



**ACME TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
ACME TOWNSHIP HALL
6042 Acme Road, Williamsburg MI 49690
7:00 p.m. Monday, September 26, 2005**

Meeting called to Order at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: O. Sherberneau (Chair), B. Carstens, C. David, R. Hardin, D. Krause, D. Morgan (7:09 p.m.), J. Pulcipher, E. Takayama, M. Vermetten

Members excused: None

Staff present: S. Corpe, Office & Planning Coordinator/Recording Secretary
J. Hull, Zoning Administrator
J. Christopherson, Township Counsel
J. Iacoangeli, Consulting Planner

1. Consent Calendar:

Motion by Carstens, support by David to approve the Consent Calendar as presented, including:

Receive and File:

- a) Draft unapproved minutes of the 09/06/05 Regular Board of Trustees Meeting
- b) Planning & Zoning News
 - 1) July 2005
 - 2) August 2005

Action:

- c) Approve minutes of the 08/29/05 regular and 09/15/05 special meetings
- d) Review and approve agenda, inquiry as to conflicts of interest: Pulcipher excused himself from discussion of the agricultural language amendment to the Master Plan. Takayama excused himself from consideration of the Dental Arts project.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Limited Public Comment:

Margy Goss asked if discussion about the proposed amendment to the Acme Township Master Plan will be entertained during that agenda item, and was assured it would.

Virginia Tegel expressed concerns about the scale, layout, traffic impacts and environmental impacts of the proposed Meijer development. In light of the beginning of the future land use visioning having begun last Wednesday, she asked if it would be appropriate to table any consideration until after the visioning is complete in November.

Lewis Griffith, 5181 Lautner Road, stated an opinion that delaying consideration of the Meijer project would be inappropriate. He feels that discussion has been underway for years, so the individuals reviewing it on behalf of the township should be prepared.

3. Preliminary Hearings:

- a) Application #2004-10P by Stone World, LLC / Ed Tobey, 2773 Harris Road, Kalkaska for SUP/Site Plan Approval to construct a natural stone masonry warehouse and wholesale building with limited retail sales on vacant property located in the Bates area approximately 500' east of the M-72, C&O Railway intersection and current zoned B-4, Material Processing and Warehousing: Josh Standfest, Elmer's Construction presented the application materials. The property is 3.13 acres in size. The proposed use is a stone yard similar to the Cherryland Cut Stone business on Three Mile Road, supplying stone products to builders on a

wholesale basis. There will be 3 employees. The frontage on M-72 is very narrow; discussions with MDOT are occurring about the fact that a standard MDOT entrance requires 80' of width but only 75' are available. To construct the apron to MDOT standards, even though it would be entirely in the MDOT right-of-way, would require permission from the adjacent landowners which has yet to be obtained. There will be a small office, 7 parking spaces (1 barrier-free) and a commercial loading/unloading zone. There will be 1 large retention basin to capture all runoff sized for a 100-year storm, and soils are good for water infiltration. Water service will come from a well, and there will be a drainfield to serve the single bathroom. An outdoor raw material storage area will be surrounded by screening fence and have a gravel surface. The staff report expressed concerns about noise or dust, but this area will not be used for any stonecutting. Landscaping has been provided, both along M-72 and for the parking area. An irrigation system will be installed. The business will operate 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Vermetten asked if the proposed use is primarily a storage facility rather than a factory; Mr. Standfest confirmed. There will be no on-site product customization per the business owner. Vermetten asked about the location of an adjacent residential property, which Mr. Standfest pointed out. This house was split from the subject property in the late 70's or early 80's, and the property on which it sits is also zoned B-4. Across the railroad tracks from the property is the Railway Industrial Park, which is also zoned B-4. Immediately to the west is an engine repair shop and a vacant storage facility. Carstens asked if any animals are housed on adjacent properties; Mr. Standfest is not aware of any.

Morgan asked if deliveries might be expected as early as 7 a.m. Mr. Standfest stated that standard commercial-type deliveries that would be unloaded with a forklift will occur. The shipped product will likely be in crates or on pallets. Vermetten asked about snow storage; Mr. Standfest stated that the retention basins will serve this purpose. Krause asked if Soil Erosion Department approval will be in hand before a public hearing if set for next month; Mr. Standfest was confident it would.

