

**WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JUNE 12, 2019**

Chairperson Mooradian called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Baiardi, Gorman, Uutinen, Mooradian, Moore, Repasky.
Absent: Wallin.

Visitors: Elaine Keiser, Norm VanWormer, Christine VanWormer, Kristi Hollingsworth,
Norma, Dave White, Sue Matsko.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda: The agenda was approved by consensus with the change of putting New Business before Old Business.

Public Comment: None.

Approval of Minutes: **Uutinen made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 8, 2019 as presented. Repasky seconded the motion.**

Vote: All yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Special Use Application #2019-3 for a Doggy Day Spa (Parcel #24-16-15-12-326-009):

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:03 p.m. for a Special Use Application Case #2019-3, submitted by Elaine Keiser for a Dog Day Spa (Parcel #24-16-15-12-326-009). The applicants are Norm and Christine VanWormer who are proposing a dog day spa at 165 Franklin St. They would be using 1/3 of the building with the rest of the building being used for storage. The business would be geared towards smaller dogs, no dogs would stay overnight. There will be one employee. The dogs will not be going outside and they will be using pee pads for them. Elaine Keiser stated that the goal of this business is to have a small grooming business for small dogs. She said that this is a need in the community and the dogs could come in for a small amount of time or it could be the whole day. There will not be any outdoor yards or kennels, but the dogs would be walked for exercise. This is not next to any residential use.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:11 p.m.

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The Regular meeting was re-opened at 7:11 p.m.

The Site Plan Review checklist was reviewed. Since the building was already in existence and the only changes are on the inside, the Planning Commission will just need to look at the change of use and how that pertains to this application. They are proposing a ground sign in the future, but that would require a separate zoning permit application.

Norma stated that she is working with the owners and will be taking care of the dogs. She described the “grooming” as giving a dog a bath, cutting its nails, brushing it out. They want to take care of mostly smaller dogs.

Repasky asked if a dog could be taken there every day of the month and the answer was yes. He asked if the dog would have to be groomed every day and the answer was no. He pointed out that the area depicted in the site plan is larger for the large dogs than for the small dogs. It looks like an equal area for both large and small dogs. Repasky asked where they intend to walk the dogs. It was explained that they would be walked outside in Franklin Park.

Moore asked where the bathing and grooming activities would take place because it was not shown on the site plan. VanWormer stated that it would be located inside. Keiser said that it would be near the current bathroom, so the plumbing could be tied into it.

Uutinen said that the word kennel should be defined. The definition reads “Any premises on which dogs, cats or other household pets are maintained, boarded, bred or cared for in return for remuneration or are kept for the purpose of sale.” He thinks that is a very clear definition.

Repasky stated that the definition of kennel shows that what is being proposed is a kennel and it is not allowed in the I-1 district. Uutinen agreed with Repasky. Repasky said that the Planning Commission has to follow the ordinance. He thinks that there is more boarding than grooming that would happen in this business. He also felt that there would be some safety issues with walking dogs outside with the vehicular traffic that is generated in Franklin Park.

Kristi Hollingsworth said that she works in Franklin Park and brings her dog to work quite often and walks the dog with her boss’ dog through Franklin Park with no issues.

Mooradian pointed out that kenneling is not just overnight, it is boarding, holding an animal without special services. This Special Use Application is being proposed as a grooming business, but it appears that it is intended as a dog holding facility. Norma said that the dogs would get more one on one attention. Uutinen said that he knows that it is frustrating to be able to find someplace to keep dogs when they want to travel, so he understands where the owners are coming from. He said that the problem is that they have to follow the zoning ordinance.

Mooradian read what is allowed in I-1 as far as animals are concerned. The zoning ordinance says that “pet and pet care stores including dog grooming” are allowed in I-1, but that is not what is being applied for. The applicant felt that they were trying to accommodate small dogs and they did not feel that it would be appropriate in the A-1 district. They also felt that a kennel

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should be defined as keeping the dogs overnight. Uutinen pointed out that he has boarded his dog during the day, so it doesn't have to be an overnight time frame. It was stated that this proposed dog day spa is not just for grooming dogs, they are also boarded without any grooming being done.

Repasky made a motion to deny this Special Use Permit Case #2019-3, the Norm and Christine VanWormer Dog Day Spa at 165 Franklin St., (Parcel #24-16-15-12-326-009) for the following reasons: A kennel is being proposed based on the definition in the zoning ordinance and the fact that dogs who would be brought in there would not be required to be groomed each visit, which then defines it as a kennel, not a groomer. The I-1 district does not allow kennels. Baiardi seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Baiardi – yes, Gorman – yes, Moore – yes, Uutinen – yes, Repasky – yes, Mooradian – yes.

OLD BUSINESS

Draft 2019 Survey from Planner to Review and Discuss:

Mooradian was at a County meeting where they discussed the fact that the County would be sending out a survey to residents this summer. The Township Board decided that it would be best for the Township to wait for the results of the County's survey, and to use their data that they receive to see how it would apply to West Traverse Township. Mooradian pointed out that the Master Plan does not have to be changed every five years, it just has to be looked at and see if anything really needs to be changed. Baiardi suggested that minor changes such as the assessing, conservation changes, gravel roads and change the numbers that go with those should be done. She said that unless there is something that is glaringly wrong, just leave it the way it is. It was agreed to wait until the County results are available and then review those and see how it relates to the Master Plan.

Proposed Zoning Amendments for Planner Review: There are a few zoning amendments that have been brought up in the past that will need to be reviewed. These will be looked at again at the next meeting.

Zoning Administrator's Report: David White presented his written report. He said that he had been waiting for a manure management plan from Joe Graham in relation to his farm, but has not received it yet. An inspector from MDARD will be coming to inspect the property.

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Township Board Representative Report: Baiardi reported that the Township Board had been doing some review of the latest FEMA flood plain maps.

Planning Commissioner Comments: Moore stated that he had spoken to someone at the State level regarding GAAMPS. He said that there is a relatively large change to the program in that there are actually some restrictions on livestock, so now townships could separate livestock from other forms of farming.

Public Comments: None.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be July 10, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Dawson Moore, Secretary

Transcribed by:
Susan Matsko
Township Secretary

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