

CASCO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 15, 2025
6:00 PM
Casco Township Hall

1. Call to order
2. Review / Approval of Agenda
3. Public Comment - items **NOT** on the Agenda (please keep comments to 2 minutes)
4. Acknowledge/read correspondence received
5. Approval of minutes:
 - a. 12/18/24 meeting
6. Public hearing – none
7. New Business:
 - a. Election of Officers
 - b. Daydreamer Domes, Missy Fojtik – amending the scope of the use of the kitchen; requested a liquor license and requests to exceed the use approved in original site plan (kitchen use)
 - c. Any other business that may come before the commission
8. Old Business:
 - a. Continue master plan update
 - b. Draft text Min dwelling size
 - c. Draft text ADU (accessory dwelling unit)
 - d. Draft AG; road frontage, lot area
 - e. Any other business that may come before the commission
9. Administrative Reports
 - a. Zoning Administrator
 - b. Township Board representative
 - c. Zoning Board of Appeals representative
10. General Public Comment (2 minutes each)
11. Adjourn

Next meeting date Wednesday February 19, 2025 6:00PM

Casco Township Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

December 18, 2024

6:00 PM

Casco Township Hall

Members Present: Andy **Litts**, Kelly **Hecker**, Dan **Fleming**, Greg **Knisley** Ryan **Brush**, Dian **Liepe**, Irene **Wood**

Members Absent – None

Audience: Allan **Overhiser**, David & Mary **Campbell**

1. Call to order: Meeting was called to order by Chairman **Litts** 6:00PM

2. Review and approve agenda:

A motion was made by **Hecker** to approve the agenda, supported by **Fleming**. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. Public comment – None

4. Correspondence – None

5. Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by **Fleming** to approve the November 20, 2024 Regular Meeting minutes, with corrections. Supported by **Litts**. All in favor. Motion carried.

6. Public Hearing – None

7. New Business – None

8. Old Business:

a. Review draft Master Plan:

The Planner is still working on the requested revisions to 1.0 Introduction.

The PC reviewed 2.0 Community profile:

2.1– History and Evolution of Casco Township

1. Paragraph (para) 1. Remove the first 2 sentences.
2. Para 1, sentence three. Change “The Ottawa, Miami, and Potawatomi...” to “The Anishinabek...” which is a term that is used to refer to the

primitive native people of Canada and America. **Liepe** would like to add a footnote to site the source of this information.

3. Para 1, sentence three. Replace “arrived permanently or seasonally by the 1600’s” with “Living here prior to” and combine with the first sentence of the next para.
4. Para 3, last sentence. Remove “in South Haven or the Palisades Nuclear Power Plant”.
5. Para 4, Sentence 2. Edit to I-196/US-31 (and change any and all further reference to the Freeways to the same).
6. Para 5, Second sentence. Remove “Since residential development...it continues to keep”. Should now read Casco Township continues to be a rural residential community.

2.2– Locational and Regional Context

1. Para 1, sentence 1. Change to read “Casco Township is a rural, agricultural, vacation, and retirement home community.”
2. Para 1, next sentence. Remove “although the Township...and several small lakes”. Remove “along the bluffs..., east of the freeway” and change to read “housing is primarily found west of and along Blue Star Hwy.
3. Para 2, sentence 1. Remove “within a relatively rural corner of”.
4. Para 2, sentence 2. Change the approximate population to 4,000 and add “with an additional 15K visitors in the summertime”, and change public “services” to “utilities”.
5. Para 3, last sentence. Add missing County primary roads.

2.3 – Existing Land Use

1. Para 1. PC questioned the context. Asked that the planner provide reference.
2. Para 2, sentence 2. Replace “crucial source of background information” with “tool”.
3. Para 4, sentence 1. Remove ‘Upon examining...is evident that”.
4. Para 5, last sentence. Correct typo “ERSI” with “ESRI”.
5. Para 6, first sentence. Remove “Casco Township is dominated by” and change to read “Agriculture accounts for...”
6. Para 6, sentence 2. Replace “ Can be found...the township” with “is located...”, Remove “where the soil...than prime”
7. Para 6, sentence 3. Change to read “Roadways are modest as there is less development.”

8. Requested clarification from the planner regarding the Prime Farmland information in Paragraph 8.
9. Para 9. Replace the Table and add “accounts for 29% of the total land area...”
10. Para 10, sentence 3. Remove “ The lakes present...relatively shallow”
11. Para 10, sentence 5. Revert back to existing verbiage.
12. Para 12, sentence 2. Add are not in “other” active use.
13. Para 12, Remove last sentence
14. Para 13, sentence 1. PC questioned percentage, asked that planner double check the math.
15. Para 16. Remove last sentence.
16. Para 17. Remove second sentence.

