looking for currently is permission to take the Silanes building off of the site plan (by tearing it down) and adding the utility building. Mr. Sommers noticed that they have appeared to have mislabeled the plan and the two buildings on it. Mr. Sika stated he will have the plan corrected. Mr. Sika also noted approval by all departments and the contingency the DPW Director noted regarding the water and sewage.

Motion by Mr. Yockey, supported by Mrs. Curry to approve the site plan review presented by Hemlock Semiconductor for the S-407 Utilities Building addition and Silanes demolition with the contingency that the sewer capacity of 420,000 gallons per day and water capacity of 750 million gallons per year is not exceeded.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Sign Board of Appeals:

A. Frankenmuth Credit Union, 7533 Gratiot Road is seeking two (2) variances for the number of pole/ground/monument signs and the allowable square footage on such a sign.

Variance #1-Number of pole/ground monument signs: Mr. lamurri opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m. A variance is being sought for an additional monument sign of twenty square feet. Public comment was opened and Mr. Keith Kosik of TSSF Architects spoke on behalf of Frankenmuth Credit Union. He stated that currently there are two monument signs on the property and they are just asking to maintain that. He added that the Duclos sign is used as guidance to find the location. The “rock” would be moved back further from the road with a new pole sign going in its previous location. He did add that he had received an email from Mrs. Watt stating that if the “rock” was moved way back next to the building, out of view from the road, this would be acceptable however, Frankenmuth Credit Union still desired to have it closer. They feel the sign is somewhat iconic. Mr. lamurri questioned if the Quick Lube sign had been removed. Mr. Kosik stated that it had been and noted that previously this site had been three parcels. They currently have 277 lineal feet of frontage along Gratiot. If they had 300’ of frontage, they’d be entitled to “bonus” signage. The parcel is so deep that it is felt if they move it back by the building it would be blocked from the east and west. Right now they are looking to move it back sixty feet (60’) off the sidewalk. Mr. Scott Ireland, construction manager for Frankenmuth Credit Union spoke and noted that Mr. Duclos had requested that the monument sign be kept for recognition of the location. They feel that the monument sign helps to mark the location for traffic flow and the safety concerns with that. The public hearing was closed at 7:45 p.m. There was discussion among the Planning Commission members at this time. They addressed their concerns with the safety/visual aspect of the sign location. At this time the members completed their affirmative findings on the Sign Board of Appeals checklist:

1. *The alleged hardships or practical difficulties are:*

- Exceptional and peculiar to the property or the person requesting the variance, and
- Result from conditions that do not generally exist throughout the Township

3 Yes (Yockey, Sommers, lamurri)

2 No (Bird, Curry)

No hardship is seen; can move it to the corner of the building. It did seem to meet the standard that if did not exist throughout the Township.

2. The alleged hardships or practical difficulties or both that will result from a failure to grant the variance include:

- Substantially more than inconvenience, or an
- Inability to attain a higher financial return

3 Yes (Curry, Yockey, lamurri)

2 No (Sommers, Bird)

There is an inconvenience with the flow of traffic and concerns for safety. This would improve traffic flow into the Duclos portion of the building.

3. By not allowing the variance, it will result in a substantial injustice being done considering the following:

- The public benefits intended to be secured by the code,
- The individual hardships that will be suffered by a failure of the Sign Board of Appeals to grant a variance, and
- The rights of others whose property would be affected by allowing the variance, and will not be contrary to the public purpose of this chapter

0 Yes

5 No (Bird, Sommers, Yockey, Curry, lamurri)

No member was able to determine that the requested variance was able to pass #3 with a yes.

Motion by Mr. Sommers, supported by Mr. Yockey to deny the variance to have the additional twenty square foot rock monument sign where it can be viewed from the road and considered signage at the Frankenmuth Credit Union location 7533 Gratiot Road.

VOTE

5 YEAS

0 NAYS

2 ABSENT

MOTION CARRIED

Variance #2-Frankenmuth Credit Union is requesting an additional fifteen square feet of signage on the pole sign. Opened public hearing at 8:00 p.m. Mr. Ireland directed the members to look at the handouts he brought along. These show the sign rendition, location and studies on speed to view a fifty square foot sign. The additional business “My Member Insurance” has to be incorporated into the pole signage. Their concerns are with visibility, recognizability (colors, fonts) and safety entering the property. Mr. Ireland introduced information from a speed study based on a 45 mph speed limit and the inability to see a sign that is fifty square feet. In order to squeeze both of the businesses information into fifty square feet, the letters become barely visible to those going at a rate of 45 mph. He added they are also concerned with the safety of vehicles going in and out of the site and seeing the sign in time to turn into the site safely. New customers and business never stops so people do not necessarily become familiar with the location and signs need to be visible. The public hearing was closed at 8:15 p.m. Discussion among the members took place at this time. The affirmative findings of the Sign Board of Appeals checklist was then completed and was as follows:

1. *The alleged hardships or practical difficulties are:*

- Exceptional and peculiar to the property or the person requesting the variance, and
- Result from conditions that do not generally exist throughout the Township

5 Yes (Yockey, Sommers, lamurri, Bird, Curry)

0 No

Safety concerns. Multi-businesses at the property.

2. The alleged hardships or practical difficulties or both that will result from a failure to grant the variance include:

- Substantially more than inconvenience, or an
- Inability to attain a higher financial return

3 Yes (Curry, Yockey, lamurri, Sommers, Bird)

0 No

Slows the traffic below 45 mph trying to view sign if it is smaller creating safety issues; would reduce financial return if customers cannot locate the office.

3. By not allowing the variance, it will result in a substantial injustice being done considering the following:

- The public benefits intended to be secured by the code,

- The individual hardships that will be suffered by a failure of the Sign Board of Appeals to grant a variance, and
- The rights of others whose property would be affected by allowing the variance, and will not be contrary to the public purpose of this chapter

5 Yes (Iamurri, Sommers, Bird, Curry, Yockey)

0 No

Motion by Mr. Sommers, supported by Mr. Yockey to grant a fifteen square foot variance to the allowable pole signage of fifty square feet. Sign can be a total of sixty-five square feet.

VOTE

5 YEAS

0 NAYS

2 ABSENT

MOTION CARRIED

New Business:

A. 2018 Planning Commission Annual Report

All of the actions taken by the Planning Commission in 2018 were listed in the annual report and Reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Yockey, supported by Mrs. Curry to receive and file the 2018 Planning Commission Report as presented.

VOTE

5 YEAS

0 NAYS

2 ABSENT

MOTION CARRIED

B. M-46 Pedestrian Crosswalk Study.

The recent crosswalk study completed by Spicer Group for M-46 where the pedestrians using the Thomas Township Trail cross was presented to the Planning Commission for their review and support.

Motion by Mr. Sommers, supported by Mr. Yockey in support of the efforts by the Township to make the trail crossing in front of Meijer as safe as possible.

VOTE

5 YEAS

0 NAYS

2 ABSENT

MOTION CARRIED.

Old Business:

A. Update the Planning Commission on the Meijer Parking Lot and Landscaping Final Design.

The Planning Commission was presented with the update received from Meijer regarding the requests made to add more “green” areas, islands etc. to increase safety in the parking lot and have a more controlled traffic flow.

Receive and File Correspondence:

Planning & Zoning News; December 2018, January 2019, and February 2019 received.

Adjournment:

Motion by Mr. Yockey, supported by Mr. Sommers, to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED