

**OSHEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD MAY 10, 2018**

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**Agenda**

**PUBLIC HEARING: BARN CAMP**

**CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FROM DOREEN BELTZ FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE, TO ALLOW A CHILDREN'S BARN CAMP AS A TEMPORARY OUTDOOR EVENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 20.410 AND 60.000 OF THE TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY ADDRESS IS 2582 SOUTH 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET IN THE RR: RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT. PARCEL NO. 3905-28-430-041.**

**PUBLIC HEARING: CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS**

- a. SECTION 66.200: DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PARCELS, LOTS AND BUILDING SITES**
- b. SECTION 68.300: OFF-STREET PARKING AND SITE CIRCULATION REQUIREMENTS**

**OLD BUSINESS**

- a. AGRITOURISM (DISCUSSION CONTINUED FROM APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup> MEETING)**
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A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, May 10, 2018, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Fred Antosz  
Ollie Chambers  
Dusty Farmer, Secretary  
Micki Maxwell  
Bruce VanderWeele, Vice Chairperson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Cheri Bell, Chairperson  
Mary Smith

Also present were Julie Johnston, Planning Director, James Porter, Township Attorney, Martha Coash, Meeting Transcriptionist, and two interested persons.

## **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice Chairperson VanderWeele called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. and invited those present to join in reciting the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

## **Agenda**

Vice Chairperson VanderWeele asked if there were any additions or deletions to the proposed agenda. Hearing none, he noted the agenda would stand as presented.

## **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items**

The Vice Chair determined no one in the audience cared to comment regarding non-agenda items and moved to the next agenda item.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION AND REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 26, 2018**

Vice Chairperson VanderWeele asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the Work Session or Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 26, 2018.

Mr. Antosz offered a correction to both sets of minutes to change the listed title of Vice Chairperson from Mr. Antosz to Mr. VanderWeele. He also noted the meeting date for the minutes listed as approved for the first meeting in April should have been April 12 rather than April 10.

The Chair asked for a motion.

Mr. Chambers made a motion to approve the minutes of the Work Session and the Regular Meeting of April 26, 2018 with the corrections as requested. Mr. Antosz supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Vice Chairperson VanderWeele moved to the next agenda item.

**PUBLIC HEARING: BARN CAMP  
CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION FROM DOREEN BELTZ FOR A SPECIAL  
EXCEPTION USE, TO ALLOW A CHILDREN'S BARN CAMP AS A TEMPORARY  
OUTDOOR EVENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 20.410 AND 60.000 OF THE  
TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY ADDRESS IS 2582  
SOUTH 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET IN THE RR: RURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT. PARCEL NO.  
3905-28-430-041.**

The Vice Chairperson asked Ms. Johnston to present the Staff report regarding the application from Doreen Beltz for a special exception use and general site layout for a children's "Barn Camp" as a temporary outdoor event.

Ms. Johnston explained the purpose of the Barn Camp is to allow elementary school age children to access the property for a day camp that would focus on nature exploration and appreciation. The camp would be held three days a week for a total of three weeks. Children would attend the camp for three days in a row, three hours a day. The requested schedule is as follows:

Camp times: 9:00 am to 12:00 noon  
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Camp dates: June 18, 19, and 20  
July 16, 17, 18  
July 23, 24, 25

She said the schedule equates to six total camp experiences (three hours a day, three days a week). Per the applicant, no more than 18 children would be enrolled in each camp time period. The property is zoned RR: Rural Residential District, which requires Planning Commission approval for outdoor events lasting more than one day.

The applicant will utilize their small hobby farm for the camp. The existing barn will be the focal point, with outdoor activities happening throughout the 27-acre parcel.

Ms. Johnston said the applicant provided a general layout plan showing the locations of the buildings on site, the driveway for drop-off, and parking areas. The applicant states restroom facilities will be provided within the barn. No additional trailers or equipment will be brought to the subject property, so the Fire Marshal has no concerns with the site. All ordinance requirements have been met.

