

THORNAPPLE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting, June 24, 2024

1. Call to Order:

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tom Kilgore 7:00 p.m. at Thornapple Township located at 200 E. Main St. Middleville, MI 49333.
- b. Present: Elaine Denton, Linda Gasper, Liz Hansson, Tom Kilgore, Sandy Rairigh, and Craig Wandrie. Absent: Bryan Finkbeiner. Also Present: Phil Gensterblum, Amy Brown, Lana Quist, David & Robin Laansma, Steve & Janice Huyser, Amy & Joe Ter Mors.

2. Approval of Agenda:

MOTION by Denton **SUPPORT** by Rairigh to approve the agenda as presented. **MOTION CARRIED** with 6 yes voice votes.

3. Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Rairigh **SUPPORT** by Gasper to approve the Minutes from the May 20, 2024, Meeting Minutes as presented. **MOTION CARRIED** with 6 yes voice votes.

4. Citizen Comments: None

5. Public Hearings:

- a. Special Use # 170 – Accessory Building in Front Yard Setback (7175 Rolling Oaks Lane)
 - i. Applicant Presentation – Steve and Janice Huyser said they would like to place a small accessory building in their front yard setback. They mentioned the other side of their lot would not be an option as their well is there. This would also be the best option for the neighbor’s view as they wouldn’t see it from the proposed location and because of the number of trees.
 - ii. Staff Introduction – Gensterblum says the well, septic, and drainage field are on the other side of the lot, as well as many mature trees, making the proposed spot the best option. If it was built on the proposed location, only a few trees would need to be removed. There is currently a trailer sitting there.
 - iii. Public Hearing **OPEN: 7:05 p.m.** No comments received. **CLOSED: 7:05 p.m.** Gensterblum confirmed that no emails or calls were received prior to the hearing.
 - iv. Commissioner Questions and Deliberation – Denton said the proposed location is just off the driveway. It also wouldn’t be visible to the neighbor from there. The neighbor doesn’t seem opposed to the proposed location. Gasper asked the applicant about their plans for the exterior. She explained the requirements of the ordinance that it be compatible with the exterior of the home and others in the area. The applicant explained that it would look like their garage, but they are still reviewing options and haven’t finalized things yet as they were waiting for approval first. Rairigh asked if the roof would be shingled, or metal. Ms. Huyser replied shingled.

MOTION by Rairigh, **SUPPORT** by Gasper to approve SLU #170 – Accessory building in the front yard setback at 7175 Rolling Oaks Ln. subject to Gensterblum’s review of the plans for the exterior which shall complement the exterior of the existing home and garage in accordance with the ordinance.

Roll Call Vote: Denton: yes, Gasper: yes, Hansson: yes, Kilgore: yes, Rairigh: yes, Wandrie: yes, Finkbeiner: absent. **MOTION CARRIED** with 6 yes roll call votes.

b. Special Use #171 – Accessory dwelling for the use of individuals requiring special care (8026 W Crane Rd)

- i. Applicant Presentation – Amy Ter Mors explained that her mother is elderly and requires additional supervision and assistance due to medical conditions. She would like to build a mother-in-law suite on the property. She would like to build an 816 sq. ft. home with one or two bedrooms and one bathroom.
- ii. Staff Introduction – Gensterblum explained the health department gave their approval for the existing septic which has enough capacity for this arrangement. He also talked about the mother in law’s need for assistance/supervision. He added there haven’t been any comments or questions received from the neighbors.
- iii. Public Hearing **OPEN: 7:26 p.m.** No comments received. **CLOSED: 7:26 p.m.** Gensterblum confirmed that no emails or calls were received prior to the hearing.
- iv. Commissioner Questions and Deliberation – Gasper asked if they’re planning on a manufactured home or stick built structure. Ter Mors replied stick built although they haven’t completely decided on the exterior yet. The colors will be the same as the house. The interior would be open concept, no stairs, like the inside of their home, with a kitchen and living room in an open area, one bedroom, one bath, and no laundry. Kilgore said Gensterblum would need to make sure the dwelling matches the house and garage. Kilgore asked how Ter Mors would remove the building after 90 days of unoccupancy. Gensterblum said he didn’t feel it would be reasonable to ask that it be torn down but rather that it could be converted to an accessory building. Kilgore read from the ordinance, point #10, section 19.68. regarding the establishment of an escrow account. Rairigh asked if there is a private road. Ter Mors explained there is a 600-foot-long easement which the Wengers use for a driveway. Gasper referred to #5 asking for a form signed by a licensed physician saying the need for supervision is present. Ter Mors presented the letter on her phone to the commissioners which she had previously sent to Gensterblum. Rairigh asked if after the 90-day period was to be used as an office. Gasper asked how it would be turned into an accessory building. Ter Mors asked about the option of an accessory building having a game room, man cave, or home office. Denton said the bathroom could remain, Rairigh stated the kitchen and appliances would need to be removed to ensure it couldn’t be used as a residential dwelling.

MOTION by Rairigh, **SUPPORT** by Gasper to approve SLU # 171 – Accessory dwelling for the use of individuals requiring special care at 8026 W. Crane Rd. with the conditions from Section 19.68 with amendments: #10_Establishment of an escrow fund, – change from “to remove the structure and restore the site” to “converting dwelling to a non-residential accessory building,” and #12 (added)_ Dwelling limit of 1 bedroom with a maximum size of 1,000 square feet.

Roll Call Vote: Denton: yes, Gasper: yes, Hansson: yes, Kilgore: yes, Rairigh: yes, Wandrie: yes, Finkbeiner: absent. **MOTION CARRIED** with 6 yes roll call votes.

6. New Business: None.

7. Unfinished Business: None.

8. Committee Reports:

a. Ordinance Committee – [Kilgore, Finkbeiner, Rairigh, Gasper(alt)]

b. Site Plan Committee – [Finkbeiner, Denton, Wandrie, Hansson (alt)]

c. Joint Planning Committee – [Rairigh, Gasper, Denton, Kilgore (alt)]

9. Administrator’s Report:

a. Zoning Ordinance Audit: Gensterblum has not received an answer from Nathan Mehmet yet but expects an updated Williams & Works quote soon.

b. Zoning Report: Gensterblum said he had received four new applications and was working on them.

c. Code Enforcement Report: Gensterblum said he only had a complaint about some weeds from a neighbor but turned out to be a garden, so the issue was closed.

10. Commissioner Comments: None.

11. Adjournment:

MOTION by Denton **SUPPORT** by Wandrie to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED** with 6 yes voice votes.

Sandra Rairigh, Secretary

Lana Quist, Recording Secretary

Approved _____