

**LOWELL CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2004**

PRESENT: Batchelor, Blough, Cornish, Sanford, Simmonds

ABSENT: None

The November 8, 2004 regular meeting of the Lowell Charter Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Cornish at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETINGS:

The minutes of the October 11, 2004 regular meeting were considered. Blough moved to approve the minutes with the following amendment. The meeting Agenda was changed to include two new items: 1) Blough hardship case, 2) agricultural labor housing. Seconded by Batchelor. All in favor and the minutes were approved as presented.

The minutes of the October 25, 2004 public hearing and special meeting were considered. Sanford moved to approve the minutes with the following amendment. For the special meeting on Michigan Dutch Barns, change the second sentence of item 6 to read, "These shall be provided within six months of approval of a Site Plan by the Planning Commission for use on adjacent property". Seconded by Batchelor. All in favor and the minutes were approved as amended.

CUMBERLAND RIDGE CONDOS:

John Scott was present to represent the property owner and developer.

Mr. Scott advised that the developer would like to construct approximately 100 units (mostly as duplex buildings) on this property. Due to the slopes and grades of this site, they are having some problem making these fit on the property.

The developer would like to explore the concept of four-plex units on this property. This would apparently help with the placement of the units. The Planning Commission discussed this issue at great length. Under the Open Space PUD Ordinance, this property may be developed using R2 Zoning rules. R2 Zoning only allows two family dwellings with sewer (duplex). The issue becomes whether the Township should change the R2 Zoning to allow four-plex as multiple family dwellings. A change to the Ordinance could effect all development in R2 Zoning, not just this project.

After discussion, the Planning Commission concluded that they were not in favor of changing the Ordinance. They also felt that with additional work between the developer and the Township planner/engineer, a design could be developed that would be agreeable to all parties.

The Planning Commission noted the planner/engineer e-mail of September 30, 2004, in which they expressed concerns over the projects grading and the need to preserve rural views.

Mr. Scott presented the Planning Commission with a rough sketch plan that showed:

- 102 units (mostly duplexes)
- Removal of the second access road onto Cumberland
- A single access (boulevard style) onto Cumberland, directly across from the Whispering Hills access onto Cumberland.

The Planning Commission Chairman will discuss this further with the Township planner to determine if this can be pursued.

PLANNING COMMISSION – RULES OF PROCEDURE:

The Planning Commission reviewed Draft #3 of the Rules of Procedure.

One correction must be made.

Section 4.4 Quorum

The first sentence currently reads:

“.....a quorum consisting of a majority of the Five Voting members of the Commission shall be present.”

The first sentence should read:

“.....a quorum consisting of a majority of the members of the Commission shall be present.”

The Planning Commission Secretary will work with the Planner to get this changed so that these Rules of Procedure can be considered for adoption.

BLOUGH HOUSING:

Martin Blough was present to ask if a mobile home can be used as an office on his property in AG-1.

The Planning Commission referred Mr. Blough to Section 4.2.4.H.a which states, “Mobile homes may be used as seasonal or accessory building to an agricultural operation from which owner derives a minimum of 50% of his/her net income, for a maximum of six months per year upon application to the Building Official.”

OTHER:

Carlton Blough asked if the Planning Commission wanted him to request approval/funds from the Township Board to pursue two items:

- ECHO Housing
- Agricultural uses

The Planning Commission was in agreement and requested that he present these items to the Township Board for their opinion.

WORKSHOP AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

It appears the Planning Commission will have a workshop meeting on November 22, 2004.

The Planning Commission will elect officers for 2005 at their regular meeting on December 13, 2004.

CONCLUSION:

Simmonds moved to adjourn. Seconded by Sanford. All in favor and the regular meeting of the Lowell Charter Township Planning Commission was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by _____, Secretary
David B. Simmonds