

7:17 o'clock p.m. Chairperson Martinek called the meeting of the Planning Commission to order.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Buechler, Crawford, Martinek, Mills, Wurmlinger

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bland, Rossow

ALSO PRESENT: Kristy Jones

VISITORS: Ted Barss, Steve Younger, Todd Butler, Phil McCarty, Charles Koob, Joe Brown

Martinek welcomed new Planning Commission member, Kathleen Wurmlinger

Chairperson Martinek opens the public hearing at 7:20 p.m.

Motion by Crawford, supported by Martinek, to approve the agenda as printed and posted.

Vote, Unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

Motion by Mills, supported by Martinek, to approve the minutes from 06/09/2015 as printed and posted.

Vote, Unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:

NONE

REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:

Crawford reported that the Township Board of Trustees did approve to adopt the text amendment to the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 38 that were presented at the 6-9-2015 Planning Commission meeting. The new building is progressing and should be finished within 6 weeks. The project is on budget.

REPORT FROM ZBA REPRESENTATIVE:

Buechler reports that the July ZBA meeting approved a side yard variance and granted a Class A designation to 3868 Krafft Rd. for the construction of a garage.

PUBLIC HEARING:

ITEM #1: SPECIAL LAND USE APPROVAL, 4802 24th Avenue / 74-20-293-0001-050, 74-20-293-0001-100, 74-20-293-0001-000:

APPLICANT: Tractor Supply Company, 5401 Virginia Way, Brentwood, TN 37027.

PROJECT: Tractor Supply Store

REQUEST: Special land use approval for a proposed portion of the site to be used as Outdoor Sales and Display

LOCATION: 4802 24th Avenue

PARCEL(s) #: 74-20-293-0001-050, 74-20-293-0001-100, 74-20-293-0001-000

APPLICANT PRESENTATION:

Steve Younger, representative of Tractor Supply Company said the proposed store will be owned directly by Tractor Supply (not a franchise). He said they are in an expansion mode, developing 110 stores this year. Tractor Supply is in 49 states with approximately 1,500 stores. They pride themselves on being a good corporate neighbor. They are a farm and ranch store and offer a lot of bulky items that can't all be kept inside. How they accomplish this is by having an outdoor display area. Martinek asked if this would be similar to the Tractor Supply Store in Port Huron Township. Mr. Younger said it would be very similar as far as the outdoor display. The building itself, will be a newer prototype. Outdoor sales will be on the south side of the proposed building. Martinek asked when the construction would start if approved. Younger; Spring of 2016. Martinek pointed out this would be the third store in St. Clair County. Martinek asked if the items are taken in at night. Younger said no, but they are secured.

CITIZEN COMMENTS AND/OR QUESTIONS:

Ted Barss; 4851 Lakeshore Rd, Fort Gratiot said he is the neighbor to the north/east of the proposed site. He said he has an adult residential home and is concerned with lights and noise that could come with the business. His concerns are that his resident's daily life will be disturbed. Mr. Barss also had concerns about the site plan

and landscape screening that abuts to his property. Mr. Barss showed potential for expansion of his adult residential home which would directly boarder the Tractor Supply Co. Store. Mr. Barss wants to make sure the landscaping is more than adequate and suggested evergreen trees on the back that about his property. Also, the drain that runs on his property would have to be utilized by Tractor Supply Co. Mr. Barss wanted to make sure the lights are not shining on his property. Mr. Younger said all lights point down and are LED on the outdoor display area. The lights are about 14ft. high. Zero lights at the property line. The hours are 8:00am to 8:00pm and an hour after close every other light shuts off. Deliveries are done during work hours and average about 2 a day. Mr. Barss just wants to be sure consideration is given to him and his adult residential home. Mr. Barss would also like an emergency access point to his property from 24th Ave. (possible site at the back of the proposed Tractor Supply Store). Crawford asked if a public paging system is used for the outdoor display area. Concerned this might be a disruption to abutting residential areas. Martinek asked about having employees wear headsets (walkie/talkie) units instead. Mr. Younger, yes that is feasible.

Motion by Buechler, supported by Martinek, to close the public hearing. Time: 7:55 P.M.

Vote, Unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Martinek and Mills both said they like store and feel it will be a good fit for the area. They both use the store. Always feel the display is neat and clean.

Motion by Mills, supported by Martinek, to approve the special approval use at 4802 24th Avenue, 74-20-293-0001-050, 74-20-293-0001-100, 74-20-293-0001-000.

