

**Ganges Township Planning Commission**  
**Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes for October 22nd, 2024**  
**Ganges Township Hall**  
**119th Avenue and 64th Street**  
**Fennville MI, Allegan County**

**I.Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Roll Call: Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** – Present

Vice Chair: Dale **Pierson** – Present

Secretary: Phil **Badra** – Present

Commissioner: Edward **Gregory** – Present

Commission Trustee: Dick **Hutchins** – Present

Zoning Administrator: Tasha **Smalley** – Present

Recording Secretary: Jennifer **Goodrich** – Present

**II.Additions to the Agenda and adoption**

**DeZwaan** made a motion to put New Business before Old Business and add a discussion regarding a conflict of interest with **Gregory** and the **Sauck** Private Road approval. **Pierson** seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**III.General Public Comment –**

Sue **Poolman** 7021 114<sup>th</sup> Ave. asked if the wetlands had been taken into consideration on the Private Road Site Plan. **Badra** responded that it was part of their review requirements.

**Poolman** asked who to report to when there is construction being done without a permit placard being posted. **Smalley** responded that the Building Department (MTS) would be the one to contact.

**IV.Correspondence and upcoming Seminars**

**DeZwaan** has the Quarterly **Ciesla** Report. **DeZwaan** also has an e-mail from **Gregory** to the PC regarding the Conflict of Interest, with replies; and an Agent Authorization letter from **Sauck** to authorize Jeremy **Lund** to represent her.

**V.Public Hearing – None**

## **VI.Approval of Prior Minutes**

**Gregory** made a motion to approve the September 24th, 2024 Special Monthly Meeting minutes.

**Hutchins** seconded the motion. Motion passed.

## **VII. New business –**

**Conflict of Interest:** **Gregory** is the former owner of the property at 1367 Blue Star Highway. He sold the property to Emily **Sauck** but has no financial interest in how the property is being developed. It was decided that “for appearances” **Gregory** should recuse himself. **DeZwaan** did point out that if the decision was tied the Site Plan approval will fail.

1) Site Plan: Jon **Kramer**, 1937 Blue Star Highway, Parcel #07-016-012-00: Contractor’s office, and storage yard.

**Kramer** and Oliver **Winter**, the Project Engineer for Mitten State Engineering presented their Site Plan. The PC noted that the fuel storage tanks and the power lines were not on the plan. **Kramer** stated that he did not intend to wire the building. **Badra** asked how he would open the O.H. Door. **Kramer** stated that he would just lift it up manually. **Smalley** recommended adding the future proposed location of Power lines so **Kramer** would not have to come back for another approval if/when it was installed. **Kramer** agreed.

The PC asked if the property could be split so that the Dwelling would be separate from the commercial use. **Smalley** stated that it could. The PC asked if there would be a bathroom in the new building or the other pole barn. **Kramer** responded that the only bathroom is in the residence. **Badra** stated that the Allegan County Health Dept. would have to approve the existing Septic system for Commercial Use.

**Pierson** asked if there were any Wetlands on the property. **Kramer** stated that there are not. **Badra** commented that the commercial uses cannot be on the Res/AG part of the Property and asked **Smalley** if the new building was in the 500’ of Commercial Overlay. **Smalley** responded that it was.

**Pierson** asked if there would be any oil changes or equipment maintenance being done in the Storage Buildings. **Kramer** responded that it would be very minimal and only for his personal equipment. **DeZwaan** asked if anything hazardous would be being stored in the former Dwelling. **Kramer** stated that there would not be.

**Smalley** asked if customers will be coming to the office. **Kramer** responded that they do not regularly come to this property. **Hutchins** thinks it is a good plan and that it will look much better once all of the equipment is inside of a building.

**Gregory** made a motion to approve the Special Land Use Application as it complies with Article 3 Section 3.02 Ground Water Protection, Article 12 Section 12.03C Site Plan Requirements, and the Master Plan; with the following conditions. **Pierson** seconded the motion. Motion passed with a roll call vote. The contractor's office, storage yard, and change of use requests were approved by a vote of 5 to 0 with the following conditions:

1. The use of the dwelling on the property shall be changed to a storage building with the removal of the kitchen and bedrooms.
2. Two revised Site Plans showing the locations of the fuel storage tanks and the power lines to the new storage building shall be brought to the Planning Commission meeting October 29, 2024 for signatures.
3. The use of the pole barn constructed in 2013 shall be changed from a residential pole barn to commercial storage.
4. The applicant agrees that commercial use on the property is limited to the Commercial District which extends 500 feet from the center of 68<sup>th</sup> St (Blue Star Hwy).
5. The Allegan County Health Department is to determine if the well and septic are adequate for the commercial uses on the property. A letter from the Health Department shall be forwarded to the Zoning Administrator.

2) Site Plan: Emily **Sauck** - Forty Acres Estate, LLC, 1367 Blue Star Highway, Parcel # 07-032-025-03 and Parcel # 07-032-025-04: Private Road (PR) - Christopher Court

**Gregory** recused himself and left the room

Jeremy **Lund** presented the Private Road Construction Application and Site Plan. **Sauck** is proposing 6 lots to be served by the PR. The existing house has been sold to Duane **Brown** and has been moved to allow for the construction of the PR. A piece of property in Ganges Twp. has been purchased to relocate the home to.