2.4– History and Evolution of Casco Township

1. Move second paragraph of Age Distribution to Goals and Objectives.

b. Draft text Minimum Dwelling Size Requirements, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), and Ag road frontage/lot area discussion was postponed till the next meeting. **Litts** asked the PC to review the drafts that **Smalley** has provided along with the previously approved dimensional variances.

9. Administrative reports:

Zoning Administrator – **Smalley** presented her November report.

Township Board Representative – **Fleming** reported that the Township has had a recent audit of the books and as a result, some fixes to speed up the reconciliation process have been implemented. **Fleming** also reported that various Township Boards and committees have had newly appointed members.

ZBA Representative – **Liepe** reported that on December 12, 2024 the ZBA denied both of the variances that William and Michelle Armstrong requested from the front setback and minimum dwelling requirements.

10. Public comment – None

11. Adjourn 9:00 pm

Attachments: available upon request

Minutes prepared by:

Jennifer Goodrich, Recording Secretary

Esteemed Members of the Casco Township Planning Commission,

Thank you for taking the time to hear our request.

My name is Missy Fojtik, and my family and I are the owners of DayDreamer Domes at 397 Blue Star Highway, the site of the former long-standing South Haven Country Club. This property sat idle for years until we saw a diamond in the rough and began our project in 2020. DayDreamer Domes is designed to offer an “elevated” camping experience—glamping, if you will. Our domes are equipped with full power, AC/heat, and ensuite baths. The property also features a well-maintained pool area, 150 acres of hiking trails, a soon-to-be-completed frisbee golf course, a float spa, a small café, and a bodega. In the future, we hope to add a covered area for yoga, salsa lessons, art classes, and weddings.

We currently hold a packaged beer and wine license, which allows us to sell “to-go” beverages. However, while our guests can purchase canned drinks up to 17% alcohol content (34 proof and quite strong), we are not allowed to open, pour, or serve beverages anywhere within our building or on the attached 2,000 sq. ft. porch. We often explain it like this: we essentially have a 7-Eleven license, you can buy alcohol in a 7-eleven, but you can’t drink inside a 7-Eleven.

Who is our clientele?

While we have had the pleasure of hosting guests from as far away as Sweden, one of the pillars of DayDreamer Domes is community involvement and activation. We host free local days at our pool, where residents with a local ID can enjoy complimentary day passes. In the summer, we also host free Service Industry Mondays, allowing local Fire/EMS personnel, nurses, and those working in resorts, hotels, motels, bars, and restaurants to use our pool free of charge. Additionally, we sell day entry passes (much like Jellystone Park) for a nominal fee, granting visitors access to our facilities, including the pool, hiking trails, and soon, frisbee golf.

While guests can already purchase canned beverages, we’re looking to expand our offerings. Our current operation is somewhat confusing, requiring vigilant monitoring. We believe that obtaining this license will enhance the customer experience, support our bottom line, and help us remain viable—because, as anyone who’s seen our parking lot can see, we are far from full.

We strive to be good stewards of the land and are committed to being an integral part of this close-knit community. We’ve hosted free family events, such as our October Halloween Weekends featuring a free haunted maze, storytelling, and trick-or-treating. Last year, we provided Santa Saturdays as part of our Deck the Domes Christmas Experience.

We want to be clear: DayDreamer Domes is here for the community, not just wealthy out-of-towners like other private resorts. We believe that financial circumstances should not limit access to local attractions. Our goal is to provide all our guests with a high-level experience, which, to us, means drinking out of something more elevated than a can.

The Liquor License Request

The 150-acre property was purchased in 2020 by my family, and we’ve been diligently working to bring our dream to life. Recently, we retained an attorney who claims to process more liquor licenses in Michigan than anyone else. While I cannot verify this claim, he comes highly recommended by trusted personal contacts. We are pursuing a “new” Resort Class C Liquor

License, as the property's previous license was sold before we closed on the purchase. The Country Club previously had a liquor license for decades.

This license would not come from the quota system but instead qualify due to the size of our café seating area (50 indoor seats and 60 outdoor seats). The attorney is confident in his ability to secure this license, but we need board approval to proceed. He has assured us that he will handle all the necessary paperwork and that the township's role is limited to providing approval. This license would be non-transferable and tied to the property. I believe Sun N Sand Resort currently holds the only operational license in Casco. There has not been an opportunity to get one in Casco in the 4 years I have been here.

