

FREEDOM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
December 20, 2007

Chairman Lindemann called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Members Present: DeLoof, Horning, Huehl, Lindemann and Ochs

A motion was made by DeLoof with support from Horning to open the public hearing. Motion passed.

Chairman Lindemann explained the purpose of the public hearing was to hear comments from the audience and Planning Commission members in regards to the rezoning application of tax parcel 14-22-200-033. The interested party (Jennifer Wells) would like it to be zoned Commercial instead of Residential to allow her to have a Veterinary Clinic there. Directions were given to members of the audience to stand and introduce themselves before asking questions.

Lori Fredericks asked to have explained what was going on. The answer was a request for rezoning from Residential to C-1 Commercial.

Don Pennington explained the procedures after a rezoning would happen. The first would be an application for a conditional use permit.

Jennifer Wells, the applicant, was asked to give a presentation of what she wanted to use the property for. She said she wanted to have a Veterinary hospital/clinic. They would do immunizations and outpatient care. It would be for small animals, mainly dogs and cats. It would typically not be overnight care.

There was a big discussion over Animal Hospital versus Animal Clinic and that clinic is not listed under our schedule of use regulations in the Zoning ordinance.

Susan Ochs asked about special land use – 2006 Public Act 110 which is a State Statute. She wondered if this could be used in this case. The answer was no as the Township has not got language to allow this. This is considered Contractual Zoning.

Steve Milkey said we need a small animal clinic in our Township and that he was in favor of a clinic here.

Jean Little said she also supported the clinic and felt it would be a real advantage to have it here.

Jennifer Alexa said whoever is making the decision we are opening the doors to all kinds of things for the Township.

It was noted that the Township has had very little rezoning requests.

A letter was received from Clarence Schneider and read. They are in favor of the clinic as long as additional buildings are not added and that no other commercial use would be brought by it.

A letter was received by Jeffrey Messman, DVM and read. He has no objections to the proposed zoning change. He felt it was a good fit as there is already a cluster of commercial enterprises in the area.

A motion was made by DeLoof to close the public hearing with support from Horning. Motion passed unanimously. Public hearing was closed at 8:05 p.m.

The Planning Commission continued their meeting with discussion and concerns from the Commission members. We were encouraged to look at our Growth Management Plan, all the permitted uses if the property were to be rezoned to Commercial and to consider if we wanted to have more commercial use right there.

“Once we start getting bigger we keep getting bigger.” If enough commercial zone areas in one place they could be combined into one large development. Where’s the line? It was mentioned that Communities are drawing the lines and containing the growth.

Huehl said she saw no harm in changing to Commercial zoning as it would be all together in that small area with other commercially zoned properties. A veterinary clinic would be a good idea for the Township.

Horning made a motion to table the application until our next meeting and get findings of facts from our planners formerly submitted to us ahead of our January 3, 2008 meeting. Ochs supported the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

DeLoof made a motion to adjourn the meeting with support from Horning. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Huehl, secretary