



**ACME TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Acme Township Hall**  
**6042 Acme Road, Williamsburg, Michigan**  
**7:00 p.m. Monday, November 28, 2011**

Meeting called to Order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 p.m.

**Members present:** J. Zollinger (Chair), B. Carstens (Vice Chair), C. David, S. Feringa, V. Tegel, K. Wentzloff, D. White, P. Yamaguchi

**Members excused:** R. Hardin

**Staff Present:** S. Vreeland, Township Manager/Recording Secretary  
P. Kilkenny, Deputy Zoning Administrator & Planner  
J. Jocks, Legal Counsel

Tegel mentioned the recent passing of Richard “Dick” Smith, a longtime member of the Acme community who was deeply involved in developing the township’s Zoning Ordinance and served on the ZBA and Planning Commission for many years.

**INQUIRY AS TO CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None noted.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Motion by Carstens, support by White to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

1. **Continuing Education/Special Presentations:** None
2. **Consent Calendar:** Motion by Yamaguchi, support by Carstens to approve the Consent Calendar as amended to remove the Planning Commissioners Journal and approval of the 10/24/11 Planning Commission minutes for further discussion including:

- a) **Receive and File:**
  1. **Draft Unapproved Minutes of:**
    - a. Board [11/01/11](#)
    - b. Zoning Board of Appeals [11/10/11](#)
  2. [Planning, Zoning & Administrative Update](#) – S. Vreeland
  3. [Planning & Zoning News](#) October 2011
  4. [Planning Commissioners Journal Fall 2011](#)
- b) **Approval:**
  1. ~~Minutes of the [10/24/11](#) Planning Commission Meeting~~

Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Limited Public Comment:** None

4. **Correspondence:**
  - a) [10/27/11 from David Scheppe regarding Traverse Bay RV Park](#): received and filed.

5. **Reports:** None

6. **New Business, Part I:**
  - a) [Minor SUP amendment 2011-03P](#) – East Bay Harbor Office/Bathhouse:

Vreeland summarized the staff report provided. Currently the offices, laundry, shower and restrooms for the marina are located in the bottom level of the former Mt. Jack's building. The marina and the former restaurant site share certain common elements such as parking and the marina office space through mutual cross-easements established when the two properties were first separated from one another. The township is slated to acquire the Mt. Jack's property in the near future for the shoreline park expansion project. Most of the acquisition funds are coming from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, and their program will not purchase properties on which there are retained private rights. The cross-easements need to be extinguished before the township can purchase the property, which requires the relocation of the marina office.

The proposed new office is just over 1,000 sq. ft., which is about the size of the current office space. It is to be set back from the ordinary high water mark by 50' as required by township ordinance. The number of existing parking spaces on the marina property far exceeds the number required by the zoning ordinance. Vreeland has proposed that the project be treated as a minor change to the existing SUP even though it requests construction of a new building because the type, intensity and traffic generation of the land use will remain unchanged.

It was noted that the marina has offered an easement across its road frontage on US 31 North so that a pedestrian connection can be made between the former Mt. Jack's property to the south and the Sarris property to the north, as both properties are expected to be acquired by the township for the shoreline project in the near future.

Tegel asked if consideration had been given to asking the marina to bring the parking lot up to current standards by adding landscaped islands. Vreeland observed that the marina's parking lot is below grade and it might look odd from the road to see treetops just above the roadside grassy areas.

David noted the presence of the sanitary waste holding tank on the site and asked if consideration had been given to requesting that it be abandoned and that the wastes it serves be sent directly to the regional sewer system. This holding tank is for pumping out sanitary wastes from boats using the harbor, and the marina did ask if it would be possible to abandon it and pump these wastes directly to the sanitary system. It would be possible if the marina wished to do so. On the one hand it would seem to eliminate concerns about a potential spill when the tank is pumped and the waste hauled away. On the other hand the holding tank waste is generally more concentrated than normal sewage which can cause treatment concerns. Vreeland and Kilkenny also related the tale of a situation that occurred at the marina in Charlevoix. A boater began pumping fuel into his boat and suddenly realized he was filling his tank with the wrong kind of fuel. He chose to use the hose for pumping out boat sanitary systems to suck the wrong fuel out of his fuel tank before it could damage his engine. The Charlevoix marina pump-out is directly connected to the sewer system, which the fuel entered. This generated hazardous fumes and conditions in the sewer lines under the main street, which then had to be evacuated so that a hazardous materials cleanup could be performed.

