

# MINUTES

**THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
THOMAS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING  
8215 SHIELDS DRIVE, SAGINAW, MICHIGAN  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024, 7:00 P.M.**

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

lamurri 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 Bird to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2024 meeting.

**VOTE      5 YEAS      0 NAYS      2 ABSENT      MOTION CARRIED**

### **Public Hearings:**

#### **A. Special Use Permit – Alexandra Gilmour: Childcare Organization (Group Childcare Home)**

lamurri opened the Public Hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Alexandra Gilmour presented her request for a Special Use Permit to operate a Childcare Organization (Group Childcare Home) for up to 12 children in her home at 7630 Laurie Ln N. Gilmour stated she currently is licensed to operate an in-home day care for up to 6 children in her home. To allow 7-12 children in the home, the state requires zoning approval in the form of a Special Use Permit before licensing is granted. The applicant has met all Special Use Permit requirements listed in the ordinance for a Childcare Organization.

lamurri opened the floor for public comment. Pete Miller of 7650 Laurie Ln N spoke in support of the applicant. The Planning Commission also received a letter of support from Sara Helsel of 7615 Laurie Ln N.

Iamurri closed the public hearing at 7:13 p.m.

Motion by Sommers, supported by Bird to grant a Special Use Permit for Alexandra Gilmour to operate a Childcare Organization for up to 12 Children in her home at 7630 Laurie Ln N.

**VOTE            5 YEAS            0 NAYS            2 ABSENT            MOTION CARRIED**

**B. Rezoning – Saginaw County Road Commission**

Iamurri opened the Public Hearing at 7:14 p.m.

Dan Armentrout of the Saginaw County Road Commission presented the request to rezone parcel number 28-12-3-20-2002-001 from A-1, Primary Agriculture and Conservation Development District, and A-2, General Farming, Open Space, Woodlot, and Conservation Development District, to M-1, Limited Manufacturing District. This would allow the current use for outdoor storage of gravel, dirt, and other materials to continue, as well as allow for the construction of a large salt and equipment storage barn on the parcel. Under the current zoning, the proposed use would not be allowed. Sika stated that if the rezoning is approved, the Township Master Plan, Future Land Use Map will need to be amended to reflect this change.

Iamurri opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public had any comment.

Iamurri closed the public hearing at 7:21 p.m.

Motion by Yockey, supported by Sommers to recommend to the Township Board to rezone parcel number 28-12-3-20-2002-001 from A-1, Primary Agriculture and Conservation Development District, and A-2, General Farming, Open Space, Woodlot, and Conservation Development District, to M-1, Limited Manufacturing District.

**VOTE            5 YEAS            0 NAYS            2 ABSENT            MOTION CARRIED**

**Presentations:**

**A. Site Plan Review – Saginaw County Road Commission Salt Barn**

Armentrout stated that the Saginaw County Road Commission would like to construct a large salt barn on parcel number 28-12-3-20-2002-001. Their current salt barn is located in Hemlock, and is not large enough or well located to meet their current needs. The Geddes Rd location would allow for the construction of a larger barn, and would also be closer to their areas they service. Armentrout explained that they plan to use the lean-to space on the north and south sides of the barn to store equipment, and they would like to have an area for dumping sediment and water from their vacuum trucks to drain into the sanitary sewer system for treatment. As the only sewer line in the area is a new force main, the Thomas Township DPW does not support a sewer connection at this location due to the potential consequences if there is a failure. The Road Commission is attempting to work with the DPW Director, Township Manager, and the Township Board to appeal this decision. If an agreement cannot be reached, the salt barn will be constructed without a dumping area and sewer connection.

Motion by Yockey, supported by Bird to approve the site plan for parcel number 28-12-3-20-2002-001 with the following contingencies.

1. Stormwater management review approval for the site.
2. DPW, Manager, and Board approval of the sewer connection.
  - a. If approval is not granted, a revised plan will be needed with the vacuum truck dump area removed.

**VOTE      5 YEAS      0 NAYS      2 ABSENT      MOTION CARRIED**

**Sign Board of Appeals:**

**A. Variance Request – JJ’s Roadhouse**

lamurri opened the public hearing at 7:40 p.m.

John Wesolek spoke on behalf of JJ’s Roadhouse to request a variance to the amount of wall signage allowed at their restaurant and bar located at 9620 Gratiot Rd. Currently, they have 25 square feet of wall signage, and under the ordinance they are allowed up to 50 square feet. The speed limit in front of the restaurant is 55 mph, and there is a traffic count of roughly 7,000 cars daily. In contrast, the main business district to the east of Meijer has a speed limit of 45 mph and sees over 30,000 cars daily. Wesolek stated they would like to place a late 1920’s vehicle on a platform on the roof of the building to draw attention to the business. An average vehicle from the time period would be roughly 40 square feet in area, if measured like a two-dimensional sign viewed from Gratiot Rd. This would mean a variance of 15 square feet would be necessary, for a total of 65 square feet of signage on the building. Sika stated that the township attorney reviewed the request and recommended that the vehicle be treated as additional wall signage.

lamurri opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public had any comment.

lamurri closed the public hearing at 7:48 p.m.

Motion by Bird, supported by Sommers to approve the variance request of 15 additional square feet of wall signs at 9620 Gratiot Rd, for a total of up to 65 square feet.

**VOTE      5 YEAS      0 NAYS      2 ABSENT      MOTION CARRIED**

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Yockey, supported by Sommers to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

**VOTE      5 YEAS      0 NAYS      2 ABSENT      MOTION CARRIED**