She addressed the Special Exception Use Considerations from *Section 60.100* of the Zoning Ordinance:

**A. Is the proposed use compatible with the other uses expressly permitted within the RR: Rural Residential District zoning classification?**

Currently, agricultural uses are not expressly permitted within the Rural Residential District. However, with recent changes to the Township's Master Plan, specifically the Rural Character Preservation Strategies, the Township has acknowledged the need to recognize the importance of agricultural uses within this District. In addition, the Rural Residential District allows two other uses which have some correlation to the requested use, which are:

- Section 20.207: Nonprofit educational, noncommercial recreational and noncommercial business center (permitted use)
- Section 20.410: Golf courses, parks, motorized vehicular roadways, and outdoor recreational areas (special exception use)

A non-profit barn camp could be viewed as both an educational and recreational use, which contributes to its compatibility with other uses in the District.

**B. Will the proposed use be detrimental or injurious to the use or development of adjacent properties or to the general public?**

The subject site is over 27 acres in size, allowing for substantial setbacks from adjacent properties to the north, south, and west. The barn and adjacent farm uses are located approximately 380 feet from the northern property line and 650 feet from the southern property line. The railroad track serves as a border to the west.

The barn use is closer to 6<sup>th</sup> Street, located approximately 120 feet from the right-of-way. In addition, across 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the east, parcelization has occurred and a number of smaller one-acre residential parcels exist, which equates to more driveway curb cuts. While not detrimental to the use of these adjacent properties, the increase in area traffic during camp drop-off and pick-up may impact these property owners. However, the temporary nature of the event should minimize this compatibility issue.

**C. Will the proposed use promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the community?**

Staff does not have any concerns regarding the public's health, safety, or welfare, however, reiterated the need to manage traffic entering the site, ensuring safety on 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Having small signage along the one-way drive for drop-off and pick-up directing traffic to move forward and not block the entrance may be beneficial.

The State of Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) defines day camps as operating for more than four hours but less than 24 hours

per day for five or more days within a 14-day period. Since the children attending this day camp will be on site for only three hours a day for three consecutive days, the applicant is not required to be licensed by the State. However, Ms. Beltz has indicated that if this venture is successful and a longer duration is approved by the Township, she will secure the appropriate licenses from LARA.

**D. Will the proposed use encourage the use of the land in accordance with its character and adaptability?**

The barn camp request is a temporary use that reflects the rural character of this parcel and area land uses. In addition, it is supported by the Township's Master Plan. The Rural Character Preservation Strategy chapter indicates:

*"Policy AG-5: Encourage and promote agricultural tourism within the study area, at an appropriate scale and intensity that limits impacts to adjacent properties, public services and the natural environment."*

Agricultural tourism is often defined as any agriculturally based operation or activity that brings public to a working farm for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the farm operation. Utilizing the hobby farm to provide educational opportunities to children on a temporary basis is both supported by this definition and the character of subject property.

Ms. Johnston said Planning Department Staff is satisfied this project meets all Special Exception Use requirements and recommended the Planning Commission grant approval for the Barn Camp temporary outdoor event, subject to three conditions:

1. The Barn Camp be operational during the following dates/times:

Camp times:           9:00 am to 12:00 noon  
                              1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Camp dates:           June 18, 19, and 20  
                              July 16, 17, 18  
                              July 23, 24, 25

2. A final inspection by the Fire Marshal prior to the commencement of the event, if needed.
3. Signage be placed on the property directing traffic to appropriate child drop-off locations, moving traffic onto the site and away from 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

Vice Chairperson VanderWeele asked if Board Members had questions for Ms. Johnston.

In response to questions, Ms. Johnston said she had visited the site, non-profit status has not been sought and is not necessary for a temporary event, nor does it

require state licensing. If the venture is successful and the applicant seeks and is allowed to provide camp next year, she would seek appropriate licensing from the state.