**Motion by Yamaguchi, support by David to approve SUP Minor Application Amendment 2011-03P as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

- b) [Minor SUP Amendment 2011-04P](#) to VGT SUP 2004-11P: During a meeting held approximately a month ago between township and project representatives, the Village at Grand Traverse representatives ("VGT") indicated that while their plans for Phase

I include construction of the main interior roadway connecting M-72 and Lautner Road, their proposed extent of construction of this road in Phase I was the car travel lanes only and not the on-street parking or sidewalks show on the Conceptual Plan. The township felt that the definition of construction the road would normally be all of the road, including these items, and that if they wanted to construct only the travel lanes right now and defer on-street parking and sidewalks to when adjacent buildings were being constructed in future phases so that they would related to one another spatially, a minor amendment of the approved Conceptual Plan is required.

VGT is voluntarily offering bike lane to be constructed on one side of the road as part of Phase I, a feature not originally included in the road plans. The question was raised as to the appropriate size for a bike lane. Steve Dearing from OHM, traffic issue review subconsultant for the township, said that 4' is an adequate bike lane width. Additional room might be desired based on whether parking is parallel, angle pull in or angle reverse in. Bikes lanes are one-way, as bicycles should ride with traffic, so generally one places a bike lane on each side of the road. Otherwise separations within the bike lane for bi-directional traffic have to be provided. Terry Boyd from Gourdie Fraser, representing applicant VGT, said they would offer two bike lanes, one on each side of the main interior roadway instead of the previously stated one.

Carstens is strongly in favor of multi-model transportation opportunities directly along the M-72 Corridor. When he has called for sidewalks along M-72 along the VGT frontage in the past, he recalls being told that there are agreements in place that make this something that the Commission cannot ask for. Jocks can speak to this issue more during general Phase I application discussions, but stated that the offering of the bike lanes along the internal road corridors would not affect the township's ability to request sidewalks and/or bike lanes along M-72.

Yamaguchi stated that if bike lanes are to be offered as part of these roadways, she asked that they be specifically marked as bike lanes.

Tegel asked if the entire sidewalk would be deferred to later phases. Mr. Boyd replied that the sidewalk on the northeast end of the main road adjacent to the Meijer site would be constructed in Phase 1 but the rest would be deferred until future phases. Tegel also asked if the roads would have a gutter pan, and offered that if there is one the adjacent bike lanes should be at least 5' wide. Mr. Dearing stated that a gutter pan can be part of a bike lane, and that the standard measurement for a bike lane width would be from the white paint line demarcating the lane to the face of the curb. Zollinger asked Mr. Boyd if he would commit to a bike lane that is 5' wide from the white line to the face of the curb; Mr. Boyd replied that he would.

David asked if the bike lane would remain intact even when the curbs are later pushed out to provide on-street parking; Mr. Boyd replied that it will.

Wentzloff asked if requiring sidewalks to be built as part of applicable phases might create a loophole. Jocks replied that the full roadway was a proposed part of Phase I. The developer would be expected to provide for sidewalks as applicable in future phases.

**Motion by Yamaguchi, support by Carstens to approve a minor amendment to SUP 2004-11P with the specification that there be one bicycle lane in each of the lanes of the main internal roadway, that the lanes be a minimum of 4' wide each without curb and gutter and 5' with curb and gutter, that the lanes be clearly marked and that the bicycle lanes remain intact when on-street parking is**

**provided in later phases. This amendment applies to Phase I only. All standards required for each subsequent phase, including buildout of the road, of the project will be addressed separately. Motion carried unanimously.**

**7. Public Hearings:**

- a) **Proposed Ordinance Amendment 017 – Public Land Uses:** Kilkenny summarized the staff memo provided. Currently public uses such as government offices or fire stations are only permitted in the B-1S district. The proposal would define the term “public uses” and expand such land uses to all business districts. It would also remove the current requirement that an SUP be obtained and make this as use by right subject to site plan review and approval.

Carstens wondered if public restrooms should be added to the definition of public uses, noting that this is currently a hot topic in downtown Traverse City. Zollinger thought that this type of land use might be welcomed in the business and shoreline districts, but not in residential areas. Adding it to the overall definition would make it possible in any of the listed zoning districts.

