

West Branch Township
Planning Commission
September 19, 2017

Members Present: Bell, Selinski, Delahanty and Evans.

Members Absent: Mollard

Others Present: Zoning Administrator Ryan Veeder, Jamie Crawford, Joe Crawford, Cheryl Ball, Deborah Buhlman, Paul Bader, Pete Mikek, Allen Philbrick, Ben Hodges, Tim Searfoss, and Jill Ammond

Chairman Bell opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 pm.

Special Use Permit & Site Plan Review: Bader & Sons

Co-owner Paul Bader gave a brief history of their company and presented their plans for the West Branch location. They have purchased the old West Branch Industries building on M-55 and are remodeling the existing building to include a showroom and service area for equipment. At this time the building on the rear side of the property will be used only for storage. A new entrance vestibule will be added along with parking in the front of the building. A sales lot for equipment is being added east of the driveway.

No communications or correspondence was received.

Tim Searfoss and Ben Hodges both were glad to see them come to town and welcomed them to West Branch. Jill Ammond asked about the purpose of the Special Use and the type of surface being used for the sales lot. Bell explained which uses were permitted and which uses required Special Use Permits. Paul Bader stated that the sales lot will be gravel since pavement does not work well for tractors. Ammond also asked if M-55 would be changed as a result of their business. Bader stated they are working with MDOT and will do what is required.

Site Plan Review: Arby's

Cheryl Ball and owners Jamie and Joe Crawford were present on behalf of Arby's. Ball showed pictures of the current building and the remodeled building. Ball explained that their remodel will include both interior and exterior surfaces, address drainage issues in the parking lot, and remove the glass from the front atrium and enclose that section.

No communications or correspondence was received.

There was no Public Comment.

Chairman Bell closed the public hearing and opened the regular meeting with the pledge at 7:22 pm.

Motion by Delahanty, second by Evans to appoint Zoning Administrator Veeder as the recording secretary for this meeting due to Mollard's absence. Motion Carried.

Motion by Selinski, second by Delahanty to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2017 meeting. Motion Carried.

New Business:

Bell inquired about the driveway for Bader & Sons and stated he would like to see that paved. Bell also asked about a fence around the sales lot. Veeder stated they have more than the required number of parking spaces required. The dimensions for signage were not included on the site plan but Bader stated they have a sign company working on it and will meet the requirements of the Ordinance.

Motion by Delahanty, second by Evans to approve the Bader & Sons Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review as submitted. Roll call vote: Yea-Evans, Selinski, Delahanty, and Bell. Nay-none. Absent-Mollard. Motion Carried.

Bell noted there were some changes to Arby's parking lot such as correcting catch basins. Veeder stated the changes are in line with parking regulations in the Zoning Ordinance. The owners stated they just bought the restaurant in June and will spruce up the landscaping when the remodel is complete. Bell also noted changes to the garbage receptacle area.

Motion by Delahanty, second by Selinski to approve the Site Plan Review for Arby's. Roll call vote: Yea-Selinski, Delahanty, Evans and Bell. Nay-none. Absent-Mollard. Motion Carried.

Zoning Administrator Ryan Veeder submitted his resignation to the Township Board on 9/13/17 and it was accepted, effective 9/30/17.

Veeder was contacted by Pioneer Power about constructing another accessory building. When the Township took over zoning at the end of 2005, their property was zoned half Commercial and half Agricultural. There were no permitted or conditional uses included in those zones to accommodate what Veeder would categorize their use. Pioneer Power would be a legally non-conforming use, and the Zoning Ordinance states that they would be required to get a variance. Bell suggested by definition, they should be a Lodge or Club, which is included in other zoning districts. Ben Hodges and Allen Philbrick were present representing Pioneer Power and provided some history on the property. They also stated they are looking to the future and thought it would be best to address the issue now. Bell stated that the Planning Commission will look at the Ordinance and discuss possibly a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

Veeder provided a Zoning administrator job description to the board for review and comments before forwarding to the Township Board for approval. Veeder would like to see the job description updated before placing an employment ad in the newspaper. He also recommended that Bell serve as the acting Zoning Administrator. Veeder could receive permits at the hall and forward them to Bell for approval. Bell stated he would be ok with that for the next month or so but would not do any enforcing.

Veeder explained the Township Board is looking at enforcement procedures to possibly include a courtesy letter before a violation letter is sent. Since enforcement procedures are in the Zoning Ordinance, Veeder stated he feels as if any change in enforcement should be initiated by the Planning Commission and addressed in the Zoning Ordinance.

Veeder presented some material given to him by Cheryl Mollard who received the info from Trustee Debbie Buhlman. Buhlman was told by Denise Cline from the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments that the recently amended language in the Industrial District could open the Township up for a lawsuit. It was decided that Bell will contact Denise Cline and discuss further.

Unfinished Business:

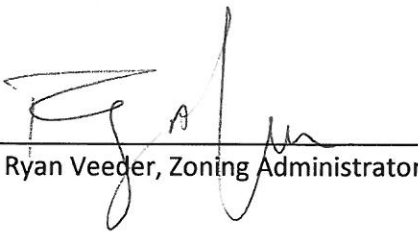
Veeder stated since the agenda was full, he does not have an update on the Sign Ordinance or Telecommunication Towers.

There were no Committee Reports.

There was no Public Comment.

Motion by Delahanty, second by Selinski to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 8:48 p.m.



Ryan Veeder, Zoning Administrator

11/7/17

Date