

Hope Township Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norton at 6:30 pm at the Hope Township Hall, 5463 S. M-43, Hastings, MI 49058. Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Members present: Bob Norton, Junior Homister, Craig Jenkins, Roger Pashby.

Members absent: Jim McKelvey, with notification.

Others Present: Township Planner/Zoning Administrator Nathan Mehmed and about 14 members of the public.

Agenda: Motion by Pashby, supported by Homister, to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting minutes: Motion by Jenkins, supported by Homister to approve the March 21, 2024 meeting minutes. All ayes. Motion carried.

General Public Comment: None.

Public Hearing Camp Michawana SEU Amendment:

- a. **Introductory comments.** Norton asked Mehmed to give a brief overview of the request. Mehmed explained that Tenny Corbett, on behalf of Camp Michawana, submitted an application for site plan and special exception use amendment for the construction of a lodge with overnight accommodations, pavilion, and associated improvements located at 5800 Head Lake Road. The existing camp is a special exception use in the AR district and has been previously reviewed by the Planning Commission through various expansions and amendments. Section 5.5 of the Hope Township Zoning Ordinance addresses changes to an approved site plan. The addition of buildings to the property is considered a major change that requires site plan review by the Planning Commission. Section 4.1, J addresses amendments to a special exception use permit. The addition of overnight accommodations and overall camp capacity is not considered to be a minor non-substantial change and is required to be handled in the same manner as the initial special exception use application. Mehmed explained that he has provided a staff memo outlining the Zoning Ordinance standards that must be reviewed by the Planning Commission, including the site plan review standards of Section 5.3, special

exception use standards of Section 4.0, and specific use standards of Section 4.2, J.

Tenny Corbett noted that he doesn't have much to add. The lodge will be part of the camp, contain 28 additional beds, and will be available for rental and for campers. It will be split into two units each with a community bathroom. The pavilion will be part of the campground near the horseshoe area. Existing trash facilities, utilities, and drives would remain unchanged. Some additional gravel parking near the new lodge would be constructed to accommodate vehicles. No approvals are needed from the State of Michigan.

- b. Acknowledge written comments received. Norton noted that there was one written comment received.

Alfred Torrence, 5757 Head Lake Road

- c. Open public hearing to receive comments. Norton opened the public hearing.
- d. Close public hearing. Hearing no comments, Norton closed the public hearing.
- e. Deliberation and motion. Norton asked the Planning Commission if they had any questions before they begin their review of the standards outlined in Mehmed's memo. The Commission asked about fire department access and lighting. Mehmed noted that similar to before, an email indicating that the Fire Department has looked at the plans and doesn't have an issue would suffice. This can be a condition of approval. Corbett explained that the light fixtures would be similar to residential porch lights. Norton asked about access to the lake and if there would be any expansion of activities or facilities there. Tenny stated that they have docks and two boats for tubing. No expansion is planned as part of the request. Jenkins stated that Long Lake is public access so the limiting access is already a moot point.

The Planning Commission evaluated the standards of Section 5.3, Section 4.0, and Section 4.2, J, finding that each standard was met, either fully or with conditions. It was noted that the relatively small increase in the number of beds, especially given the distance from the property line, wouldn't have a substantial impact on adjacent land uses, traffic, or neighboring properties.

Motion by Homister, support by Jenkins to approve the Camp Michawana special exception use and site plan amendment incorporating the findings in Mehmed's report, subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain all necessary local, county, state, or federal permits and approvals.
2. The applicant shall comply with all stipulations of the Barry-Eaton Health Department, Delton Fire Department, Southwest Barry County Sewer Authority, and the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.
3. The operation shall at all times comply with the ongoing requirements of Section 4.2, J and Section 10.15 of the Zoning Ordinance.
4. All conditions pertaining to the original site plan and special land use approval shall remain effective.

All ayes. Motion carried.

Joe Zalokar SEU Noncompliance: Mehmed explained that the Planning Commission originally approved Joe Zalokar's business in September of 2023. At that time, Joe had applied for a small equipment repair business, which is defined as "an establishment primarily engaged in the provision of repair services to individuals, including repair of minor household items such as appliances, yard maintenance equipment and similar items." Mehmed indicated that he and Don Dekema, the Ordinance Enforcement Officer, received complaints about Joe selling large equipment in the lawn of the establishment. Don investigated and contacted Mehmed, who confirmed that Joe was not in compliance with his special exception use approval. Joe asked to come back to the Planning Commission to discuss his options.

Joe explained that he didn't originally intend to sell such equipment but that an opportunity came up and he decided to do it. He contests some of what is in the September minutes, but realizes he is asking for forgiveness now and wants to know what he can do.

The Planning Commission discussed the situation didn't have an issue with an agricultural and yard equipment sales business being in that location. The Commission asked about farm supply stores. Mehmed explained that those are permitted by special exception use in the C-2 and C-3 districts. The definition

would mostly fit the use, but the Planning Commission would need to amend the Zoning Ordinance to add it to the AR district or rezone the property. Mehmed explained that the Master Plan does not support rezoning to commercial in that location, so a text amendment might be more appropriate. Other communities allow similar stores in agricultural zoning districts if they generally support agricultural uses. He noted that it may be appropriate to limit it to fronting on M-43. The Planning Commission discussed the options and explained that they wouldn't have a problem with this use on M-43 in support of agriculture and rural landowners needing equipment to maintain their property. Mehmed was directed to come back with draft language to modify the definition of farm supply store and add farm supply stores to AR as a special exception use.

Master Plan Update: Mehmed gave an update on where the master planning process was left off and what is next. He indicated that he will be bringing updated existing conditions data and maps to the June meeting for review by the Planning Commission.

Zoning Administrator: Mehmed mentioned that planning and zoning activity has been busy and that there will likely be some additional variance requests on future Zoning Board of Appeals' agendas.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Homister. Second by Jenkins. All Ayes. Motion carried. Meeting concluded at 7:56 p.m.


Craig Jenkins, Secretary

5-16-24
Date