Takayama noted that "limited retail sales" are contemplated. Mr. Standfest stated that there would be some sales to the general public, but most sales will be to contractors. Takayama recalls a problem with a business that located along this stretch of M-72 that may be engaged in more retail that is permitted. His concern is that the traffic and usage is appropriate for the zoning district, and that the entrance/exit to M-72, which is a high-speed road, is safe. Mr. Standfest stated that retail sales will remain limited by necessity, because the materials sold will be in a raw state and not prepared for do-it-yourselfers. Contractors will purchase the goods for custom installation in high-end homes and facilities. Vermetten echoed the concern that the nature of the business could change over time, and that if permission for limited retail sales (a term which seems somewhat ambiguous in the ordinance) is granted, the retail use might expand without additional consideration/approval. Hull pointed out language in Section 6.9.3(1) of the ordinance addressing this concern in a way that seems to say that there may be retail sales of a limited nature. Corpe recalls that previous past application has involved ensuring that a minority of the space in the structure is configured as a showroom and/or a minority of the revenue generated is from retail sources. She also observed that specific language in the SUP document can be used to effectively address the concern.

David asked for clarification about the requirements for the commercial driveway. Mr. Standfest described the standard construction of a commercial driveway acceptable to MDOT and what has to happen if portions of that driveway are in front of another property, or if neighboring owners will not give permission for such a

condition. The issue is occurring entirely within the MDOT right-of-way and is therefore under their purview; Mr. Standfest has been having difficulty making contact with them. MDOT must grant access to the property in one form or another. Hull observed that the radius point for the entrance will be 14' from the edge of the actual construction, and what the neighboring property owner's concerns about the situation might be. Corpe reported that MDOT has indicated their key concern will be access management that provides shared, safe access for these adjoining properties in the long run.

Morgan again raised the question of the limited retail sales, particularly in the event that market pressures encourage the business owner to wish to expand in this regard. This could increase traffic and noise impacts for surrounding property owners. She also asked if the owner would be able to initiate stonecutting activities in the future. Hull replied that part of the township's SUP process is that the applicant is bound by representations made by themselves or their applicants.

Motion by Krause, support by Vermetten to schedule Application #2005-10P for public hearing at the October meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Griffith expressed a concern that the way Mr. Standfest set up the easel to display his plan, the public was unable to adequately view it as they are accustomed.

4. Public Hearings:

- a) **Proposed Amendment to Acme Township Master Plan Agricultural & Rural Preservation Section: (Discussion will be limited to proposed text additions; continued discussion regarding map will occur at the October meeting):** Brian Bourdages, Farmland Preservation Specialist assisting the township with the purchase of development rights project, stated that the Commission is considering some proposed amendments to existing Master Plan text, plus addition of an agricultural preserve zone map, that will make the township eligible to apply for state and federal matching funds to leverage the preservation funds raised by township millage. Mr. Bourdages stated that the document under consideration consists of two elements: language already in the Master Plan and language pulled directly from the township's Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance adopted in 2004. The current draft includes comments from the County Planning Commission.

Public Hearing opened at 7:35 p.m.

Mrs. Goss stated that she has an extensive number of comments but isn't quite sure how to effectively convey them. She is concerned that the language is "too exclusively complimentary to farmland preservation." She pointed out the third bullet point which says that the township would suffer from the loss of farmland, noting that the concepts of business or housing could be substituted and the statement would still be true. She questioned why only one type of land use is mentioned. Mrs. Goss feels there is an element of "glowing overstatement" that is "false," and that if the language was toned down to a more realistic while still truthful level, it would be more accurate. Farmland is only 2% of the township's tax base, yet it seems to her like all other land uses are being subordinated. She believes in preserving farmland and agriculture, but in a way that maintains it in a continuous block. Vermetten observed that if one reviews the Master Plan in entirety, it speaks in glowing terms of the other uses in other places in sweeping, visionary terms. This is one small section of the Master Plan under consideration that is focused on one subject. In his opinion, the other land uses are spoken of in equally glowing terms in their respective sections. To him it is important to not view this section in a vacuum, but to remember it is part of a larger whole. Mrs. Goss stated that it appears that nearly all of page 1 is

new language.