Wurmlinger requested to abstain from voting as she is an officer of Eastern Michigan Bank which is the owner of the above said properties.

Roll Call Vote, Unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM #1: SITE PLAN APPROVAL, 4802 24th Avenue / 74-20-293-0001-050, 74-20-293-0001-100, 74-20-293-0001-000:

APPLICANT: Tractor Supply Company, 5401 Virginia Way, Brentwood, TN 37027.

PROJECT: Tractor Supply Store

REQUEST: Site plan approval for a Tractor Supply Store

LOCATION: 4802 24th Avenue

PARCEL(s) #: 74-20-293-0001-050, 74-20-293-0001-100, 74-20-293-0001-000

APPLICANT PRESENTATION:

Mr. Younger, Tractor Supply Co., MDOT approval has already been granted for access to the site. Parking by the Township review was classified as retail and they feel it is a specialty store. They feel the 79 parking spots are more than sufficient and do not feel they could fit the 24 additional spots. Jones spoke that future land use is always looked at and that is how the number of parking spots were determined. If the store moves out and a more general retail moves in, would parking be adequate? Jones said the commission could also look at access management as being a piece for future land use, reviewing the concerns expressed by Mr. Barss. Additional emergency access to a multiple residential home is also a wise move. The determination of the Planning Commission is needed in this area, whether it is parking or access management or nothing at all. However, future land use should always be a consideration. Mills said he liked the idea of additional access especially from an emergency management perspective. Buechler asked how Tractor Supply Co comes up with their calculation for parking. Younger replied they use a common parking ratio of 4 to 5 spots per 1,000 sq. ft. of retail space as do most municipalities that they work with. Mills likes less parking and more green space. Martinek also agreed with the feeling that there was more than enough parking with the specialty ratio. Crawford brought up about trailers that are out by the road and that was not discussed earlier with the outdoor sales. His understanding was that it was on the south side of the building and out front by the entrance. It was not noted on the site plan. Younger said it is the required 80 ft. from the center of the road and has a berm and trees and shrubs. He apologized for omitting that and it was not intentional. Crawford said that he has concerns that this additional area was not considered for parking either. Todd Butler, Ozark Civil Engineering, representing Tractor Supply Co addressed landscaping and drainage. Regarding the detention pond, he sent a letter to Mr. Barss because

they will need an easement to the drain that is on Mr. Barss property. Mr. Butler said they have meet with the Drain Commission and know they have to tie into a drain (Carrigan Drain), however, it is up to Tractor Supply Co to obtain the easement. Feels the Drain Commission is holding them hostage to obtain that easement when it is their requirement to tie into a drain. They have had soil boring samples done and are waiting for the results. Crawford commented that it might be all sand and that the detention area might not even hold water. Mills recommended going deep with the borings. Barss commented that possibly a deal can be made between Tractor Supply Co. and himself regarding easement to the drain on his property and providing him with emergency access to his property and 24th Ave. Crawford and Buechler said that it is something that would have to be worked out between the two. Butler addressed the landscaping up close to the building that was suggested in the review by Kristy Jones, he said that is an outdoor display area and landscaping is difficult in that area. He also said he will look at having the landscaping on the perimeter that abuts to Barss property have trees of the evergreen nature.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Martinek said he feels they need to designate Tractor Supply Co as a specialty store to use that parking ratio. Crawford said he feels any access management on the back of the property be made between Mr. Barss and Tractor Supply and be for emergency access only (gated).

Motion by Buechler, supported by Mills, to approve with conditions number 1, 2 and 5 on the review by Kristy Jones, Fort Gratiot Township dated August 11, 2015, and designate it as specialty store with parking being adequate as presented (79 spots) the site plan for 4802 24th Avenue, 74-20-293-0001-050, 74-20-293-0001-100, 74-20-293-0001-000.

Wurmlinger requested to abstain from voting as she is an officer of Eastern Michigan Bank which is the owner of the above said properties.

Roll Call Vote, Unanimous. MOTION PASSED.

Buechler said he knows that parking and landscaping are always up for determination and that maybe that it is something that needs to be reviewed by the Planning Commission to make a recommendation to the Township Board of Trustees to be amended. This could be an item on the agenda in the near future.

Motion by Martinek, supported by Buechler, to adjourn. Time, 8:55 P.M.

Vote, Unanimous. Motion Passed. Meeting Adjourned.