There were no further questions; the Vice Chair asked the applicant to speak.

Ms. Doreen Beltz, 2582 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street, explained the camp is not non-profit at this time but if it is successful she will pursue 501-C3 non-profit status in the future. She would like to be able to offer scholarships and will need state accreditation for that purpose. This summer will be a pilot program after which she will consider next steps. She stressed profit is not a goal. She has a tremendous vision for what the camp could be and felt it could be a poster child for agribusiness. The camp will be a controlled experience with direct, personal relationships, like a small group field trip rather than a traditional day camp.

In response to a question from Ms. Maxwell, Ms. Beltz said she has scaled back the number of campers from 18 to a maximum of 16 per day.

There was extended discussion of concern regarding the amount of possible increased traffic, how traffic will flow on the property, and available parking spaces. Noted was that in the case of future expansion parking would need to be kept off the street.

Ms. Beltz noted she installed a fence and double gate so there is no road access to children or animals.

Ms. Maxwell said she was all for the project, but that the traffic concerns her.

Ms. Johnston pointed out that if the flow of traffic on the property were changed to the right instead of to the left as is shown on the site drawing, additional queuing of cars would be possible and safety would be improved.

Ms. Maxwell confirmed the applicant need to return to the Planning Commission next year with an application if she wishes to provide a camp in the future.

Mr. Antosz asked how children would be divided into groups.

Ms. Beltz replied the children would range from kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade and would likely be split into two groups, with two supervisors as well as interns.

Vice Chair VanderWeele noted he attended an event for 100 children organized and run by Ms. Beltz and that she does a great job with children. He indicated the resulting traffic was well coordinated.

There were no further questions for the applicant; Vice Chair VanderWeele asked if there were any members of the public who wished to speak.

Ms. Barb Malsom, 2824 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street, said her property is directly south of Ms. Beltz' property and she was concerned about the ability of the camp to expand in the future and wondered how large it could become under Township Ordinance.

Ms. Johnston explained current Ordinance allows only a temporary event. The Planning Commission is reviewing changes to the agritourism and agribusiness sections of the Ordinance that would allow more flexibility to owners. Since nothing has been approved yet, it is hard to answer what might happen in the future. Theoretically, the camp could become permanent, but seasonal.

Attorney Porter noted the goal is to create a balance for use of property that is not injurious to neighbors. Rights and responsibilities need to be weighed.

The applicant, Ms. Johnston said, would be required to return with a special use request for future camps; a public hearing and notice to neighbors would be mandated.

Ms. Malsom asked whether under the current Ordinance if there were 180 children who wanted to attend the camp that would be possible.

Ms. Johnston said it would be possible, but the Planning Commission would have to consider that. They might say 180 children for five days is not permitted because it is more commercial, or that a one-day event would be permitted as long as it is considered a "similar use" to that on their property.

Ms. Farmer told attendees that public work sessions of the Planning Commission are held prior to the second scheduled Planning Commission meetings of the month (4th Thursday) and they are currently discussing zoning/uses of Rural Residential. She noted the next session is scheduled for May 24 at 6:00.

There being no further comments, Vice Chair VanderWeele closed the Public Hearing and moved to Board Deliberations. As there were no further comments from Board Members, he invited a motion.

Ms. Maxwell made a motion to approve the application from Doreen Beltz to allow a Barn Camp as requested, subject to the three conditions recommended by Staff and the additional condition that the traffic pattern be changed, reversing the one-way traffic from left to right. Ms. Farmer supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARING: CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS**

- a. **SECTION 66.200: DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PARCELS, LOTS AND BUILDING SITES**
- b. **SECTION 68.300: OFF-STREET PARKING AND SITE CIRCULATION REQUIREMENTS**

Vice Chair VanderWeele asked Ms. Johnston to review this item for the Board.

