

Buchanan Township Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
July 22, 2020

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The July 22, 2020 meeting of the Buchanan Township Planning Commission (PC) was called to order by Chairman Dennis Wentworth at 6:30 pm

Members Present: Dennis Wentworth (Chair), Scott Albright, Gerald (Jerry) DiPietro, Daniel Lakin, Amber Breden, Rachel Plank, Kimberly Scarpone  
Members Absent: NONE  
Others Present: Zoning Officer Eileen Glick, Kevin Barker, April Binns, Steve Copeland

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Scott Albright moved to approve the agenda; Dennis Wentworth, seconded

**ALL APPROVED**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 26, 2020**

Scott Albright moved to approve the February 26, 2020 minutes noting the misspelling of the Fire Chief's name; Kimberly Scarpone, seconded.

**ALL APPROVED**

**BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT**

April Binns and Steve Copeland made a brief presentation regarding the building of a Wedding Barn on their recently purchased 17ac parcel of land. The barn would be approximately 6,000 square feet. Also on the property would be 2 'dressing' cabins for the use by the bridal party and grooms men. Max guests allowed would be 300. There will be an 'approved' list of vendors for food and drink. They are planning on parking area, off the road, for 140 vehicles. All festivities would end by 11PM.

They will make formal application for a Special Use permit. Eileen Glick and April Binns will look at several ordinances written by surrounding communities allowing wedding venues. The Planning Commission will formalize an ordinance for presentation and discussion and ultimate adoption, allowing for Wedding Venues. NOTE: *At that point, our parking ordinance will be refreshed.*

**CORRESPONDENCE**


See, NEW BUSINESS

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

The review and possible codification changes to off street parking was tabled. (See Public Comment)

**NEW BUSINESS**

Kevin Barker presented a letter from the City of Buchanan, Zoning Administrator proposing the rezoning of parcel 11-06-0036-0009-00-1 former Electro Voice parking lot, Carroll Street, Buchanan, MI 49107. A local charity, The Buchanan Scare Crow Ladies (BSCL) purchased the sliver of property to build a 'pole barn' like structure to store their scarecrows AND use as an office and workshop, ultimately setting up robotics training for school aged individuals. Currently the sliver of land is zone residential. They would like to rezone to Light Industrial.

Approved by ALC  


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The property will never have a home built on it and is located next to the RR tracks and has been used as part of the Electra Voice parking area. The rezoning appears to have little adverse impact on the area, goes along with the historical use of the land, and would require an update to our Master Plan (during the next update cycle). *See the attached July 16, 2020 letter to the Planning Commission for complete details.*

Mr. Barker asked to put on our August agenda for a Public Meeting to vote on changing from Residential to Light Industrial and a Map Amendment.

Dennis Wentworth moved to put the request for re-zoning of parcel 11-06-0036-0009-00-1 on the August 2020 agenda as a Public Meeting, Daniel Lakin seconded.

**Roll Call Vote**

Rachel Plant	YES	Amber Breden	YES	Dennis Wentworth	YES	
Jerry DiPietro	YES	Scott Albright	YES	Kimberly Scarpone	YES	Daniel Lakin YES

**Motion Passed**

*Next Meeting : August 26, 2020*

Meeting adjourned PM by Dennis Wentworth 7:03PM



Gerald DiPietro, Secretary  
Buchanan Township Planning Commission  
Attachment



July 16, 2020

Buchanan Township Planning Commission  
BUCHANAN TOWNSHIP  
15235 Main Street  
Buchanan, Michigan 49107

**RE: PROPOSED REZONING OF PARCEL 11-06-0036-0009-00-1 FORMER  
ELECTRO VOICE PARKING LOT: CARROLLSTREET, BUCHANAN, MI 49107**

Dear Buchanan Township Planning Commission:

I am writing this letter to you as the Zoning Administrator for the City of Buchanan in support of the proposed rezoning of the parcel described above that was developed and has been part of the Electro Voice campus for many years. The lot has not been in active use since the departure of Electro Voice, and now has been purchased by our local charity, the Buchanan Scare Crow Ladies, as the location for their office and workshop space. Although from all appearances and industrial past use, the parcel appears to be in the City, but it is in your Township and is zoned residential, which would prohibit the proposed new use.