Takayama believes, and Mr. Bourdages has stated, that most of the proposed language to be added is intended to qualify the township for state and federal funding. Without this language, the township could miss out. Mr. Bourdages stated that the language comes directly from the PDR Ordinance already “on the books” for the township. He reviewed the entire Master Plan today and concurred with Vermetten’s statements about the section under review being one part of the whole.

David stated that while this section emphasizes preservation of farmland, it does not attack the concept of commercial use. Overall, farmland tends to be threatened by commercial and residential development, but commercial and residential development is rarely threatened by farmland.

Mrs. Goss also feels that the proposed language about the value of development rights “stops short of saying what it actually means.” The purchase of development rights seems to her to be an incentive program to farmers to preserve agricultural and open space lands. It should be clear that it is an incentive to farmers who stand to gain, and that the whole community stands to gain, from purchasing development rights from farmers who truly wish to continue to farm their land. Carstens believes that the language of the last sentence of the fourth bullet point is pretty clear, as did Mr. Bourdages: the township recognizes that development rights on a piece of land have significant value distinct from the value of the land itself.

Andy Andres Sr. stated that the discussion is about farmland. What is farmland? To him, it is a place where you can plant corn, or potatoes, or a garden. The land his family farmed was very good for hay, but was poor for potatoes or corn. His grandfather’s farm was used for cherries and pears at one time, but both had to be discontinued. “Farmland” should be seen as land that a family can actually use to raise their own food, not just a fruit crop. There is a lot of good farmland in Acme Township, but some of the land such as that now owned by The Village at Grand Traverse, LLC. and Meijer is not good land. This should be taken under consideration. Vermetten noted that the two properties mentioned were taken off the proposed map after the first discussion of it in June, and that a state definition of “farmland” is being employed. Carstens also observed that the map is not under discussion this evening. David observed that the definition of farmland does not say that a particular piece of land should be able to support every crop, but if it will support any crop it should be included. Takayama agreed, observing that his family’s farmland in Illinois would grow corn but could not grow cherries. Vermetten noted that the definition of “farmland” is set forth in state statute, and that land meeting the definition can be partially but not entirely under cultivation.

Mr. Bourdages noted that the township’s PDR ordinance refers to and relies upon a farmland scoring system being established by the County Agricultural Board. This scoring system will be applied to properties applying to the program to rank their desirability for preservation based on real and measurable standards.

Ken Engle understands that the proposed language would become part of the Master Plan. He noted that the urgency present earlier in the summer to meet a deadline passed with that deadline, so there is time for some consideration. He noted that the language, if added to the Master Plan, will over time be used not only in relation to farmland preservation but in relation to zoning issues. There are public concerns in the agricultural community that it could lead to “downzoning.” There are statements in the language about potential buffer zones between differing uses, but on whom will the responsibility fall. Will a residential use have to provide a buffer from his

farmland, or will his farmland have to provide the buffer from someone else's residential use?

Tim Stoecker, attorney for The Village at Grand Traverse, LLC. and Meijer, Inc. was previously unaware that an earlier version of the agricultural preserve zone map included the properties he represents. He asked why there must be both written language and a map, and was informed that both are required by the state grant program. What happens if a farmer decides to stop farming in a way that meets the state definition of farmland, or the definition of farmland changes? Does their property automatically leave the map? If the map and the language/definition become out of sync, which is to be construed as correct for zoning decision purposes.

Carstens observed that most communities going through this process already have a future land use map; however, Acme is only just beginning to embark on creation of a future land use plan. Earlier discussions included the idea that there be disclaimers in the Master Plan additions stating that they should be used only for farmland preservation programs and not for zoning decisions in any way.

Takayama expressed appreciation for farmers who are relying on the increasing value of their land as their retirement plan. If a farmer wishes to develop his 80 acres, and it scores very highly for preservation, he hopes that the township would use every means possible to both help the farmer retire comfortably and preserve the land for the township or other farmers. But, if this mutually beneficial outcome could not be reached or the farmer does not wish to consider it, the land can still be developed as zoned. The development option does not go away.

Carstens noted that the Farmland Preservation Advisory invited Gordon Hayward, Peninsula Township's Planner, and several farmers from his community to come and speak. They all indicated that their voluntary program has been very well received.

