

Leighton Township Planning Commission Minutes

Date: June 9, 2021, 7:00 PM

Members Present: Stephen Shoemaker, Tom Smith, John Hooker, Harry DeHaan, Ben Potts, Matt VanderEide.

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Planner Andy Moore from Williams & Works, plus 9 members of the public and/or applicants.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Harry DeHaan at 7:00 PM
2. **Approval of Minutes from May 12, 2021.** Minutes were accepted as presented.
3. **Public Comments for items not on the agenda:** None
4. **Inquiry of Conflict of Interest:** None
5. **Public Hearings:** None
6. **New Business:**
 - a. **Site Plan Review – Faulman Investments LTD, 1125 Morren Ct.** Kyle Visker from LRE presented the application. C. Kyle Faulman, on behalf of Faulman Investments LTD (“Associated Rack Corporation”), has applied for site plan review for property located at 1125 Morren Court in the Moline Industrial Park (PPN 13-265-011-00). The subject property is approximately 1.9 acres within the I-1 Industrial district and located within the Moline Industrial Park. All surrounding properties are also in the I-1 district, except for the northern property line which is adjacent to the proposed Hunters Glen expansion, which is in the R-3 Medium Density Residential district. The applicant is proposing a manufacturing business on the site. Currently, the site contains an existing 8,000 square foot building and associated parking. The applicant is proposing to expand this building by an additional 8,000 square feet and redevelop portions of the site to increase parking, drive aisles, and landscaping. The building would have fire suppression but no other new water or sewer service are proposed.

The site plan review committee recommended that the Planning Commission to approve the site plan subject to the following two issues to be discussed by the Planning Commission:
 1. Determine if gravel an acceptable surface for the north and west sides of the building.
 2. Discuss the dumpster location and it should be enclosed.

Moore reviewed his staff report noting the issues brought forth by the site plan review committee. Shoemaker asked about the operation of the building, asking if there would be any stripping of racks. Applicant indicated that there would not be.

Potts felt that millings would be okay to the north and west of the expansion. Shoemaker felt that millings would be better for dust control purposes. The Commission settled on asphalt millings as an acceptable surface for this area.

Potts motion to approve with **conditions noted by Moore.** support by Matt. Motion carried 6-0 with all members voting yes.

- b. Site Condominium Sketch Plan Review - Legacy Site Condo, 789 142nd Ave.** Ron Van Singel presented an application for preliminary site condominium review to develop a single-family site condominium project at 789 142nd Avenue (PPN 03-13-021-002-40 & 03-13-021-002-42). The subject property is approximately 37.5 acres in the AG Agricultural District and RCD Rural Corridor Overlay District. The applicant is proposing a site condominium development with 15 single-family residential lots, equating to an overall density of about 1 unit per 2.8 acres. The property is currently undeveloped and primarily comprised of farmland and woods. Single-family detached dwellings are permitted by right in the AG Agricultural District. The project will have a master deed and restrictive covenants. Van Singel stated that it is consistent with the ordinance and felt it could be developed in accordance with the Township guidelines.

Moore reviewed the process with the Commission. At this stage, the Planning Commission reviews a conceptual sketch of the plan for adequacy and provides feedback on the overall development concept. Comments made by the Planning Commission at this stage are intended to provide direction to the applicant regarding the overall plans but are not to be considered binding commitments.

Moore also reviewed his staff report, noting that the proposed development is different from many other residential developments in the Agricultural areas of Leighton Township. There are only 2-3 other similar developments in the Agricultural district south of 142nd Avenue, and those are characterized by larger lots and less overall density compared to what is proposed here. Thus far the Township has been successful in keeping residential development to the northern half of the Township where there is more infrastructure to support growth. This development represents a departure from that pattern. He is concerned that it may lead to further growth rural and agricultural areas and lead to further land fragmentation, the accelerated loss of agricultural land, degraded viewsheds, and a general declination of rural character.

Shoemaker asked about similarities with other projects such as Harvest Meadows, Paris Ridge Estates, and Horseshoe Estates (which has its own sewer system).

Van Singel noted that the Master Plan is a guide and each parcel should be evaluated on its own based on appropriate processes. He also noted that the lots are permitted in AG and meet the standards. He also noted that lot splits of 2 acres would also be permitted.

There was a discussion about the long-range planning of the community and if this fit. Shoemaker felt that if it met the requirements of the ordinance then he was inclined to think that the commission should approve it. Smith was not in favor of the project and was concerned about the long-term preservation of farmland in the community. VanderEide indicated that he wasn't motivated by tax revenue and felt the PC needed to have a fundamental discussion related to how they use the Master Plan. Potts didn't want to tell an applicant how to use their land, but also wondered if they approve this project, why have a Master Plan at all? DeHaan didn't like it much either but also saw it from the applicant's perspective as well. The Commission did not come to a consensus relative to the project overall.

Richard Post, a property owner in the Leighton Industrial Park (from the public) felt that this was a good development and should proceed. He felt that development is inevitable and should not be held up.

7. Old Business:

- a. **Harvest Meadows Phase II.** All permits have not been received so this approval of this project will remain postponed for the time being. A couple members of the public indicated applications haven't been filed with the sewer board or drain commission, so this may sit for a while.

8. Other Business:

- a. **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).** Last month Commissioners were asked to review the ordinances provided and come back with notes related to what they like and don't like related to accessory dwellings in the Township. Some of the Commissioners were not in favor of ADUs and others were concerned about how to enforce issues, as in the past it had been a problem for the Township, and there remain some trailer-type units in the Township that are used as ADUs and the Commission generally did not like them and are concerned about long term problems. The Planning Commission will continue to review this issue and will decide next month.

9. **Public Comments:** Richard Post who lives on Green Lake was present and indicated he will be on the agenda for next month for a pole building. He said he was frustrated with PCI as he felt they haven't returned calls and his pole building project was held up for other reasons. He feels like they aren't serving the community very well.

Mr. Post also asked about a pole building in the Leighton Industrial Park. He was curious as to who approved it because there is a restrictive covenant against pole buildings that was never enforced. The Planning Commission informed Mr. Post that the Township does not enforce the restrictive covenants of individual development, and that enforcing those rules would be up to the property owners in the park, not the Township.

10. Correspondence: None

11. Commissioner Comments: None

12. Adjournment. Motion by Smith to adjourn. The motion was supported by Hooker and carried via a voice vote with all members voting yes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Moore, AICP

Leighton Township Planner