

Empire Township Planning Commission, Meeting Minutes

November 2, 2021

The Empire Township Planning Commission was called to order by Tom Kaldunski at 8:00 PM.

Present were: Tom Kaldunski, Trent Larson, Jared Sachs, Doug Clark, Jane Kansier, Brad Fisher, Charles Seipel-Teng, and liaison Jamie Elvestad. Commission member Bob Bjerke was absent.

John Anderson with the Winkler Land Company presented plans for the proposed subdivision of the Poplar Grove Farms property. It is proposed that the property will be developed in two phases, with phase one taking place on the 40 acres south of 197th Street and phase two on the 40 acres north of 197th Street. Phase one is proposed to contain 28 larger, single-family lots with 100' street frontage and with park dedication space and trail connections in the flood plain area on the south half of the property.

Phase two is proposed to contain smaller lots with 65' street frontage as well as 45 parcels for a mix of detached townhomes. This phase would need to be developed as a PUD. Mr. Anderson also presented a map showing how future development to the west would tie into the Townships trail system.

Phase two includes an area for a stormwater pond in the northeast corner of the property and it is anticipated that improvements will be made to the drainage ditch that flows through a portion of the northeast portion of the property.

It was recommended that the portion of Biscayne Ave., directly to the east of phase two, be paved as part of the development. Plans for the development need to include enough right of way on Biscayne Ave. to serve as a future County collector road. Mr. Johnson indicated that plans call for a 75' ROW on the developments side, so total ROW will be 150'.

Water is stubbed into the proposed development. Sewer can be stubbed in. A potential for a sewer connect to the Met Council should be checked into.

Recommendations on the proposed development from the Planning Commission included the following:

The developer consider adding an additional street access for phase two that would access Biscayne Ave., south of the bridge in order to provide an additional outlet for traffic and emergency vehicles.

The developer consider increasing the size of the 65' frontage lots in phase two.

The development require a final grading plan.

Ample street lighting must be provided.

Sidewalks should be placed on one side of the through streets in the development.

Paul Schlafman at 3680 194th Street presented a proposed plan to subdivide a larger parcel that he owns, located behind his home. The parcel is in the MXR District. Mr. Schlafman would like to split the parcel in two and incorporate the east portion of the parcel into his home parcel. The west parcel would be sold off to someone that might be interested in placing a home on the property.

The Planning Commission recommended that the west portion of the parcel eventually be home to multiple homes. The new parcel would need street access with at least 100' of frontage. There were concerns with the low-lying nature of the parcel and access to water and sewer. A lift station would likely be needed to serve the parcel. Because of the infrastructure needs in developing the parcel, it was recommended that subdivision not occur unless it becomes a part of a larger development, such as the Fairhill development to the north or a future development on the Independent Black Dirt parcel to the south.

The property owners at 20070 Chippendale Ave. were present to discuss a letter that they received regarding a new detached accessory structure on their property. The property owners indicated that the structure serves as a playhouse. They also believe that the structure meets the required setbacks. The Planning Commission determined that this structure falls under the definition of detached accessory structure according to the Zoning Ordinance. The property owners indicated that one of the accessory structures on their property will be coming down as it is no longer structurally sound. This would bring the total number of accessory structures from three to two. The Planning Commission concluded that if the third detached accessory structure is removed from the property, the property will be in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance. It was noted that this structure will need to be removed from the property by June 1, 2022.

The property owners at 21690 Blaine Ave. were present to indicate that there are no longer commercial AC units being stored outdoors on the property. The storage shed on the property is being used for storage and not for business activities. The Planning Commission concluded that the property is now in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

It was reported that the front parking lot for the automobile dealership at 20485 Chippendale Ave. has been paved, per the conditions of their Interim Use Permit.

The Planning Commission reviewed information provided in an article regarding PFAS in land based bio-solid applications.

The Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.