Noelle Knopf, 5795 US 31 North, heard mention of two maps: an agricultural preservation map indicating areas that could be preserved, and a future land use map. Will the two maps overlay one another? If a farmer opts out of the program can his land still be used for something else? Sherberneau stated that the future land use map will overlay the agricultural preservation map; the agricultural preservation map will be used for a limited purpose. Vermetten stated that a future land use map is necessary for the township's zoning ordinance, and the farmland preservation issue is a part of this larger issue. Corpe raised the caution at the last meeting that years down the road the contents of the Master Plan could drive downzoning by a different set of Commissioners. This is why completing the work on both maps and integrating them is so important.

Public Hearing closed at 8:03 p.m.

Mr. Bourdages stated that the Farmland Advisory will be having another meeting with Gordon Hayward to discuss how the future land use map operates in conjunction with the agricultural preserve zone map. He will ensure that information about the meeting is widely available and invited all interested parties to attend. Corpe asked if the map would be discussed at the same meeting before returning to the Commission in October; Mr. Bourdages stated that he is working to coordinate the meeting as soon as possible.

Sherberneau directed the Commission through review of the proposed language; discussed changes are reflected in the text which is included and incorporated by reference. Final adoption of the text was left to occur simultaneously with that of the

proposed agricultural preserve zone map.

- b) **Application #2005-9P by Dental Arts/Dale Hunter, 8456 Elk Lake Road, Williamsburg MI, for SUP/Site Plan Approval for conversion of a single-family residence at 3635 Kirkland Court to a dental laboratory, said property being currently zoned B-1S, Business Shoreline District:** Mr. Josh Standfest of Elmers Construction was again representing the application. He summarized the location, zoning and current use of the subject property. There will be 3 full-time and 1 part-time employee in an office that supplies dental appliances and molds to local dental offices. By law, this business may not accept walk-in patients, but must accept all orders through and return all orders to a dental office. Because the property abuts a residential use an enhanced landscaping buffer is required by ordinance; however, in this situation the residential and proposed business uses are separated by a 100' wide railroad right-of-way. The residential use is also at a significantly higher elevation, which would decrease the effectiveness of most screening. Hull is recommending that several canopy trees be employed to soften the view from Scenic Hills and provide enjoyable scenery for TART users. The applicant is seeking permission to provide 5 parking spaces for the business which is fewer than the number strictly required by the ordinance. Mr. Standfest pointed out again that there will be 3.5 employees and no walk-in business, and noted that if no additional parking is developed there will be no additional soil erosion control measures needed on-site. The existing structure, built in 1954, is slated to be renovated and to become more attractive for the community.

Hardin asked what would happen if a new business takes over the site that would require more parking; would the parking allotment be grandfathered? Hull replied that a new use would require an SUP amendment and these requirements could be revisited. Vermetten asked how refuse will be handled; Mr. Standfest replied that the level of waste generated will be similar to that of a residential use, and the owner plans to use a standard 96-gallon garbage tote to be stored inside the building.

Vermetten asked who the current property owner is and that the applicant be sure to provide proof of the pending sale prior to final Board approval.

David noted that there was discussion at the August meeting about permitting parking in the front yard, which requires special approval by the Commission. He seems to be more concerned on this front than the balance of the Commission, disagreeing with the consensus. Vermetten noted that Kirkland Court is a private road and not a public road, so the prohibition against parking in the front yard is not strictly applicable.

Public Hearing opened at 8:44 p.m.

Ann Rundhaug recalls that when the duplex on Kirkland Court was built there were concerns from Scenic Hills residents about the height of the building and of trees.

Chris DeGood, Gourdie Fraser, asked if the parking requirement was based on the floor area, and was given an affirmative reply.

Public Hearing closed at 8:45 p.m.

Motion by Carstens, support by Hardin, to recommend approval of Application #2005-9P to the Board of Trustees subject to: the findings of fact in the Staff report dated September 26, 2005; the two clarification points in the staff comments and recommendations section being satisfied; and all representations

by the applicant or applicant representative at the preliminary and public hearing. Motion carried unanimously (Takayama abstaining).

