

**CHOCOLAY TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Monday, February 12, 2024 Minutes**

**I. Meeting Call to Order**

Chair Ryan Soucy called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Roll Call**

Members present at roll call:

Ryan Soucy (Chair)  
Donna Mullen-Campbell (Secretary)  
Rebecca Sloan (Vice Secretary)  
Don Rhein (Board)  
Stephanie Gencheff  
Kendall Milton

Members absent at roll call:

George Meister (Vice Chair)

Staff present:

Dale Throenle (Planning Director / Zoning Administrator)

**IV. Additional Agenda Items / Approval of Agenda**

Throenle requested that Soucy consider adding an agenda item to discuss the public hearing for the agriculture districts; Soucy accepted request.

*Rhein moved, Mullen-Campbell seconded, to approve the agenda as changed.*

*Vote: Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried*

**V. Minutes**

**A. January 22, 2024 regular meeting**

*Rhein moved, Milton seconded, to approve the minutes as presented.*

*Vote: Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried*

**VI. Public Comment**

None

**VII. Presentations**

None

**VIII. Unfinished Business**

None

## **IX. New Business**

### **A. Site Plan Review SP 24-03 – Dollar General Store # 30520**

#### **Staff Introduction**

Throenle stated that the site plan review was for a new Dollar General store that will be located at the intersection of US 41 South and Silver Creek Road, and that the applicant had been at a previous meeting with a preliminary review of the proposed plan.

Throenle went over the issue brief submitted to the Planning Commission in the agenda materials. He noted that there was a discrepancy between the site plan regarding the required number of parking spaces; the size of the proposed structure was stated as 12,800 square feet, which would require 62 parking spaces as opposed to the 49 shown on the submitted plan. He added that there was nothing on the plan that indicated the floor area space on the plan.

Throenle pointed out that MDOT changed normal accommodations for the driveway to allow for access to the property and approved the driveway application.

Throenle stated staff comments regarding light spillage onto the US 41 South portion of the bike path and indicated that no lighting was shown at the rear of the structure. He added that the proposed lighting on the southwest side may cause issues with traffic turning left onto Silver Creek Road and suggested that the light be moved over the unlighted rear door at the southeast corner of the building.

#### **Commissioner Discussion**

Rusty Doss, Dollar General representative joined the discussion. Soucy asked Doss to give a review of the plan changes since the preliminary site plan review. Doss pointed out that the requested stop signs were added at the bike path crossing, and salt-resistant plantings were added. He stated that the floor space would be 8,500 square feet which would require 43 parking spaces, and that MDOT had addressed draining requirements as part of their permitting process.

Sloan asked about the beehive catch basin shown on the plan; Doss described it as a metal screen that looked similar to a beehive that covered water capture pipes, and that there would be none located on the site.

Sloan asked about the area at the north side of the building; Doss described the area as the delivery area for the building, and where the dumpster would be located.

Sloan asked about demolition of the existing building; Doss stated that he understood that conversations were in progress, but he was not sure as to whether the building would be moved.

Gencheff asked about the deliveries on the north side of the building, and if there was enough room for tractor trailers to turn around on the site; Doss stated that there would be ample room to accommodate the delivery vehicles.

Rhein asked about the light on the southwest side of the building and if the light could be moved. Doss responded that the light could be adjusted downward to keep the

light on the property.

Throenle asked about the lack of lighting above the door on the southeast corner of the building. Doss responded that the architects may have decided to leave the light off the drawings. Rhein requested lighting on that corner for basic security lighting.

Soucy asked Throenle about staff concerns regarding light spillage onto the bike path. Throenle responded that staff was pointing out that the spillage was occurring, but that it would be beneficial to the bike path users if it were retained.

Rhein stated he did not have any remaining concerns with the plan. Milton stated that he would like to see the adjacent zoning on the plan. Soucy reviewed the comments on the checklist; Throenle followed with additional comments regarding the checklist.

Throenle stated that the additional driveways were not shown as they did not affect entrance into the proposed project. Mullen-Campbell asked why two entrances were not on the site plan; Throenle stated that was an MDOT decision to remain with one driveway for entrance and exit; Doss added that MDOT prefers to keep driveways to a minimum, and that MDOT stated a driveway entrance from Silver Creek Road at the intersection was not an option.

Mullen-Campbell asked if there was a decelerate lane from the north; Throenle stated that there was not. Mullen-Campbell expressed a concern that without the lane traffic stoppage at the light may be an issue if someone wants to turn into the project driveway. Doss stated that those concerns were addressed with MDOT.

Mullen-Campbell asked about municipal water; Throenle stated that there was no municipal water available. Rhein added that the project would be attached to the Township sewer system.

Soucy stated that the Commissioners should consider conditions be added to the approval of the plan. His suggested conditions were: that the applicant submit a revised plan with the lighting shown on the southwest corner; that the site plan review checklist be reviewed and that those items be added to the plan; that floor space and non-floor space be noted on the plan; that adjoining zoning be added to the plan; that lighting be added to the rear of the building; and that the plan show the off-site wells.

