

Colfax Township and Village of Thompsonville
Community Joint Planning Commission
14714 Lincoln Avenue, Thompsonville, MI 49683

Minutes – March 18, 2022 Public Hearing

Meeting was opened at 7:00 P.M. with the pledge of allegiance
Roll call: Greg Kraft, Shelley Greene, alternate Irene Dunham Thayer, Ken Pasanski and Brent Johnson.
Eric Pettit arrived at 7:05 P.M. Shelley was absent for the first review of the application and Irene was present, therefore, Irene is the voting member.

Introduction by Chair: Greg provided a summary of the application for a Special Land Use permit for a child care center on Thompson Avenue. He explained the purpose of the hearing was to provide an opportunity to public input on the permit request and reviewed rules for commenting. Greg then asked for comments in support of the request.

Kathy Howland said there is a great need and supported it.
Kayla MacGirr spoke in favor of the request.

There being no further comments, Greg asked for comments in opposition.

Craig Meredith asked how the propane tank will be filled, commented on parking not being plowed, snow removal in front and ice on the sidewalk. Mr. Meredith also said the building is going from minimal use and now it will be five days a week.

There being no further comments, the JPC discussed findings and conclusions. Irene stated she supported the request. Ken, Brent and Eric thought it was a great idea. The propane tank is accessible in its current location on the west side of the building. Snow plowing will be the responsibility of the owner. The JPC took a question from Mr. Heffelfinger in the audience asking about the drop off zone shown on the site plan. It was explained that it is a public street, anyone can park there and snow removal is the responsibility of the Village. Most morning drop off times are expected to be between 6-8:00 A.M. which, hopefully, will not be an issue for snow removal.

The JPC finds the request meets the zoning ordinance standards and voting at this time will be for a conditional approval to satisfy the state of Michigan. A future vote for final approval to operate the business will need to take place when the state issues a license. A license is an ordinance requirement.

Motion/second by Irene/Brent to conditionally approve the special land use request. Roll call: Irene, Greg, Eric, Brent and Ken all vote aye; Shelley abstains; motion carried.

Motion/second to adjourn the public hearing by Ken/Brent at 7:22 P.M.; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Greene
Secretary

Minutes are proposed until approved at the next meeting

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Minutes – March 18, 2022 Public Hearing

Meeting was opened at 7:23 P.M. with the pledge of allegiance
Roll call: Greg Kraft, Shelley Greene, alternate Irene Dunham Thayer, Ken Pasanski and Brent Johnson.
Eric Pettit arrived at 7:05 P.M. Shelley was absent for the first review of the application and Irene was present, therefore, Irene is the voting member.

Introduction by Chair: Greg provided a summary of the application for a Special Land Use permit to construct a 10,584 square foot building for retail sales at 14940 Lincoln Avenue. He explained the purpose of the hearing was to provide an opportunity to public input on the permit request and reviewed rules for commenting. Greg asked the JPC if there were questions or comments before taking public comment.

Brent commented on having it here with one so close in Copemish which can't keep its employees and the shelves stocked and is a fire hazard. Ken echoed his same concerns plus he has received questions about lighting and spilling over outside the property. Shelley said the ordinance addresses lighting and needs to be shrouded. Consultant Scott Jozwiak said all lighting is directed downward and cuts off at the property line and would be open for an inspection upon completion. Irene felt that the store shouldn't be judged on the last two years and that all stores have been hit commented on supply chain issues. It's not an accurate view on how it's going to work. Shelley, as zoning administrator, received several calls about the Copemish store, and other stores to a lesser degree, about the scaffolding with inventory left in the aisles and frustrates customers not being able to easily and safely get through. She stated the zoning ordinance addresses health, safety and welfare through but not specifically to standards for the building inside. It was pointed out to her that OSHA oversees workplace issues and that the fire department may have a concern but we will have to wait and see. She felt with Copemish being a distance away it would be nice for people to walk to the store and that the best foot needs to be put forward to let it shine for the Village. Greg agreed the aisles need to be kept clear. Eric viewed the property from the ball field and felt the building was too big and high but the special use permit considers that. Shelley said maximum building height is 28 feet. Consultant Scott Jozwiak said this will look different and not like a typical Dollar General. It will have a wood frame with 12-13 foot side walls with a gable on the front and a 5/12 pitch roof. Mr. Jozwiak will relay back so the Thompsonville store can shine. Shelley asked for exterior renderings.

