

Approved 10/3/2018

Regular Meeting of Casco Township Planning Commission
September 5, 2018; 7 PM

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Liepe at 8:15 PM following a special meeting. Due to the late start time reports will be limited to essential information.

1. **Call to order and review of agenda.**
2. **Opening comments by PC members:** none
3. **Public Comment:** There was none
4. **Approval of minutes of August 2018 Regular Meeting.** A motion by Adamson, supported by Fleming to approve the minutes of August 8, 2018. All in favor. Minutes approved as written.
5. **Report from Township Board representative Judy Graff:** Graff reported on the Board Meeting. The proposed recommendation on building height was discussed and tabled. It has not been determined what the Board will do, but Graff let them know that without further direction, the Planning Commission would not like the Board to send it back to the PC for further discussion. Graff told the Board that financial implications are not the responsibility of the PC.
6. **Report from ZBA representative Dave Hughes:** Dave Hughes reported on the ZBA. There was a request for a setback variance on a home that had previously been given the setback variance, but the time limit ran out. The applicant's plans changed in the meantime and are now raising the house up and adding a walkout basement under it. The setbacks requested were the same as the previous variance that had been granted earlier.
7. **Report from Water/Sewer representative Lou Adamson:** Adamson said the SCHAWSA meeting was cancelled and he had nothing to report.
8. **Report from Alfred Ellingsen, Zoning Administrator:** Ellingsen had to leave prior to reporting.
9. **Unfinished Business:**
 - A. **Lighting Amendment- Chairman Liepe still working on this and will have Updated wording sent to PC members prior to October Regular meeting.** Graff said after discussion this would be brought to public hearing. Chairperson Liepe agreed.

Fleming commented that there is no way you won't be able to see a neighbor's lights.

Hughes said it is only about nuisance glare light going onto neighboring properties.

10. Unfinished Business:

Knisley asked where we are on codifying the ordinance. Campbell is working on it and will update the PC.

Graff asked when there would be a special meeting for discussion on the PC's processes, organization, responsibilities and bylaws.

After discussion about when to have the organizational meeting, the PC decided to dedicate the entire November 7th meeting to this. The November meeting will begin at 6 PM. Knisley noted the time change from 7 PM to 6 PM will need to be posted.

11. New Business:

Tim Woodhams of Civica Engineering out of Kalamazoo sent an email to the PC (attachment #1) requesting to be heard concerning a project that would require a zoning change.

Chairperson Liepe invited Woodhams to speak.

Woodhams and his father have a purchase agreement on 5 acres on Baseline. He is interested in multifamily, medium density apartment buildings for middle income tenants. After talking to Ellingsen and Supervisor Overhiser, he was advised that he should come to the PC and have a conversation to get the PC's thoughts of higher density multifamily zoning. High density is not currently included in the Casco Ordinance. The apartments would be geared more toward the average working person, not tourists. They would be two story 8-unit buildings, with two-bedroom apartments.

Graff asked where on Baseline this would be. Knisley said it is adjacent to a 10-acre parcel where a developer attempted to build low income apartments but was turned down by the township. Jensen's Campground bought the 10-acre parcel. The 5-acre parcel is next to Jensen's.

Woodhams said they built the Center Meadows and Lake Center Apartments in Portage and suggested looking at them for an example of the quality. The parcel is now single-family in an LDR zone. Woodhams would either need a zoning change or contract zoning. He explained that contract zoning is where he would enter into a contract with Casco for a specific parcel.

Graff stated it sounded like a PUD. Why not use a PUD? Woodhams said a PUD must use the current zoning.

Woodhams said it is not a low-income housing. There is a lack of housing for teachers, factory workers, and middle class. The apartments would typically rent for \$1,100 to \$1,200 monthly. They would be approximately 1,100 sq. ft. It is difficult to rent one-bedroom apartments. It typically takes 2 incomes to rent and generally they want two bedrooms. Three-bedroom apartments gets more people and more parking requirements, etc. There would be 4 upper units and 4 ground floor units. Everybody gets an end with 8-unit buildings.

Knisley advised Woodhams that parts of that property are possibly wetlands. Fish & Game lists it as wetlands. When they built Baseline Road they eliminated side road ditches and there are water issues.

Hughes asked if Woodhams had an idea of timeframe?