A recess was declared from 8:48 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

5. Continued Discussion/Deliberation:

- a) **Application #2005-3P by Meijer, Inc.**, 2929 Walker NW, Grand Rapids MI 49544 for SUP/Site Plan Approval for development of a 232,360 sq. ft. grocery/general merchandise store, 2,400 sq. ft. convenience store with 10 gas pumps, and 100,041 sq. ft. of additional commercial space on property located at 5896 Lautner Road (the southeast corner of M-72 East and Lautner Road) and currently zoned B-3, Planned Shopping Center: John Iacoangeli, the township's Planning Consultant recapped the state of the application. Prior to the August Commission meeting, the applicant, township and representatives of MDOT and the Road Commission held a discussion. They agreed on some additional materials to be submitted by the applicant (geometric designs for improvements to Lautner Road and M-72), after which a technical review meeting of all parties would be held. The materials were submitted last week and the meeting held last Thursday. In approximately 3 weeks MDOT and the Road Commission are expected to provide feedback on the geometrics and the traffic study. A representative from URS, the applicant's traffic consultant, is present this evening to recap the plans. Mr. Iacoangeli also wishes to discuss landscaping and photometric plans this evening; he was unable to provide a report because the plans were submitted by the applicant early last week after meeting packets were already prepared so the comments will be general at this time.

Mr. Stoepker began the traffic presentation on behalf of the applicant. Last month all parties agreed to the standards by which traffic counts would be established as a basis for road improvement design. The applicant has also designated the cost allocation for the suggested improvements; at a meeting last Thursday Scott Nowakowski from Meijer, Inc. stated that all costs for the required traffic infrastructure improvements will be paid by his company. MDOT has indicated that some federal funding has recently been allocated to the M-72 corridor and is expected to be spent on improvements to the M-72/US 31 intersection.

Laura Aylsworth, URS Corporation provided cross-sections of the proposed improvements that were required by MDOT to ensure that improvements would fit within the existing M-72 right-of-way area. Based on the currently proposed site design, most traffic impacts are expected to accrue to Lautner Road. Currently levels of service (LOS) on Lautner are C or D, but by 2008 LOS F is expected to occur if no improvements are made. Her firm is proposing road improvements that would return the LOS to C/D (current conditions) after the proposed Meijer site improvements. Improvements include a center left turn lane near the main entrance into the site, plus a 150' right turn taper on the northbound side. Between the primary driveway and the next driveway north there would be 3 lanes. At the auxiliary drive there would be another 150' right turn lane taper, a through northbound lane and dual left turn lanes for a total of 4 lanes at the intersection of Lautner and M-72. All of this pavement would fit in the right-of way, but a grading permit on the Andres property would be needed in this section. Signalization of the Lautner/M-72 intersection is proposed. On the north side of this intersection there would initially be 3 usable lanes with potential for a 4th for about 800'.

Takayama expressed concern about conflicting left-turning movements between people seeking to travel west on M-72 from Lautner Road and southbound people on Lautner seeking to turn left into the gas station. David questioned the statement that

no matter what happens the LOS will reach level F in 3 years, asking if this would be the case even if the Meijer store does not develop. Ms. Bonzelet stated that a 2% annual traffic growth rate absent any improvements is assumed, and that since Lautner/M-72 is not currently signalized cars are already having to wait to turn left at this intersection. LOS F represents a 60-second wait to maneuver. Part of the proposed traffic plan is also to prevent people from turning left on to M-72 from the site by directing them out to Lautner Road to make the left turning movements onto M-72 at the controlled signal. Carstens asked if any consideration has been made for the expected propensity to turn left on Lautner and increase traffic on Bunker Hill Road rather than using M-72; Ms. Bonzelet said that there has not, and this would be very difficult to model. Morgan feels that it is very likely that people will use Bunker Hill road and this eventuality should be studied. Hull clarified a general expectation that people will use Lautner to Bunker Hill to go towards Traverse City, but in his opinion this would be frustrating to people because the light at Bunker Hill and US 31 is very short and there would be long delays. It is possible that people would find it faster to turn right on Lautner, left on to M-72 at the light and left onto US 31 at the light to head towards town.

