

WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION
Planning Workshop – January 23, 2007 @ 7:30 p.m.

Vice Chair Jill Kemp called the workshop to order at 7:30 p.m. Roll call indicated four members of the Zoning Commission were present: Wayne Brezina, Jill Kemp, James Likley, and Scott Anderson. Chairman Russ Zupanic was unable to attend and John Miller (alternate) was out of the country on business.

Also present were: Mark Majewski, AICP (Northstar Planning, Cleveland Heights), Jeff Plumer, Tim Kratzer, Gary Harris, Kelly Gregoire, Ron Oiler, Carolyn and Tim Sims (late) and Chief Assistant Prosecutor William L. Thorne (arrived at 8:33 p.m.).

Note: The Westfield Township map was on display on the easel. A copy of the State's drawing of the revamping of the I-71/I-76/SR224 intersection was provided to the Zoning Commission members and Mark Majewski.

The following is a summary of tonight's workshop.

Vice Chair Kemp stated that the purpose of this workshop is to work on the zoning districts along Greenwich/Lake Road. Planner Mark Majewski, who worked with us a few years ago in changing our zoning code, was asked to be present to provide input and suggestions for future development planning for the township. We also asked our legal counsel to be present.

The Chair asked landowner Tim Kratzer to present his suggested proposal.

Kratzer – From two properties past the bridge (under I-71) on Greenwich Road to Hulbert, there is approximately 120 acres in the Kratzer family name and I would like a zoning change. The front 150' of my property is zoned LC and the back is zoned RR. I would like to put in a large retail development (example: Lowe's, Target, Giant Eagle, Meijer, Bass Pro Shop, Cabala's, etc.) along with possibly restaurants and/or a hotel. It would take \$150 million to build. My property runs parallel to Chippewa Ditch.

Chair – Our first big objection to putting this type of retail development in LC or HC was sexually oriented businesses and we thought perhaps a complete new district should be written in our zoning code. We understand that all ramps will be redone at the interchange (I-71/I-76/SR224).

Upon questioning by Majewski and various Zoning Commission members, additional information provided by Kratzer included:

- access would be to turn on I-76 coming North or get off the Route 3 exit
- his planners have been talking with the county sewer and water departments
- highway engineer said a traffic study would be necessary
- the State is working on Lake Road improvement simultaneously with the interchange
- county engineer would be working on how any further road improvements would get done
- Greenwich Road might need to be widened to 3-4 lanes
- the preliminary drawing had a double entrance between his house and his daughter's house and another double entrance down toward Hulbert Road

- the county controls Westfield Center water and Jim Troike said water should be available
- Troike wants to meet with him and the Pride One/Omni (old truck stop) people and possibly the resources could be combined
- development might include three big box stores – 1 ½ million of retail space – some restaurants and some smaller stores in between
- the water main is 12” by the township hall and Speedway is 12”; the county puts down the pipe and then it is taxed.

Kratzer provided to the zoning commission members copies of Medina, Lodi and Seville commercial/retail zoning codes and indicated they had all zoned to accommodate large grocery stores and large retail stores. Majewski indicated there are a lot of examples that could be adapted for use and that HC or LC might not be the right way but it should not be too difficult to devise a new type of zoning district.

Planner Majewski’s comments and concerns during the discussion included:

- basically the intersection stays self-contained
- traffic issues are going to be important
- improvements on Lake and Greenwich Roads may need to be done (important to benefit the township, the county and the people who want to find the potential retail stores)
- typical development would probably plan for two entrances
- buffering may be important where it joins RR
- signage may be important
- the intersection doesn’t seem to be a major impact - it’s kind of the community’s nest egg and if the community is helped as far as tax rates, it’s another way to look at it
- resident input will be a big thing but the Zoning Commission needs to make decisions on land use
- usually commercial development is not a big consumer of water/sewer; water is important but not a huge problem.

Other comments/concerns expressed by individual Zoning Commission members during discussion included:

- if sewer is extended, will there be available taps to others along Greenwich Road
- the size of pipe and volume of water and who pays for the costs
- the benefits of a project of this nature need to be spelled out to the public
- what about future use on the South side of Greenwich Road
- this area is adjacent to and near the highways so it would be contained
- concern about possible annexation
- concern about emergency services
- water and sewer would not be coming from Seville but probably from the county and Westfield Center
- whether the cost of a planner could be shared.

Upon discussion about how to get feedback from the public, a suggestion was made for doing a resident survey listing 10-12 questions. Majewski cautioned about a survey with a scorecard for questions as it would box the zoning commission in to any potential routes they may wish to take. Majewski further stated that a public meeting for input was important but the Zoning Commission has the responsibility as decision makers because

there would be other factors (other than public input) that the Commission would need to consider.

Majewski suggested the next step could be an application for amendment to zoning code – maybe a rough sketch to give a sense of how many buildings and the parking required. He also suggested a planning meeting. You also need to talk to legal counsel.

Majewski further indicated that as a point of information concerning what you are looking at he would need to give a different proposal than the previous one – it might have a per meeting expense – he will do a revised proposal and if you proceed with this project, it may change those prior proposals.

Jeff Plumer asked the Zoning Commission to think about this process and set some goals – keep moving forward as prudently as possible.

Assistant Prosecutor Thorne arrived he thought at 7:33 p.m. but apparently his watch had stopped and he apologized.

Chair – We have come to a tentative conclusion that we want an application from Kratzer and then a public meeting and then coming up with a new zoning district.

After reviewing the evening's discussion up to the time of his arrival, Thorne stated that the Zoning Commission should proceed just like any normal applicant is making a suggestion – it can proceed with new language on its own or require a formal application. The Zoning Commission on its own can come up with a new district and appropriate language. Once you have a formal application there's a strict time frame that needs to be followed. If you want to have an informal meeting before an application is filed, you can do that as well.

Upon further discussion it was decided that the Zoning Commission will hold its next regular meeting on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. where an informal presentation could be made on behalf of the landowner and the Zoning Commission will consider public input as to this proposed development. An additional meeting for public input will be held on Tuesday, February 27, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. Landowner Kratzer will contact his planners to see if they are available to do presentations on February 13th and 27th and advise the secretary. If they are available, the secretary will draft a public input announcement to be put in The Gazette and The Trading Post for review by the Zoning Commission members and A.P. Thorne prior to placing it in the papers.

Announcements

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, February 13, 2007, at 7:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Upon motion by Jill Kemp, duly seconded by Wayne Brezina, and unanimously passed, the workshop adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Marlene L. Oiler, Certified PP, PLS
Westfield Township Zoning Commission Secretary

(Minutes approved 3/13/07)