

Alamo Township Planning Commission Minutes  
A regular meeting of the Alamo Township Planning Commission was held Tuesday  
December 7, 2010 at the Alamo Township Hall

Chairman Goyings called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance. The following members were present: Paula Baker, Karen DeVries, Ron Feniger, Helen Goyings, Belden Smith, Al Sweitzer, and David Veenstra. Also present:, Township Deputy Supervisor Barbara Fisher, Mike Cramer, and Bruce LaBrie.

AGENDA: Add wind Ordinances and Karen DeVries departure.

MINUTES: Motion was made by K. DeVries to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held November 2, 2010. Motion was seconded by P. Baker. The **motion carried** by voice vote.

UPDATE ON COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

P. Baker reported that the individual members of the subcommittee, reviewing the current Master Plan and zoning map relationship in the sections surrounding the D Avenue - US 131 interchange, have continued to examine the parcels and current land use in that area.

B. Smith also reported sub committee progress in reevaluation of the listed uses in the commercial districts. See attached report.

KAREN DEVRIES term on the Planning Commission will expire at the end of the year, and she has decided to step away from the commission for the time being, but would consider reappointment at a later time. Chair Goyings introduced Bruce LaBrie to the commissioners. Chair Goyings is recommending that Mr. LaBrie's name be submitted to the Board of Trustees for appointment to the commission.

Chair Goyings asked Deputy Supervisor B. Fisher to review with the commission the current status of development of the Midget Track, discussed with Mr. Gary Howe, at the November meeting. A Site Plan is being assembled, in coordination with township staff.

B. Fisher also reported no follow up communication regarding the proposed commercial development at the North East corner of D Avenue and 12th Street in township section 13, first discussed at the June '10 meeting of the Planning Commission.

There was brief discussion of the closing of the Club Car Restaurant, located in the midst of the business district corridor on D Avenue.

THE 2011 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE was presented. It was decided not to reschedule the July or the September meetings, which will fall the day after Independence Day and Labor Day respectively. The schedule was approved by a voice vote.

WIND ENERGY DISCUSSION: The Commission returned to the ongoing consideration of elements which might be included in future regulation of Wind Driven Electrical Generators in the township. A. Sweitzer reported that he has been unsuccessful in contacting Pine Grove Township in his attempt to obtain a copy of their wind energy provisions. Bruce LaBrie said that in Morenci Township a 650 foot setback is required, restricting wind generators to fairly large parcels. The discussion of provisions in other municipality's ordinances soon turned to the current controversy over local responsibility for control of marijuana growth. throughout the State. Consensus at this time is to wait and see what larger municipalities do and how current issues before the State courts are resolved.

CITIZEN COMMENT - NON AGENDA ITEMS: none

IN FURTHER DISCUSSION of business land use in the township, the commission members reviewed business use as it currently exists between the intersection of Hart and Owen Drives and the intersection of D Avenue and 12th Street. The comparative intensity of land use in various categories, over that stretch, and the lack of any obvious established pattern presents further challenge to development of intelligent, useful and effective business zoning regulations.

GOALS: Chair Goyings asked the commissioners to think about goals for 2011, and prepare at least a short list at the January meeting.

JANUARY 4th MEETING The Planning Commission's next meeting will be held at the regular time of 7:00 PM, at the Alamo Township Hall, 7901 North 6th Street.

ADJOURN: At 8:05 PM motion was made by K. DeVries, seconded by H. Goyings to adjourn. Motion passed on a voice vote.

Belden Smith  
Secretary

Attachment

December 7, 2010

**Commercial Zoning Subcommittee progress report, number three:**

The subcommittee met November 22, and had a wide ranging but only moderately productive discussion of several questions. The primary, and starting topic was the question of what characteristics of land use intensity justifiably differentiate between business districts. What uses of the land permitted, for example, in a "B-2" district would be unsuitable in a "B-1" district, and why? How can we intelligently describe those differentiating characteristics without falling back on the old, more subjective format. And then, what specific regulations are necessary and appropriate to maximize land use compatibility among business enterprises that are located or may locate in the township.

Differentiating characteristics, or in other words district-specific permitted uses and standards should, the subcommittee thinks, be as threshold oriented, quantitative and dimensional in phraseology as possible.

The challenge is to discover the resulting measurable effects (characteristics) of land use activity which are perceived by fellow or future land users, either individually or as a community, to be an imposition on their rightful and permitted use of land.

And then the question; what, if any, pattern is there in the township already? The commission has discussed a "bull's-eye" concept, which is appealing in theory, but which appears to be difficult to impose on the existing commercial use in the township. This led us to question the necessity to segregate business land use at all, in light of the seeming lack of land use conflict existing currently. To question but not to disregard. The justification for this whole exercise of zoning lies in the idea that it is "good" to attempt to anticipate, and set rules to avoid or mitigate, future land use conflict which is likely to develop if (or as) population density increases.

The outcome was simply to continue to review other ordinances and codes in an attempt to discover existing language that reflects this approach to business district segregation.