Wentzloff asked if the language “such as but not limited to” should be retained in the definition of public uses. This was thought to be a potentially good idea.

**Public Hearing opened at 7:55 p.m.**

Gordie LaPointe, 6375 Plum Drive has just read the proposed ordinance amendment. His understanding is that in any district, including residential, a fire station or other public facility could be sited without a public hearing. Kilkenny stated that the memo pointed out that the Commission should make a decision as to where an SUP should be required and where a use subject to site plan approval should be required. It could differ in various zoning districts.

Ken Engle, 8433 Bates Road, expressed a concern about opening the agricultural zoning district to public uses. We have a farmland preservation program in effect and he feels that many public uses would conflict with agriculture.

Gayle Hanna, 3000 Mt. Vernon Rd, Midland, stated that she objects to the concept of Acme Township operating a marina or harbor as a business. She feels that any such facility should be privately operated.

Brian Bourdages, GT Regional Land Conservancy Farmland Preservation Specialist, noted that the township’s Agricultural Preservation Zone is a subset of the township’s agricultural district. Mr. Engle may have been particularly concerned about public uses in the preservation zone rather than the agricultural district as a whole.

**Public Hearing closed at 7:59 p.m.**

There was discussion about making public uses a use by SUP in the residential and agricultural districts, but allowing them by right subject to site plan review in all other districts. Carstens was in favor of continuing the discussion to a subsequent meeting to consider the matter further, as were White and Wentzloff. Jocks recommended that the Commission give specific guidance to staff so he can suggest appropriate amendments. Yamaguchi recommended making public uses by SUP in all residential zoning districts.

**Motion by Yamaguchi, support by David to continue discussion of the proposed**

**ordinance amendment at a subsequent meeting.**

Christopher Grobbel suggested adding schools to the list of public uses to be regulated. Vreeland observed that public schools are largely exempted from zoning requirements. Mr. Bourdages suggested that some public uses might be appropriate in some places, but some only in others. Kilkenny especially requested feedback on the SUP vs. use by right issue.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**b) SUP/Site Plan Approval Application #2009-01P - Village at Grand Traverse LLC (continued)**

- [Resolved/Outstanding Review Issues Matrix](#)
- [Updated Traffic Impact Study and TIS Appendix](#)
- [OHM Review of Updated TIS](#)
- [Proposed Development Standards Guide for Phase I](#)
- [Proposed Development Standards Guide – Common Areas & Graphics & Signage](#)
- [Environmental Issues Update](#)
- [Signage-related information](#)
- [TART-related information](#)
- [Public Input](#)
- [Commissioner Questions](#)
- [Beckett & Raeder Status Update](#)

**Public Hearing opened at 8:07 p.m.**

Jim Heffner, 4050 Bayberry Lane, recently needed to travel downstate. He went to the Heartland Meijer store and took several pictures which he provided. They show how landscaping is used to define spaces in the parking lot, how brick walls screen truck bays, and the like. The e-mail he sent including the pictures can be accessed at the “Public Input” link above.

Pat Salathiel, 4888 Five Mile Road commented on the proposed signage for the project. She is curious as to whether other entities have asked for sign sizes in excess of township ordinances, or amendments to the ordinance itself. This is perhaps not the last big box store that will seek to locate in the township

The e-mail received from Denny Rohn, 9267 Shaw Road, dated 11/28/11 was read into the record. Ms. Rohn opposes any variance for the project from the township’s normal signage regulations. Her e-mail can be accessed at the “Public Input” link above.

Larry Quimby, 4073 Evelyn Street, sent an e-mail dated 10/28/11 that supported the roundabout concept for road improvements and suggested that parking structures be used within the project. He also expressed the concept that needed road improvements to roads in this area, particularly the US 31/M-72 intersection, be made before new large-scale retail development is considered. He also suggested that large scale retail establishments would be more appropriately placed in Whitewater Township near Elk Lake Rd. or Williamsburg Rd. His e-mail can be accessed at the “Public Input” link above.

**Motion by Yamaguchi, support by Wentzloff to permanently close the Public Hearing portion of the application process. Motion carried unanimously.**

Zollinger noted that while public comment will no longer be entertained during the VGT portion of meetings, the public may still comment on any issue relevant to township planning during the public comment periods provided at the beginning and end of each agenda.