The construction of the PR is much further along than expected and the PC chastised **Lund** for not waiting for their approval before starting construction. **Lund** explained that he was out of town when **Lubbers** was asked to put in a driveway to move the original house out of the way, towards the back of the property. **Lund** believes there may have been some miscommunication as to the extent of what a "driveway" would be vs starting the PR, and apologized.

**DeZwaan** thinks the PR is encroaching on the neighbors and that the Stop sign should not be in the ROW. **Lund** stated that the property lines are marked and that the PR is in the correct location. **Lund** explained the road commission required a 30' apron and curbs at the entrance to the PR, which is located

in their ROW; beyond that point the PR doesn't encroach on the setback requirements. **Lund** went on to say that the road commission had told him where to place the stop sign and he had done as requested. **DeZwaan** asked if the Fire Department had approved the turn around and **Lund** replied that they had.

**DeZwaan** questioned if all of the wetland area on the property had been delineated. **Lund** responded that **Sauck** had paid Exxel Engineering to provide all of the required information on the Site Plan. The PC is concerned that lot 6 doesn't show any wetlands but the National Wetlands Inventory does. **Pierson** questioned when the tree removal for the PR installation had occurred. **Pierson** stated that tree removal can only occur between October 1<sup>st</sup> and April 15<sup>th</sup> to protect the Northern Long Eared Bat population. **Lund** responded that he was unsure of the timeframe but that they had made a conscious effort not to remove any larger viable trees.

The PC members were upset that the PR is essentially already installed and that parcels are being advertised for sale, without their final approval. **Smalley** commented that an Engineer will have to provide an as built drawing that will confirm that it was constructed properly and in the correct location. **DeZwaan** stated that the road maintenance agreement will have to be reviewed by the Twp. attorney, at the applicants cost. **Badra** reminded **Lund** that the agreement also needs notarized signatures and that all of the lots will need ingress & egress from the PR.

**DeZwaan** made a motion to approve the Private Road Application Site Plan as it complies with Article 3 Section 3.21 Private Roads requirements, Article 12 Section 12.03C Site Plan Requirements, and the Master Plan; with the following conditions. **Badra** seconded the motion. Motion passed with a roll call vote. The Private road request for Christopher Court was approved by a vote of 4 to 0 with the following conditions;

1. Access to the six lots must be from Christopher Court.
2. Ganges Township Fire Chief must clarify if his approval requires a paved cul-de-sac.
3. Allegan County Road Commission's approval is needed to place the stop sign in the road right of way.
4. Two revised Site Plans showing the locations of all wetlands on all lots and the approximate locations of the wells and septic systems on each lot. The revised Site Plans are to be brought to the October 29, 2024 Planning Commission meeting for signatures.
5. Construction of the partially built private road cannot be resumed until the final Site Plan is approved.
6. The applicant acknowledges that all lots may not be buildable.
7. The Private Road Maintenance and Access Easements Agreement must be reviewed by the

Township attorney at the applicant's expense. After the attorney's approval it is to be recorded with the Allegan County Register of Deeds. Notarized signatures of all owners of the lots are to be part of the document.

**Smalley** asked the applicants if both of the Site Plans could be revised and submitted before the October 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Meeting. Both parties stated that they would do their best. **Brown** asked if he can still move the house. **Smalley** stated that the demo plan would need to be amended and a permit would be required to install the building on the other property.

## **VII. Old Business**

Zoning Ordinance discussion will be postponed till next week's special meeting.

## **IX. Administrative Updates**

a. Township Board - None

b. Zoning Board of Appeals – **Pierson** reported on the court decision regarding the Zaleski property lot coverage case.

c. Zoning Administrator – **Smalley** stated that she has 2 more Site Plan approvals for the next meeting. 1- campground across from Camp-it & 2- Renewing the expired Cottage Home Site Plan Approval

## **X. Future Meeting Dates** – Special Meeting Oct 29<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm & Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>

## **XI. General Public Comments**

Rob **DeZwaan** – 2259 68<sup>th</sup> St. remarked that he had repeatedly heard “40 Acres” in the **Sauck** discussion and asked how many acres the 1367 Blue Star Highway property was. It was explained that it was just the LLC name and that the property is approximately 20 Acres.

Sue **Poolman** – 7021 114<sup>th</sup> Ave. asked how anyone would know about the Northern Long Eared Bat requirements. **Pierson** stated that he had found it online.

Kerry **Curtis** – 2266 lakeshore Dr. asked if all construction Site Plans are approved by the PC. **Smalley** answered that only Commercial projects are approved by the PC, not residential ones.

Sue **Poolman** – 7021 114<sup>th</sup> Ave. asked if there any fines for work started without permits. **Smalley** explained that the Building Dept. can double fee any projects started without permits and that the Twp. could also impose additional fees if they are adopted into their fee schedule.

**Adjournment –**

**Hutchins** made a motion to adjourn the meeting, **DeZwaan** seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Jennifer Goodrich

Ganges Township Recording Secretary