Greg asked for comments in support of the request.

- Audrey Swisher stated it would be a nice start to the Thompsonville revitalization.
- Eugene Allen stated as Village president he support and felt, regardless of the state of affairs of Copemish, we need to give ample opportunity, and any time we can bring additional business to the community it's good and so is competition. His vision is for the community to grow and prosper.
- Kathy Howland said she has pros and cons. She is very concerned about safety and that young kids walking into stock could fall, cashiers are not always at the register and could lead to a child taking a candy bar who didn't know better. She did not know where the sign will be but does not want to see the Webber sign for the ball field blocked. Mr. Jozwiak pointed out where it is planned which answered Mrs. Howland's comment.

There being no further comments, Greg asked for comments in opposition.

- Marry Heffelfinger said we are a village trying to grow but in the past she has not seen Dollar General give back. They have more of a retail corporate mentality and go into small towns and villages. She agrees with competition but as we grow she would like to see businesses that are vested in Thompsonville to make a difference for families and businesses and not with a corporate mentality. She doesn't know the wages but felt it needs to be able to help families be able to work and support Thompsonville. In the past that corporation has not taken the time to get involved with families and villages.
- Craig Meredith said he has four comments. One concerned the master plan and zoning ordinance and asked how this fits in with the Thompsonville Area Revitalization Project. Shelley said this is private property and TARP does not include it. Mr. Meredith addressed drainage from the east under the old railroad grade at CR669 and from Lindy Road. His question concerned roof runoff. Mr. Jozwiak pointed out this will have a big drainage system and is designed for a 100 year flood. Mr. Meredith asked about signage, and Mr. Jozwiak said that is a separate permit and will apply at a later date. Mr. Meredith asked about lighting in the ordinance, and without reading the specific standards Shelley responded light is not to spill past the property and need to be shrouded.
- Mary Heffelfinger said it sounded like Scott was doing a presentation and she has concerns for the Village. She was informed the presentation was made in February and he offered to quickly go through the site plan pages. He addressed the septic system, storm water drainage, signage, overnight deliveries, parking lot, setbacks, soil erosion, landscaping, sidewalks and building design. The swales have no impact on the storm

water. Eric asked if they were corporate stores or leases. They are corporate with a developer/owner and a 30-year lease with Dollar General. Shelley pointed out that the ordinance does not specify the type of business that can operate as long as it meets the standards. Ken asked Scott if the roof meets the height standard. It is at 29.2 feet and Scott said it will not be a problem.

- Kathy Howland commented on staffing. She asked about materials being removed. They will be repurposed if possible. She does want it and not see the Village's integrity taken away.

- Mary Heffelfinger is in favor of growing and using the property as a commercial space and restated her philosophy.

There being no further comments, the JPC discussed findings and conclusions. Eric commented on proximity to Copemish and concern whether number of employees will be sufficient but that is a burden for the owner. Brent hopes it works out. Ken felt the lighting was addressed. Irene stated as long as they comply with the ordinance it should be fine. Shelley said we will need to wait and see if safety issues arise and address them appropriately. Eric felt it is important not to use retail discrimination for a space. He said this doesn't affect TARP's plans as known. Roof height has been addressed.

The JPC finds that the site plan is in compliance with the joint zoning ordinance with the exception of roof height which will be adjusted to not exceed 28 feet. Sign will be by separate permit.

Motion/second by Eric/Irene to approve the application with the conditions set forth in the findings. Roll call: Greg, Eric, Irene, Brent, Ken all ayes; Shelley abstains; motion carried.

Motion/second to adjourn the public hearing by Greg/Eric at 8:26 P.M.; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Greene
Secretary

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