**Traffic Issues:**

Mr. Dearing of OHM, the township's traffic sub-consultant for this project noted that VGT hired a firm called Progressive AE to perform their traffic impact study (TIS). There have been several iterations of the TIS to ensure that all concerns of the township's advisors, MDOT and Road Commission were appropriately addressed. Mr. Dearing found Progressive AE excellent to work with, and he is recommending that the TIS is now in a complete and final form. There are no substantive concerns with the calculations or conclusions therein, and is in such form that in the future if another project is coming into the township it will make an appropriate reference material for them. Zollinger noted that therefore all matrix items marked as unresolved that relate to traffic can be marked as satisfactorily completed.

**Environmental Issues:**

Dr. Chris Grobbel, Grobbel Environmental stated that up to November 14 the applicant dug 14 pits to appropriate depths to check soils conditions as promised. Fortunately there was a lot of rain while the pits were open. All pits filled with water, with the majority being groundwater. It is confirmed that there is a high water table and poor soils for storm water infiltration. On November 17 Dr. Grobbel met with Brian Rowley from Gourdie Fraser and discussed using a constructed wetlands storm water management approach. We were expecting a memo from Gourdie Fraser commemorating what would occur, but it has not been provided to date. Dr. Grobbel is suggesting a system that provides for at least 4-5 levels of management and filtration in a storm water management train, and that it be designed by experts in these systems hired to consult with the applicant and/or Gourdie Fraser. Dr. Grobbel is recommending that perhaps a conceptual plan for the overall treatment system be approved contingent upon the final engineering designs being provided and found adequate at a future point in time before the SUP can take effect.

System design would be to handle back-to-back 100 year storms. The current design is highly engineered, but he suggests that the final design be more natural in appearance. Overall he is highly pleased with the progress that has been made with the applicant on creating a wetlands storm water management system that could be phased with development phases.

David stated that the drawings appear to show lines that would gather collected storm water and direct it underground and under other improvements to the created wetlands. Dr. Grobbel confirmed this, and he noted that there could occasionally be overflows. These would be managed by rip-rap and/or grassed pathways to direct the water flows appropriately. David asked if it will be possible to use drainage pipe to send water to areas it can infiltrate. Dr. Grobbel stated that down to 15' the soils will not infiltrate runoff appropriately. He feels that if the project is going to be built, the proposed new system is the best possible storm water management solution.

Yamaguchi recalls being told about a water treatment trail that Dr. Grobbel installed in Suttons Bay, and asked if this would be similar. It would. The Suttons Bay system is a 5-phase system. The water becomes cleaner and cleaner as it travels through the treatment train. By the time it is discharged to the natural environment the water quality is generally very acceptable. Native plants can be planted in the treatment

train to perform the filtration. Dr. Grobbel has asked Mr. Rowley to come up with a plan for regular inspection and maintenance of the created wetlands to maintain peak efficiency and remove invasive species.

Wentzloff asked about the feature shown on the preliminary system design. There are two proposed 3-bay series of constructed wetlands which would be on areas currently designated for future buildings. Mr. Boyd stated that the applicant is viewing these as temporary locations for these wetlands, and that they may be located as future phases are developed. Basins 1 and 2 along Lautner Road would remain as originally planned. Two proposed bioswales would replace previously planned parking.

Tegel asked if there will be standing water in the constructed wetlands and if they would have to be fenced around for safety. Dr. Grobbel is suggesting that they be included in the pedestrian trail system so that they form a public natural amenity, and that the Commission treat and consider them as if they were permanent.

Tegel also asked how much non-impervious surface would be included in Phase I under the revised plan. Mr. Boyd stated that 300 parking spaces were removed, creating about 50,000 sq. ft. of green space. Tegel also asked if the overall VGT site will remain intact, and if only the Phase I areas will be disturbed. Mr. Boyd stated that the entire site is planned to be scraped and graded while Phase I is under construction.

Tegel expressed appreciation for water quality monitoring. Mr. Boyd has asked for specific direction from the township about what factors are to be tested for and at what precise locations. She asked what the process would be and who would assume responsibility for addressing any impacts from the site on water quality that the testing results indicate come from the site. Dr. Grobbel stated that it can be difficult to pinpoint specific sources of negative events unless the event is witnessed, and the response to impacts would have to be addressed in the conditions on the SUP. Tegel stated that the mouth of Acme Creek is considered "impaired" and she finds it critical that further damage be prevented to the maximum possible extent.

