

**Orange Township
Planning Commission Meeting**

**Berlin/Orange Fire Department Bldg
265 W David Hwy
Ionia MI**

January 15, 2008 - 7:00 p.m.

Approved 4-15-08

Chairman Dan Reeder called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Don Nash, Dan Reeder, Tom Green, Wayne DePotty, Brian Stuart, and Zoning Administrator, Jeanne Vandersloot.

Minutes Approval: Chairman Reeder asked Stuart to read the minutes aloud. DePotty motioned, Nash seconded, to approve the October 16, 2007 minutes as presented. Carried 5-0.

Agenda Approval: Stuart motioned, DePotty seconded, to accept the agenda and add Larry Listerman for an update on the Menards parking lot cross connection and third to discuss the 425 agreement. Carried 5-0.

Public Comment: None

Agenda Item # 1 – Elect Officers

A motion was made by Green, seconded by Nash, to keep the Chair with Dan Reeder, the Vice-Chair with Brian Stuart and the Secretary with Tom Green (same officers as before). Carried 5-0.

Agenda Item # 2 – Larry Listerman – Ionia Twp. Supervisor

Larry wanted to give the Planning Commission an update on the Menards north parking lot cross connection with the strip mall that is within Ionia Twp. He said neither party contacted him as directed by the members (in minutes). He became aware of the situation when Menards put in the driveway paving to its property line near the strip mall. He spoke with Vandersloot about it to see what Orange Twp. required. He met with John Bush out there to look at it. The curb was still in so no one could drive over it. There was dirt on the strip mall property side. He thought that some gravel could be put down, the curb removed, and people could drive through between the properties. They have an ordinance requiring such connections. He spoke with the Card & Card owners, they were not nice to speak with and not agreeable. He then had their Twp. attorney send a letter to Card & Card telling them that they must connect and Menards does not have to take their storm water run off. He has had no response from Card & Card after the letter. He said Ionia Twp. is willing to take it further to get this done. He thinks the French drain could be partially paved over and the water could run in from other open parts. Menards offered to pave up to the strip mall parking lot if approval given. Larry noted that snow was piled in that area today and that Card & Card just don't want anyone driving through their lot, even though it would be good for everyone's business customers. The members thanked Larry for the update.

Agenda Item # 3 – Proposed 425 Agreement

Nash gave an update on the discussions going on between the Township, the City, County and Sparrow Hospital representatives. Sparrow wants to buy some of the County's land and additional neighboring land to build a new hospital on. The hospital needs water and sewer service and they say a 425 is the way to get it brought out to this property (20 acres next to and south of the airport, County owned, and about 20 more acres from the Benedict farm). He feels that such an agreement should be a vote of the residents of the Township. At the October Board meeting, people from Sparrow, City mayor, County Commissioners and others made a presentation to the Orange Board. Orange is a partner in the sewer so we should be able to bring that out, but water is a problem. A water line is across the street and should be able to be brought across with agreements. An attorney was hired to write the 425

agreement. Nash said that Orange/Berlin would do the fire protection and would get some fees back for that. Ann Moon said that Orange would get mills but the hospital is non-profit and no taxes equal no mills. The animal shelter is being changed to be off David Hwy by Griswold's. The animal shelter committee had come previously to the Township and everyone wanted it off M-66, not on David. Reeder said that of all the people he has spoken with, none are in favor of the 425. The rest of the members and audience agreed (Mrs. Nash, Mrs. Reeder, Mike and Ann Moon). The people voted zoning in and this should also be voted on by the residents. Nash said there is a public hearing on it January 28 at the church on Kelsey/David.

Reeder said the Board should have asked the Planning Commission's opinion about it. DePotty said he is usually opposed to 425's, but in this case, if that method is the only way for water and sewer to be available and there are favorable exchanges, then it may be a good idea. The airport owns about 200 acres. Listerman noted that Ionia Township has quite a few 425 agreements and they are very satisfied with them and no problems. Orange is using the same attorney as theirs to write the agreement and he really knows his business. Ionia requires any 425 applicants to pay all fees, legal and otherwise so the Township does not have to pay anything. He questions the need for the new hospital due to so much work having been done updating the current one. The hospital will own the land and will probably lease future doctor office buildings so no mills will be generated to go to Orange Twp.

There were some questions on how many public hearings there would be and the number of public hearing notices and how many other newspapers. Vandersloot suggested a call to the Clerk for those questions. Reeder presented a document he typed up opposing the 425 agreement from the Planning Commission. He invited any members that agreed with him to sign it and it would be taken to the Board. Stuart motioned, Green seconded, to support opposition and sign the resolution. A roll call vote was taken. All 5 Planning Commission members voted yes to sign it and send it to the Board.

More discussion took place on how to get it into the newspaper – either by letter to editor or reporter for story. Mike and Ann Moon noted that what they read in the newspaper was the minutes with the public hearing as part of the minutes and the Grand Rapids Press had a small article about the animal shelter proposed for David Hwy. Nash also noted that Judy Emmons is a great representative and is looking into whether some of the fair ground's property could be used for the new shelter. There was a story he read about an animal shelter being located at a prison and the prisoners help with the care and they play and interact with the animals – a success story for everyone. There were questions on the legal noticing requirements for a 425 public hearing. Some were going to look into it with MTA or other references. Stuart questioned the population restrictions around an airport and could a hospital be that close by; he hoped Sparrow looked into that with the airport board.

Adjournment

Green motioned, Stuart seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm. Motion carried 5-0.

Next meeting: The next scheduled meeting is at 7:00 pm, April 15, 2008, at the Fire Dept. Bldg.

Submitted by Jeanne Vandersloot, Recorder