Day Passes and Community Workshops

I am well aware that I am not allowed to operate strictly as a commercial business; however, we are open to offering day passes. We host classes such as wreath-making, hat-burning, cooking classes, occasional dinners, and sound baths. With only nine domes in operation at the moment, we aim to fill our space and classes with locals who want to come for the day and experience our workshops. Not everyone who stays at the domes is interested in these activities, and frankly, we love hosting them and do not intend to stop. However, we need enough participants to cover the costs of instructors and materials, so why not open them to day guests? I have been to Jellystone for the day and participated in similar offerings there. For \$10, you gain entry for the day and can purchase food on-site.

Addressing Concerns

Township Supervisor Allen O. was unfamiliar with the process when I inquired about the necessary approvals, as this has not come up during his tenure. He directed me to Allegan Zoning Administrator, Tasha, who informed me that I need to present this request to the planning commission for approval before it can proceed to the board.

One issue that may arise is the question of day-pass and food-service validity. I believe this license does not expand our current use model. We are already licensed to sell beverages and operate a licensed restaurant as part of the ancillary services for our campsite. This license would simply allow us to provide a higher level of service for our guests.

Conclusion

We hope this letter outlines our position clearly, and we look forward to discussing this matter further at the January 15 meeting. In the meantime, if anyone has questions, please feel free to contact us or visit the site to see it firsthand.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kindest regards,
Ondrej and Missy Fojtik

Contact Information:
DayDreamer Domes: 269-906-0916

L12-A

Minimum lot size **	Public sanitary sewer available—10,000 square feet
	No public sanitary sewer available—20,000 square feet
Minimum lot width** ***	Public sanitary sewer available—85 feet
	No public sanitary sewer available—100 feet
Front yard setback * ** *** ****	30 feet if public sanitary sewer available; 50 feet if no public sanitary sewer available
Side yard setback **	15 feet if public sanitary sewer available; 25 feet if no public sanitary sewer available
Width to depth ratio	1:4
Rear yard setback **	40 feet
Maximum height of all buildings	35 feet
Maximum lot coverage	25 percent
Minimum dwelling unit size	720 square feet; 24 feet across any front, side and rear



Draft Text – rough draft of the format (Dec 2024 meeting)

Add - 3.20 O. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

1. ADU only allowed on parcels with an existing dwelling.
2. Allowed in zoning districts that allow a dwelling.
3. The size of the ADU shall not exceed the lot coverage of the zoning district. There is not a minimum size, but must meet all requirements for a dwelling in the building code (as amended from time to time)
4. The ADU shall meet the setbacks as required in the zoning district. If the ADU is not attached to the dwelling the setback per 3.07G apply.
5. An ADU is allowed by Right.
6. Only one ADU is allowed per parcel.
7. An ADU can be used as a Rental, long term or short term.
8. ADU cannot be split from primary dwelling unless meets the requirements for primary dwelling (size, setbacks and lot coverage)

Definition ideas:

Add to - 2.05 Dwelling

D. Dwelling Unit, Accessory

DWELLING UNIT, Accessory: A dwelling unit that is permitted only on properties with a single detached principal dwelling unit. ADUs include a kitchen, a sleeping area, and full bathroom facilities.

DWELLING UNIT, ACCESSORY. A dwelling unit located on the same lot as a principal use, located either within the principal use or within a detached accessory building, including a kitchen, sleeping quarters and a bathroom facilities.

LDR

USES

P = Permitted by right

SU = Special Use

Accessory buildings and uses, customarily incidental to any of the permitted uses or special uses in this zoning, regulated in Section 307

Adult foster care, family homes

Adult foster care, group homes, in accordance with Section 15.03.A

Bed and breakfast establishments, in accordance with Section 15.03.D

Churches, in accordance with Section 15.03.F

Country clubs and golf courses, in accordance with Section 15.03.I

Day care, group homes, in accordance with Section 15.03.K

Day care, family homes

Home occupations in compliance with Section 3.18

Hospitals, clinics, convalescent homes, in accordance with Section 15.03.Q

Libraries and museums, in accordance with Section 15.03.T

Long-term rental

Ponds in compliance with Section 3.27

Private K-12 schools, in accordance with Section 15.03.AA

Public K-12 schools

Public parks, playgrounds, play fields, and similar public open space recreation uses, not including campgrounds, in accordance with Section 15.03.CC

Short-term rental



Single-family detached dwelling, Accessory Dwelling Unit

Utility and public service buildings, in accordance with Section 15.03.JJ