Wentzloff asked why the constructed wetlands would not be put in their final locations now if the entire site is due to be graded now? Dr. Grobbel stated that the location and sizing needs for the permanent constructed wetlands configuration is somewhat dependent on the shape and extent of the actual development, the location and extent of impervious surfaces and runoff points.

Dr. Grobbel stated that if there is ecological value incorporated into the stormwater management chain, then those areas where that value is created should be counted as true open space for the project. This could bring the project closer to compliance with the Master Plan dictates for more open space than the Conceptual Plan currently provides.

Zollinger referred to the matrix and asked if Dr. Grobbel feels that the majority of environmental issues it contains have been addressed on a conceptual, if not final level. The answer was yes. Zollinger also clarified that Dr. Grobbel and the applicant are asking for approval of the project based on the conceptual stormwater management design.

Kilkenny asked how much additional buildout the proposed two 3-bay wetlands trains could handle. Mr. Boyd stated that they are sized only for Phase I, and to DEQ standards being able to handle back-to-back 100 year storms. Kilkenny also noted

that it appeared that the proposed storm water system would displace some of the planned retail and residential development density for the township and asked if this was correct. Mr. Boyd stated that the VGT is proposing that these constructed wetland areas would be in temporary locations that would be moved as future phases of the project are developed. Dr. Grobbel said one recommendation he has is that if necessary the basins be made deeper rather than wider.

Jocks stated that the modification to the storm water plan that would change the layout of the approved Conceptual Plan requires another amendment to the original SUP Conceptual Plan such as was requested and granted earlier this evening relating to the roads. Mr. Boyd disagreed with this requirement. This will be resolved through future discussion with the applicant.

**Other Issues:**

Zollinger noted that John Iacoangeli has not had sufficient time to respond to the proposed development guides provided to the township just before packets were distributed for the meeting. Jocks observed that it is especially important for the Commission to review these documents in detail because they represent planning for the entire project and not just Phase I.

**TART:**

Julie Clark, Executive Director of TART, addressed the Commission. She stated that her agency has done a lot of work to try to determine an optimal TART route through the site. She has met with Jim Goss from VGT as well. Building the trail when the site is graded would be optimal as saving money in the long run. TART asked if the VGT would be willing to not only grant the required TART easements but also construct a 10' wide trail in a 35' wide easement from the internal roundabout to Lautner Road and convey an easement from the proposed internal roundabout westward. VGT declined, offering instead a 12' wide easement along the southernmost edge of the property, but not offering an easement from the interior of the project to the M-72 right-of-way as specifically required by the Conceptual SUP. TART responded with a letter saying that the 12' wide easement is insufficient for constructing a trail to AASHTO standards. This letter generated a phone call to Ms. Clark from J.R. Anderson and Steve Schooler where several options were discussed, but no follow-up letter has been received. Mr. Boyd stated that a letter is in preparation offering a 25' wide easement across the property and to the M-72 right-of-way. Bike lanes and sidewalks are also acceptable where they will be provided.

Feringa stated that the Tribe has met separately with TART to coordinate how to bring the trail across M-72 and into the Resort property in coordination with the easement provisions made within the VGT project.

Tegel asked for the status of connecting the TART between the VGT property and the current Bunker Hill terminus. No progress has been made with the intermediary landowners to date, but Ms. Clark believes that having a commitment from the VGT may be helpful in additional discussions with them.

Dr. Grobbel asked why the proposed TART alignment doesn't follow the conceptual alignment on the Conceptual Plan. Ms. Clark responded that the currently proposed alignment is the narrowest route across the wetlands back to the railroad right-of-way. Dr. Grobbel stated that the necessary wetlands crossings will require state approval. The Conceptual alignment requires only one crossing whereas the newer TART proposal requires two. Two crossings seem like more of an impact than one. Creating the Conceptual crossing where the proposed road connection to Mt. Hope



Road would be would be expensive without concurrent road construction, and it is unclear if or when the road would actually be constructed.

Kilkenny asked about the earlier statement about TART being satisfied with both bike lanes and sidewalks on the north/south interior roadway in lieu of the TART easement. Ms. Clark clarified that both items are needed to be satisfactory. Otherwise pedestrians would have no choice but to walk in the bike lane or in the street.

