

MINUTES

**THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
THOMAS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
8215 SHIELDS DRIVE, SAGINAW, MICHIGAN
WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2023, 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: K. Beam, D. Sommers, D. Bird, R. Iamurri, and P. Lynch
Absent: S. Yockey, J. Curry
Others Present: D. Sika, Community Development Director
R. Hopper, DPW Director
J. Corriveau, Parks Director
A. Bicigo, Code Enforcement Officer/Planning Assistant
11 Interested Parties

Iamurri called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Lynch, supported by Bird to approve the agenda as presented.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Sommers, supported by Lynch to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2023 meeting.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Presentations

A. Project Update – DPW Sanitary Sewer Improvements

DPW Director Rick Hopper updated the Planning Commission on the progress being made to upgrade to the sewer main from Hemlock Semi-Conductor through Thomas Township to Saginaw Township. He also gave an update on improvements being made to the pump station near State St. Questions were asked and answered.

B. Site Plan Review – Home Depot Rental Parking

Community Development Director Dan Sika stated that Home Depot will be converting 18 existing parking spaces to reserved parking for up to six box trucks and rental equipment on trailers. Even with this conversion, they still have far more parking than is required by the township for a business of their size.

Motion by Lynch, supported by Bird to approve the site plan as presented.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

C. Site Plan Review – J&S Mid Michigan Dog Kennel

Sharon Maher of J&S Mid Michigan explained that they will be converting the warehouse located behind Darcey’s Furniture at 7916 Gratiot for a dog kennel and training facility called Paws and Beyond. Maher stated that they will be using soundproofing insulation and foam to ensure there are no noise complaints related to barking dogs. Sika stated that the applicant met with the Thomas Township Police Chief to discuss his concerns related to the noise ordinance, and he is satisfied with their noise control plan. lamurri asked if the training would be specific to police dogs, or any dogs in general. Maher stated it will open to all dogs, it will not a police training facility. Maher also stated when asked, that only one or two dogs will be outside at a time one-on-one with a handler to relieve themselves. Dogs will be on a leash at all times outside of the building. Training classes of 4-6 people and their dogs will take place from 6-8 pm. The outdoor area is fenced and gated, and will be closed off if any dogs are taken outside. The existing gate will be repositioned to allow a 22’ drive for two-way traffic. Debra Murphy, Konnie Hinton, BJ Roach, Gary Ratti, and Jody Wilk all spoke in support of the applicant.

Contingencies:

- Expand the current driveway on the east side of the building to 22’ to allow two-way traffic.
- Include one handicap parking space next to the building on the east side near the kennel door on cement or asphalt, not gravel.
- Dogs outside must be leashed and taken outside on a one-on-one basis.

Motion by Lynch, supported by Sommers to approve the site plan with contingencies.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

D. Site Plan Review – Thomas Township Nature Center Storage Barn

Parks Director John Corriveau presented a site plan for a storage barn for the Thomas Township Nature Center. The maintenance equipment for the nature center is currently stored off-site, and has to be transported back and forth. The proposed barn will either be built on existing township property, or on the property behind the Wash World Car Wash. Corriveau stated that the Township is currently attempting to purchase the additional property, but at some point, in the past, the deed was not certified after it was sold. If they are not able to clear up the deed issues, the barn will go on the existing township property. It will be a 30’x40’ storage barn with a mezzanine. The building will have flood gates installed, as it is in the flood plain. Sika stated that there has already been an EGLE permit obtained to allow the building to be constructed in the flood plain.

Motion by Lynch, supported by Sommers to approve the site plan as presented.

VOTE 5 YEAS 0 NAYS 2 ABSENT MOTION CARRIED

Adjournment:

Motion by Sommers, supported by Bird to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion carried.