Although rezoning requests are normally generated in response to a new proposed development, when considering a proposed rezoning the Planning Commission must consider that any use in the proposed new zone must also be considered. Below are the facts we consider when making a rezoning decision in the City: *Is the proposed location an appropriate location for all the uses which would be permitted under the requested district or zone?*

1. Would rezoning be consistent with the other zones and land uses in the area?

The subject parcel is in an area of mixed use: commercial, industrial and public uses to the north, and the location of the parcel, which is separated from the land in the Township to the south of it by the railroad tracks has been historically tied to the industrial use and zoning in the City and is served by City streets. The past use of the property has been industrial in nature – serving as overflow parking for EV. Rezoning to a light industrial classification requested would be compatible with its historical use and would be consistent with the adjacent mixed uses that characterize this area.

2. Would the rezoning be consistent with the development trend in the area?

Yes. The development trend in the area has been the development of mixed commercial and light industrial uses along South Redbud Trail and Carrol Street. Advancements in technology have made it possible for a variety of industrial uses to operate as "light" industrial uses, that is with little to no impact on adjacent properties. The proposed use by the Scarecrow Charities would be consistent with the development in the area, in the City.

3. Would other uses in the proposed zone be equally or better suited to the area than current uses?

The current use is no use – the property is vacant. Considerable work would need to be done to accommodate this parcel for residential use. The access to the parcel is from Carroll Street, in the City, which is often busy with traffic from athletic activities at Smith Park, and traffic generated by the Buchanan Meadows Assisted Living Facility. The rezoning would not adversely affect the Township in any way because its access and utilities will come from the City. The residential area in the Township will remain undisturbed by the proposed use, or any light industrial use. Uses in the light industrial zone do not generate the noise, dust, vibration, and odor generated by intense, heavy industrial uses. They typically do not generate a lot of traffic, except for that generated by the operation of the business. And they can co-exist happily with a variety of mixed uses as is evidenced by Frame Industries which co-exists with its commercial and residential neighbors on Main Street in downtown Buchanan.

4. Would the rezoning be consistent with the policies and uses proposed for that area in the master plan?

The Future Land Use Map for Buchanan Township shows the future land use of the parcel as Urban Residential, which implies a higher density use than single family residential, or even light industrial uses. However, the subject parcel is for all intents and purposes industrial, and visually connected to City properties and uses, and served by City streets. It is separated from the Township by the active Amtrak railroad tracks.

I have attached a copy of an aerial photograph from Beacon for your perusal. A picture is worth a thousand words. I would respectfully ask you to support the rezoning request for this parcel.

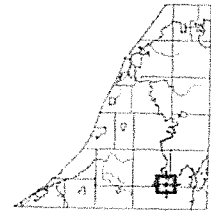
Best Regards,

Debra Davino Patzer, MA  
Certified Zoning Administrator












cc:



Overview



Legend

-  Railroads
- Roads**
-  <all other values>
-  Interstate
-  Major Arterial
-  Minor Arterial
-  Roads
-  Parcels
-  Lakes
-  Rivers
-  Parcel
-  Lake Michigan

Parcel ID	11-06-0036-0009-00-1	Alternate ID	n/a	Owner Address	TORSTEN LLC
Sec/Twp/Rng	n/a	Class	202		202 LINCOLNWAY E SUITE 100
Property Address		Acreege	1.75		MISHAWAKA IN 46544
	BUCHANAN				
District	11310				
Brief Tax Description	COM 1303.5' W OF CEN OF SEC 36 T7S R18W TH S 254' TH N68DEG W 672' TH E 624' TO BEG (Note: Not to be used on legal documents)				

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