Turning to proposed M-72 improvements, currently 2 lanes head east and 1 head west, all 11' wide. They are proposing a change to 12' wide lanes and extending the eastbound passing lane section that is west of Lautner Road, and adding a center left-turn lane. Near the intersection there would be a 250' right turn lane leading to Lautner, 2 through eastbound lanes and the center left turn lane. Westward there would be 2 through lanes. East of Lautner Road heading westbound there would be 2 through lanes, a right turn lane to northbound Lautner Road and a center left-turn lane.

Iacoangeli covered some basic principals about the LOS system. LOS is an indicator of the amounts of expected delays and is rated A through F. A means virtually no delays; F means a long delay. If LOS is A, the levels of pedestrians tend to be lowest because car travel is more convenient, while LOS F tends to lead to slower traffic and more pedestrian activity. At LOS A safety is greater than at LOS F. Acme's Master Plan says that if the Meijer store is developed on their property and not on the Village property, it should still be an anchor for a town center development. Lautner Road is being designed by the applicants as a 55 mph road, but if this occurs the road crossing will not be pedestrian-friendly and the ability for Meijer to be integrated into a town center will be diminished. The Master Plan also calls for Lautner Road to serve as a main street in such a scenario, and again this means that the road should be designed for a maximum 30 – 35 mph even though it is a County road. The lanes could be narrowed, reducing the amount of pavement for pedestrians to cross (4 standard 12' lanes = 48' to cross). This is where the traffic engineering must mesh into community planning goals. Vermetten observed that a county road is under different criteria than a state trunkline, so the township could request a slower speed zone on Lautner (but not demand); however, it is unlikely that a similar request could be made on M-72. Mr. Stoepker observed, and the Commission agreed, that Lautner is currently at 55 mph and the applicant has designed to what exists without having created the situation.

Iacoangeli handed out some artists renderings. One represents how the main entrance into the Meijer site from Lautner with outlots might appear. The buildings seem to form more of a "main street" with a pedestrian feel that could integrate developments on either side of Lautner Road. The road can be designed to be slower-speed and more pedestrian-friendly or left as currently proposed; the Commission needs to provide direction to the applicant in this regard. The slower concept was discussed at the technical meeting on Thursday. Mary Lajko from the Road Commission stated it

would be a departure from the County standard; however the County is in the process of reconsidering its road standards right now and the request could be made but might or might not be granted. Iacoangeli reiterated that whether on the Village property or their own property, if designed carefully the Meijer can serve as an anchor to a walkable downtown area. He stated that it is not his goal to characterize Meijer as a “villain” in the situation, and noted that anything that can be done to reduce road speeds and lane widths benefits Meijer by reducing their out-of-pocket construction costs. They have designed prudently based on current posted road speeds, but the issue is actually larger than this and is about community design.

Takayama stated a belief that a majority of people whether they support Meijer or not would prefer not to see an intersection like the one at US 31 and South Airport Roads, which is what the proposal presented by URS brings to his mind. He prefers the slower, narrower concept. Vermetten noted that the intersection will still need to be designed to accommodate increased traffic flow.

Mr. Nowakowski observed that creating a boulevard/median on Lautner similar to the one in Iacoangeli’s pictures may not be feasible because there is not enough existing right-of-way. Iacoangeli stated that he is not advocating a median per se, but is seeking to illustrate a general concept. Ms. Aylsworth stated that traffic stacking areas/numbers of lanes on Lautner will be to some extent dictated by MDOT as requirements for interaction with the state trunkline, but she agreed that lanes could be narrowed. There are also intersection and signalization designs that can assist with traffic calming. Another potential difficulty with a boulevard would be the turning radii needed by commercial delivery trucks, and Iacoangeli stated again that boulevards don’t work well in heavily commercial areas for this reason and he is specifically not advocating a boulevard on Lautner Road. Sherberneau stated that this is one reason why MDOT indicates that it may not be possible to create a boulevard on M-72 – the need for 62’-long trucks to be able to make turning movements.