### **Commissioner Decision**

*Rhein moved, Sloan seconded, that the site plan be approved with the following conditions:*

- 1) The applicant submit a revised plan with the lighting shown on the southwest corner*
- 2) The site plan review checklist be reviewed and that those items be added to the plan*
- 3) Floor space and non-floor space be noted on the plan*
- 4) Adjoining zoning be added to the plan*
- 5) Lighting be added to the rear of the building*

6) *The plan show the off-site wells.*

Vote:      Ayes: 6      Nays: 0      *Motion carried*

## **B. Joint Meeting Considerations**

### **Staff Introduction**

Throenle stated that the Commissioners should discuss the information that was shared at the previous joint meeting with the Board to set up a direction for the next portion of the year.

### **Commissioner Discussion**

Soucy stated that the state land discussion apparently was the highest priority; Rhein agreed.

Mullen-Campbell stated that housing and accessory dwelling units be another priority; Sloan agreed. Milton stated that he felt accessory dwelling units should be addressed as accessory care giving dwelling; Rhein agreed.

Sloan asked about the housing issue and what the discussion should look like. Milton stated that the square footage issue should be considered as the issue; Rhein agreed.

Gencheff asked about two distinct housing units on a property; Sloan stated that tiny homes and other variations were part of that discussion too.

Commissioners discussed the variations of the housing and where it would be located. Gencheff added that the discussion should include rental of that housing.

Throenle added that Bill DeGroot, Township manager, would be presenting findings at a future meeting concerning the housing question in the County. Throenle stated that the current concern was the existing zoning ordinance language, and that it would be a topic of discussion.

Sloan stated that she understood the basic housing concerns, but wanted to know if there were additional concerns that should be considered. Throenle responded that staff had been reviewing the possibility of adding housing types in the three local mobile home parks and in the Brookwood subdivision.

Throenle gave an overview of the growth in the Township that outlined where projects were occurring and how that related to the housing discussion. He added that Mullen-Campbell's ideas about aging in place, how things might be ten to fifteen years out in the Township, and how things are changing in areas around the Township should be part of the discussion. Gencheff asked if the commuting might change from going from the Township to coming into the Township; Throenle stated that it might be a possibility based on the potential new development.

Sloan added that solar and wind ordinances should be considered. Rhein stated that the Michigan Township Association (MTA) was looking at the issue and that it should be addressed when the MTA gets a proposed ordinance designed.

Gencheff asked about the rezoning of the State lands and if Manager DeGroot was

going to do a presentation on that topic. Throenle responded that staff were discussing the ideas internally and that the ideas would be presented at a future meeting. Soucy added that base zoning of the State lands was the primary consideration.

Soucy stated that educational topics should be part of future meetings, especially on wind and solar.

Throenle asked what the Commissioner would like to address next as far as the zoning ordinance was concerned. He added that Meister requested at a previous meeting that Meister would like to see site plan review as a topic.

Mullen-Campbell asked about recreation; Throenle stated that the recreation plan was on the list for consideration during the year.

Soucy asked about shoreline preservation; Throenle responded that staff would like to see that as a higher priority, and that DeGroot would like to present information regarding natural feature preservation at a future meeting. Throenle added that some of the discussion will be related to the new FEMA maps that will be adopted later in the year.

Rhein stated that he thought the top two priorities should be the State land use discussion and the natural features discussion.

**Commissioner Decision**

*Rhein moved, Mullen-Campbell seconded, to pursue the shoreline, the potential land use for the State lands, and housing, including accessory dwelling units, as the priorities.*

*Vote: Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried*

**C. Consideration for Moving the Public Hearing for the AG District from March to April**

**Commissioner Discussion**

Rhein stated that he was OK with the April 15 meeting date, but that he would not be available for the meeting.

Mullen-Campbell asked Throenle if he was OK with changing the date. Throenle stated it would make it easier, as there were a significant number of notifications that had to be prepared for mailing, and that language could be prepared and presented to the Commissioners prior to the public hearing meeting.

**Commissioner Decision**

*Rhein moved, Milton seconded, to rescind the motion to hold a public hearing at the March 18 meeting and to hold a public hearing at the April 15 meeting.*

*Vote: Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried*

**IX. Public Comment**

Tracy Sanyal, 4050 US 41 South property owner

Spoke on the history of purchase of the property, reasons for selling, and her desire to preserve the church structure on the property.

Commissioners discussed the historical nature of the building and potential issues for preservation of the building.

**X. Commissioner's Comments**

Milton

No comments.

Rhein

No comments.

Mullen-Campbell

Let's be visionaries and have a good 2024.

Sloan

No comments.

Gencheff

No comments.

Soucy

No comments.

**XI. Director's Report**

Planning / Zoning Administrator Throenle

He stated that he would pursue direction for future meetings with staff, with the State lands as the priority item for discussion.

**XII. Informational Items and Correspondence**

A. Township Board Minutes – 01.08.24 draft

B. Township newsletter – January 2024

C. Marquette County Planning Commission minutes – 01.10.24 draft

D. City of Marquette Planning Commission minutes 01.16.24

**XIII. Adjournment**

*Rhein moved, Sloan seconded, to adjourn the meeting.*

*Vote: Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion carried*

Soucy adjourned the meeting at 8:22 PM

Submitted by:

---

Planning Commission Secretary

Donna Mullen-Campbell