**Area Requirements**

Ms. Johnston said on March 22, 2018, the Planning Commission forwarded a recommendation of approval to the Township Board for the Residential Condominium Development Standards. In reviewing associated ordinances related to residential development, Staff recommended changes to the Schedule of Area, Frontage, and/or Width Requirements (Section 66.200) at the April 12<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting.

Currently, she said, Section 66.200 outlines different area requirements for one and two-family dwellings. For example, if a project has public water and sewer, a single-family dwelling requires 10,560 square feet where a two-family dwelling requires 13,200 square feet. In a platted subdivision or site condominium, this ordinance actually incentivizes two-family dwellings. The density for single-family would equate to 4.12 dwelling units per acre while the density for two-family increases to 6.60 dwelling units per acre.

Density is determined by dividing the total required square footage per lot into an acre (43,560 square feet). The increase seen for two-family is that on every 13,200 square foot lot or building site, two dwelling units are permitted.

Staff recommended changing the table from “*Area Requirements*” to “*Area Requirements per Dwelling Unit*.” This would stipulate that each individual residential unit have the same amount of area, regardless of the number of units planned for the parcel or lot. A two-unit with public water and sewer would be required to have a lot that is 21,120 square feet. This recommended change aligns with the densities allowed in the Residential Condominium Development Standards Ordinance and ensures a level playing field for density regardless of the number of attached or detached units planned.

**Circulation Aisle Widths**

Ms. Johnston explained in December of 2017, the Planning Commission forwarded amendments to the Township Board for changes to the Off-Street Parking Ordinance. The amendments primarily centered on ensuring ADA compliance for accessible spaces and regulating circulation aisles. As part of the discussion with the Township Board, a request was forwarded back to the Planning Commission that



circulation aisle widths be reviewed. The overall intent of the request was to determine if the Township could allow for reduced widths and therefore reduced asphalt on site.

She said there are several types of circulation aisles that could be found on a non-residential site, such as within parking lots, dedicated fire lanes, to get to loading/unloading facilities, to ensure access around the entirety of the building, etc. The recently approved changes to the Off-Street Parking Ordinance would require all circulation aisles be 24-feet in width for two-way traffic and 20-feet in width for one-way traffic.

Over the last three months, the Planning Commission reviewed research from other communities and amended Ordinance language provided by staff. Based on the Planning Commission discussions during this time period, these recommended amendments to Section 68.300.C: Circulation Aisle Width, were:

- C. *Circulation Aisle Width.* Aisles for the general vehicular circulation of the public shall be 24 feet wide for two-way traffic and 20 feet wide for one-way traffic. The reviewing body may grant, upon request, reduced widths for circulation aisles. The reviewing body will consider the following before making a determination if drive aisles may be reduced:
1. overall circulation of the site,
  2. access to public rights-of-way,
  3. public safety,
  4. volume of traffic,
  5. visibility,
  6. location of nonmotorized traffic,
  7. grade or slope of the drive,
  8. other site considerations which may impact general circulation.

Ms. Johnston endorsed a recommendation of approval by the Planning Commission be forwarded to the Township Board.

Vice Chair VanderWeele determined there was neither public comment, nor any Board discussion on this item and asked for a motion.

Mr. Chambers made a motion to approve the changes to 66.200 and 68.300 as proposed and recommend them to the Township Board for approval. Ms. Maxwell supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. **Agritourism** (discussion continued from April 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting)

Given that two Planning Commission Members were absent, it was the consensus of the Board to table this discussion until the May 24 work session.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Johnston said she had flyers for any Board Members who might be interested in attending a free Planning Commissioner's ToolKit training workshop on Thursday, June 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Ms. Farmer said she is planning to compile educational accomplishments of Boards and Staff for inclusion in the Township Newsletter.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further comments, Vice Chairperson VanderWeele asked for a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Farmer made a motion to adjourn the Meeting of the Planning Commission. Ms. Maxwell supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Planning Commission meeting adjourned at approximately 7:52 p.m.

Minutes prepared:  
May 12, 2018

Minutes approved:  
May 24, 2018