Takayama asked Ms. Aylsworth about the concerns regarding increased traffic on Lautner and Bunker Hill Roads. He asked what would happen if the main entrance to the Meijer site were on M-72, and if this would encourage people to stay on the trunkline. Ms. Aylsworth and Iacoangeli both stated that it is a generally-recognized principle that primary access should be from the less-busy road. Iacoangeli also stated that main access from Lautner should also be encouraged so that cross traffic with the proposed Village occurs and supports businesses and homes which may develop on that site. Hardin noted that in Suttons Bay M-22 is the main street, whereas in Elk Rapids the main street is off of US 31. He has found no difference in the way traffic and pedestrian access work in the two places this summer, noting that people slow down in the context. Morgan again raised the question of using Bunker Hill as a bypass for M-72/US 31, but Vermetten and Hardin agreed with Hull’s previous observation that well-functioning signalization on M-72 and US 31 will make those roads more attractive than waiting 3 or 4 light cycles at Bunker Hill and US 31 to head towards Traverse City.

Iacoangeli asked for direction from the Commission as to the directive of the Master Plan that if Meijer develops on its own land that Lautner Road should be pedestrian-friendly and the Meijer and Village sites integrated. Carstens stated he would prefer to have Meijer back on the Village property, but if it develops on its own would like the two sites integrated and Lautner traffic calmed. David stated that he is not yet ready to consider the traffic implications, being uncertain whether or not a Meijer will ultimately exist. Krause feels that if a Meijer will be on its own site the traffic that will come must be accommodated, and the plan as proposed by URS would accomplish this task. Ms. Aylsworth said again that the same number of lanes will be

required no matter what, the difference will be the potential lane widths. Krause suggested that the traffic calming measures be attempted south of the proposed gas station entrance from Lautner Road. Hardin is intrigued by the possible traffic calming options and asked Mr. Nowakowski how Meijer would feel about this and about Lautner Road taking on some main street characteristics; Mr. Nowakowski said that Meijer's has no objections. In an historic moment, Vermetten stated complete agreement with Carstens. Pulcifer concurred with traffic calming on Lautner, while expressing concerns over the impact on traffic flow. Will it be efficient for cars turning off M-72? Morgan echoed this concern. People slow down automatically when they reach Suttons Bay on M-22 because of the context they enter, so careful design would be beneficial in this regard. Iacoangeli stated understanding of the Commission's intent.

Motion by Sherberneau, support by Takayama to extend the meeting to a maximum of 10:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. DeGood moved on to a brief discussion of the photometric study that was presented and how it should be read. Previous discussion centered on 20' poles on a 2' concrete footing. Orange dots on the plan represent the number of lights needed to light the parking lot. Meijer's standard lighting plan uses more lights close to the store and fewer farther away. At the storefront, at pavement level, they seek a minimum of 1 footcandle, average 3 footcandles and maximum 15 footcandles. Farther out these figures are 0.5, 1 and 10 footcandles respectively. To accomplish this with 20' poles, which can light a smaller diameter of ground, 49 poles are required. Using 33' high lights as Meijer prefers would require 26 poles. Mr. DeGood stated that either height conforms to dark sky standards, but the diameter of the lit area is greater from the taller pole. Mr. DeGood stated that the wattage of the bulbs cannot be reduced dependent on the pole height. The scenario tested a 400 watt bulb on a 22' pole and a 1,000 watt bulb on a 33' pole and found that at 400 watts there were unacceptably dark areas. Mr. Nowakowski added that as required trees in the parking lot grow up they will block some of the light, and that there will be less glare of light off cars from the taller lights than the shorter lights. He also stated that it's ultimately about making the mother wheeling her groceries and child through the parking lot feel safe.

Mr. Iacoangeli had the lights turned off and turned on a flashlight, directing it at a table. He demonstrated what happens when you move the flashlight closer to the desk surface. Farther away (higher pole) creates a wider area of weaker light; closer down (shorter pole) creates a narrower area of brighter light, which was clearly visible through the demonstration. He only agreed with Mr. DeGood that more poles would be required. Iacoangeli also pointed out on the site plan places where directly under the light source there would be 43.5 footcandles, with 1 footcandle at the perimeters of the circle of light. Averaging the maximum and minimum yields about 26 footcandles, whereas most communities try to keep the figure at 15 footcandles or less. The proposed lighting plan would create very intense light at the gas station on the corner and darker areas elsewhere on the site, as opposed to a more desirable even lighting throughout the site. In some areas of the site the maximum footcandle measurements directly under the poles could exceed 75 footcandles. Iacoangeli recommended that the lighting plan be completely re-evaluated, suggesting that lighting around the perimeter might be 33' tall, but closer to the building the lights would be shorter and more pedestrian scaled to more evenly distribute light throughout the site. Krause stated that there are national standards.

