

**MINUTES**  
**GOLDEN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING / WORK SESSION**  
**March 18,2008**

Meeting called to order at 7:35 P.M. by Chairperson Lefler.

Roll Call: Present; Lefler, Marciniak, Terryn, Whitney, Kolenda, Schulte, Fuehring, Wilson, Ferwerda. and Zoning Administrator Whelpley.

Jake reported that the purchase of Val-Du-Lakes Campground has been completed. The new owner is on the agenda for the March 25, 2008 Planning Commission meeting to request approval of her new site plan. She plans to move the entrance and implement new rules for the campground.

Ted Ferwerda presented a study of the minimum requirements for square footage, width elevation, recreational equipment, and accessory buildings requirements for comparable townships in our area. This would serve as a good reference for setting our own minimums. It was suggested that other areas, with smaller requirements be added to this information to give a better idea of what is really out there, not just the areas that have bigger requirements than we do. This way we can get a more accurate idea of what these numbers mean.

Jake presented maps showing lot sizes in various areas of the township. In the Village of Mears and in Lake Michigan Shores the lots are all 50 feet wide, with the exception of a few in the Village which are 25 feet wide. The lots around Silver Lake are 55 to 100 feet wide, and the existing PUDs are ½ acre or more. According to the existing zoning ordinance all lots must be 100 feet wide. What was legal at the time an ordinance is passed, must be allowed. As long as setbacks can be met, nonconforming lots can be built on. On nonconforming lots setbacks are currently 6 feet.

Jake also presented data on the sizes of dwellings for which permits were pulled for the last 3 years. The majority were 900 to 1200 square feet. Ted has suggested the minimum width be raised from 12 feet to 20 feet. If width was raised to 20 foot wide, the minimum of 720 square feet would not be hard to meet. Brad suggest we raise the width to 16 feet wide and add an age limit of not more than 5 years old at time of placement. This would allow for singlewide mobile homes to be placed, but they would have to be fairly new. If the minimum is raised to 20 feet, this would eliminate mobile homes, but would still allow manufactured homes. A mobile home is considered anything 12, 14, or 16 feet wide and a modular or manufactured home is anything over 16 feet wide. Helen pointed out that there are plenty of homes existing in the township of the smaller size available and these changes would merely eliminate new ones being put in.

Other issues discussed were multiple RV's on a lot and using RV's during dwelling construction. It was suggested that a permit must be attained to place multiple RV's on a lot temporarily. If RV's are not moved when the permit expires the property owner would be charged a fine.

Many people put an RV on a lot when they get a permit for building a dwelling and then don't build the house but live in the RV or a garage that was built before the house was constructed. There is a limit of 24 months for having an RV on a lot while a building is being built. Is it possible to require a permit to place an RV during construction and also to restrict the use of the RV to 12 months, with a possibility of renewal of permit? And also the ordinance possibly needs to be changed to make sure that the garage is not built and lived in, instead of the dwelling being built.

Storage of RV's, semis, snowmobiles, etc. was also addressed. The ordinance needs to be changed to eliminate storage of these things in front yards, as in many instances this creates a line of sight hazard on corners, and it is unsightly as well. The suggestion is that the items had to be stored on side or rear of lot or put into a storage unit. The storage would also have to be outside of the setback for lots.

It was asked how other areas enforce junk ordinances. Mason County has a Junk Authority to enforce junk ordinances, which are passed by each Township. There has been discussion of this for Oceana County, but many of the townships don't feel they have a problem with this and some of them have their own police force to deal with it.

The following changes were suggested to the Zoning Ordinances to address the above issues:

No change to the Minimum dwelling size.

#### Chapter 4 – 4.12 Regulations Applicable to Dwellings

2. “All dwellings shall have a minimum width across any front, side, or rear elevation of 12 feet at time of manufacture.”

To be changed to:

2. *“All dwellings shall have a minimum width across any front, side or rear elevation of 20 feet at time of manufacture. Modular or manufactured homes must be no older than 5 years at the time of placement.”*

#### Chapter 4- 4.33 Recreational Use (amended 5/8/01)

1. Recreational vehicles may be the primary use on lots in upper Silver Lake Plats #8 and #10 and the Plat of Lake Holiday Gardens; provided, however, such units must be limited to one unit per lot; must be connected to sewer and water systems approved by Dist. #10 Health Dept.; must have electrical hook-up. Zoning permits are required for new installations, improvements and additions.

2. Recreational vehicles may also be used on lots elsewhere in Golden Township for up to 24 months following issuance of a building permit for that property, during construction of a dwelling.

3. Except as provided above, recreational vehicles shall not be moved upon any property that does not have a legal primary use including but not limited to a dwelling.

To be changed to:

*Change section 4.33 title to read “Recreational Vehicle and Tent Use.”*

1. No change.

2. *Except where noted in Paragraph 1 (one) above, tents and recreational vehicles shall not be used for dwelling purposes within the Township limits, provided, however, that tents and recreational vehicles may be used for temporary dwelling purposes within campgrounds duly licensed by the State of Michigan and subject to all Ordinances, rules, laws, regulations, and requirements relating thereto.*

3. *However, a permit may be granted for one recreational vehicle for up to 12 months following the issuance of a building permit for a primary use on that property and must be connected to sewer and water systems approved by District #10 Health Department for that property.*

4. *Outside storage of property owner or tenant owned recreational equipment including or similar to campers, boats, travel trailers, or snowmobiles provided that said equipment shall be unoccupied and shall not be located in any yard setback.*

5. and 6. no change.

Chapter 4 – 4-.16 Residential Accessory Buildings and Structures

*Proposed Addition – Number 4 to this section:*

4. *Accessory building may be erected in any residential zoning district only as an accessory to an existing dwelling (which includes being built simultaneously with the construction of any permitted dwelling).*

These issues will be voted on at the March 25, 2008 regular meeting of the planning commission and if approved will be taken to the Township Board for approval.

A work session will be set up at the regular Planning Commission meeting on March 25, 2008 at the Township Hall to discuss minimum lot sizes and public roads.

There being no further business to come before the commission Lefler adjourned the meeting at 9:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Carlson, Recording Secretary