Woodhams said he would like to start the re-zoning process as soon as possible. He has a sales agreement on the property contingent upon getting the zoning change. He can drop out of the deal if he does not get the approval from the township. Woodhams said he would initiate helping write a new zoning district.

Knisley asked about the timeline with the sales agreement. Woodhams said there is a disagreement on this with the seller. The seller thinks there is a limit to how long he would wait for a zoning change. Woodhams feels the sales agreement gives him the time it takes to get a zoning change.

Knisley said there was a proposal for 100 condo units to be built on the 10-acre parcel next to this. There was strong opposition, mainly with water issues, and the surrounding neighbors stopped the project. The condo project got serious heat.

Fleming said the big hurdle would be with the zoning change. Hughes said the PC would be open minded, especially since it is close to South Haven.

Graff said they would have to look at the Master Plan and how the PC interprets it.

Hughes said the PC has a lot on their plate and it could be a while before a zoning change could be addressed. It will not be in the next couple of months.

The PC said it could be put under new business for discussion and they can look at the Master Plan. Right now, we allow 30 units in a medium density area. This would be 10 additional above what is now allowed.

Woodhams said they like to build in multiples of 8 because of the type of building. The entire building would be smaller than some houses on the lake.

Woodhams said his attorney suggested contract zoning and he will forward information he received on contract zoning to the PC.

11. Public Comment:

John Barkley said he liked the idea of adding full time residents to Casco. Anything to support that would be good. It makes a lot of sense.

Chris Barczyk asked what prohibits the apartments from becoming high-density STRs. Woodhams said that would be the advantage of contract zoning. Anything can be specified. Barczyk added, if you use MDR guidelines currently in place there can be 7 units per acre. Woodhams request would be for 9 units per acre.

Graff stated if you allow STRs in medium density, it would be allowed. She said she considers contract zoning to be the same concept as spot zoning.

A motion was made by Graff, supported by Adamson to adjourn. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9 PM.

Next Meetings: October 3, 2018 Regular Meeting 7PM
November 7, 2018 Regular Meeting dedicated to PC Organization 6PM

Attachment #1: Letter from Tim Woodhams, August 27th, Re: Multi Family High Density Apartments

Minutes prepared by Janet Chambers, Recording Secretary

Liepe, Dian

From: Liepe, Dian
Sent: Monday, August 27, 2018 11:13 AM
To: 'Tim Woodhams'
Cc: supervisor@cascotownship.org
Subject: RE: Woodhams - Baseline Road

I will add to our Agenda under new business.

Dian Liepe

**Casco Township
Planning Commission
Chairperson**

From: Tim Woodhams [mailto:twoodhams@civicaengineering.com]
Sent: Monday, August 27, 2018 10:51 AM
To: Liepe, Dian <liepe@msu.edu>
Cc: supervisor@cascotownship.org
Subject: Fwd: Woodhams - Baseline Road

Dian

Morning. We have a sales agreement on a property along Baseline. The property is west of Blue Star and directly across the street from the Allen Edwin project. Our development group builds multifamily properties.

We are hoping to build a small complex on the approx. 5 acre parcel. Currently it is zoned single family. However, the Land Use plans indicates this parcel is appropriate for a higher density. After talking with Allan and Alfred we have learned that the township doesn't have a high density ordinance. It has a medium density of, I believe, 6 units per acre.

We are looking at the property and hoping to achieve 40 units. Which would be in the 9 units per acre range.

I would like to be on the agenda for the upcoming Sept 5 planning commission meeting to discuss.

I appreciate your help and look forward to hearing back.

Thanks

Tim Woodhams PE
Civica Engineering PLLC
1503 East Centre Ave, Suite C
Portage, MI 49002

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <supervisor@cascotownship.org>

Date: Thu, Aug 9, 2018 at 6:16 PM
Subject: Re: Woodhams - Baseline Road
To: Tim Woodhams <twoodhams@civicaengineering.com>

Tim
The chairman's name is Dian Liepe
and her email is liepe@anr.msu.edu
Allan

> Allan
>
> Thanks for talking with me the other day about the possibility of drafting
> a multi family ordinance in the township.
>
> Going forward I understand the next step should be attending the Planning
> Commission meeting to begin the discussion. I see that the next meeting is
> this week. I am wondering if I could be placed on their agenda as new
> business to formally start that process?
>
> I couldn't find an email on the townships web site for the PC Chair.
>
> Thanks for your help,
>
> Tim Woodhams
> 269-760-6688
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