Sherberneau asked Corpe if she had been able to contact Jerry Dobek, and she replied that she had. She explained that Mr. Dobek is an astronomy professor at NMC, a

nationally-recognized dark sky lighting expert, and a member of the County Planning Commission. He will be looking at the photometric plan next Monday and offering his observations to Iacoangeli. Krause expressed some frustration about what he perceived as “reinventing the wheel.” He stated that there are national standards for shopping center parking lot lighting. Morgan is eager to hear Mr. Dobek’s point of view, and said she had done some research into national parking lot lighting standards. She finds them harsh and believes that the New Urbanist developments are coming up with better, more inviting alternatives using shorter lightpoles. Krause objected, saying that lighting a downtown area is different than lighting a large parking lot.

Mr. DeGood displayed the proposed landscaping plan, which was developed in cooperation between Meijer and Krause. Trees on 30’ centers are provided along main internal roadways, with a significant number of trees near the retention basins on the eastern part of the site. Scatterings of planted areas were consolidated into larger areas with more trees, and a significant berm was provided to screen the gas station. Iacoangeli stated that a plant list with quantities should be provided. He also feels that some enhanced landscaping should be provided near the southernmost right-in/right-out driveway to Lautner Road. He also indicated that the Commission agreed to reduce the transition strip behind the property from 200’ to 50’ if the landscaping along Lautner Road is enhanced, and this still needs to be accomplished. Vermetten asked if Krause discussed additional plantings along Lautner Road; Krause stated that they had. Mr. DeGood agreed that Krause stressed this, and recalled a conclusion by the group that landscaping near the proposed outlots should be deferred until those units are actually developed. Mr. Nowakowski stated that if the township could guarantee that the position of the outlot units will remain as currently proposed, the landscaping could be planned around this configuration at the current time. Carstens feels like the proposed sidewalk is too close to the road, and in the wintertime a person passed by a snowplow could be bowled over. Mr. DeGood concurred, and felt that this fits into the discussion about calming traffic on Lautner Road. Iacoangeli agreed with Mr. Nowakowski that establishing a row of plantings along Lautner is more important than intensively landscaping around outlot sites that may not be developed for a few years. Canopy trees could become established. Krause feels that the County will not permit planting of trees within the right-of-way.

By next month’s meeting, technical comments from MDOT and the Road Commission should be resolved, and there can be substantive discussion about the lighting plan. Takayama stated that the addition of greenery along the Meijer building face is welcomed to the maximum extent possible without blocking the façade. Mr. Nowakowski stated that the corporation is proud of their architectural design and likes to show it off as much as possible. Krause echoed Takayama’s sentiments and requested some additional detail of a pedestrian area in front of the store. Iacoangeli also noted that a signage plan meeting township requirements still also remains to be submitted.

Morgan asked Iacoangeli if the Village at Rochester Hills is similar in size to the current proposal; he will have to research this.

6. Public Comment/Any other business that may come before the Commission:

Dan Hanna, 7239 Lautner Road returned to a comment by Takayama about causing sprawl. Mr. Hanna believes that the current township administration and CCAT have directly caused sprawl in Acme Township. There was a good plan that involved Meijer in The Village at Grand Traverse, LLC., but they fought it off and should take responsibility.

Mr. Griffith spoke about Iacoangeli’s demonstration of lighting concepts. He feels it was

misleading because the flashlight was lowered different amounts at different points during the demonstration. Mr. Griffith also spoke to the idea of planting trees in the Lautner right-of-way, and suggested that the County would not want tree roots disturbing the pavement.

A female citizen asked: when traffic starts using Lautner Road whether they stop to shop or not, who will control their speed. She travels through Acme several times a week but people rarely follow the speed limit. Corpe mentioned that the township has a new Community Policing Officer who met with the township along with Undersheriff Nate Alger last week. It was indicated that one of his priorities should be traffic enforcement.

Ms. Knopf stated that she agrees that it would be positive if Meijer relocates back into the proposed Village. Anything that could be done to further this cause would be appreciated.

Meeting adjourned at 10:34 p.m.