Tegel asked if Ms. Clark would recommend sidewalks along M-72 and Lautner Roads as part of the overall non-motorized transportation plan, and she said yes. Tegel wanted to have this issue on record, because the application materials say that the applicant is supportive of non-motorized infrastructure and this is an important issue. She also asked if TART uses a formal document for measuring level of service for pedestrians, and noted that the Smart Growth Tactics series of publications has a template for one.

Carstens noted that at the last meeting he asked for clarification on whether the township could require sidewalks along M-72 as a condition of Phase I SUP approval. Jocks wanted some time to study this, and he has discussed this with Vreeland. Jocks sees nothing in the documents from a legal perspective that would prevent such a requirement from being imposed. The SUP requires the applicant to comply with the terms of the 2003 Zoning Ordinance, and sidewalks along M-72 are a requirement in that ordinance.

Tegel asked if the Commission will look more closely at the issue of pedestrian access on the site. Zollinger stated that if this issue is not already on the matrix it should be added. Tegel asked if there would be continued detailed discussion of these issues tonight or if it would be deferred. She has many more questions to ask and needs assurance that there will be time and scope allotted to detailed discussion when those questions can be fully explored. Zollinger indicated that this would be the case.

Mr. Boyd said that the Commission has been talking as if the applicant would never install the sidewalks that earlier tonight were permitted to be phased. He is asking if there is a perceived need for temporary sidewalks along the roadways. Tegel responded that the TART and Lautner Road are highly used by bicyclists and she is very concerned about the Phase I proposal not providing adequately for non-motorized transportation. She heard earlier this evening that the applicant turned down Ms. Clark's request to have a sidewalk along the eastern boundary of the project abutting Lautner Road. Tegel stated that the applicant's materials mention being supportive of complete streets concepts, and she wants to hold them to that support in Phase I. Mr. Boyd countered that the Conceptual Site plan for the project does not include sidewalks along Lautner Road or M-72. This general discussion will be continued in the future.

**Review Issues Matrix:**

Zollinger guided the Commission through a page by page, unresolved point by unresolved point. He asked that future revisions of the matrix show revision dates.

Tegel asked for explanation of the procedure for approving the proposed reduction in the number of parking spaces. Jocks stated that the parking required by the SUP was a maximum by square foot. Vreeland added that the 2003 Ordinance gives the Commission to vary the parking standards, and Dr. Grobbel added that the conceptual site plan shows the maximum amount of parking required. Tegel also asked if the applicant would seek to add the parking spaces eliminated from Phase I

to later phases; Mr. Boyd said they would seek to reduce parking in future phases wherever possible.

Item 5.11 can be checked off per Dr. Grobbel. The next item should remain as-is until further documentation is provided by the applicant.

Photometric information is still forthcoming from Iacoangeli.

Iacoangeli still needs to provide feedback on the development standards manuals that were submitted. Commission questions included:

- Phase I Standards
  - Page 11 – refers to pedestrian areas. Tegel requested expert review on where bike racks would be placed and the bike rack style. Bike rack placement at the Garfield Meijer store interferes with pedestrian pathways. She asked for Ms. Clark’s advice. The proposed “wave” style rack is acceptable but not optimal. She prefers an o-ring style because it holds more bicycles and protects them better. Mr. Boyd stated that no bike rack locations have been selected yet, but Tegel says that a location is shown in front of the Meijer store. If this is the case, Mr. Boyd says that he and VGT do not have the authority to approve relocation.

Due to concerns about completing the agenda this evening, the Commission was asked to submit detailed questions about the development standards manuals to Vreeland by e-mail by Friday so she can forward them to Iacoangeli for consideration as part of his report and so everyone can receive his report as soon as possible for review before the next meeting on December 19.

**The Chair declared a 5 minute recess from 9:45 – 9:50 p.m.**

Dr. Grobbel reported that as to the environmental issues on the matrix his status recommendations are:

- Page 13 of 18
  - First issue: check off
  - Second issue: the Planning Commission should make a decision because he can’t recommend that the impervious surface requirements are met
  - Third issue: check off
- Page 14 of 18
  - First issue: check off based on bioswale design presented
  - Second issue: do not check off because permits have been applied for but responses not yet received
- Page 15 of 18: check off entire page
- Page 16
  - Fourth issue: he is still concerned about appropriate buffering from the Andres property so do not check off
  - Fifth issue: The TART easements are still a work in progress so do not check off

Vreeland asked how comfortable the commission is with items the staff and consultants are recommended as satisfied. The Commission is largely comfortable but has questions about some key issues. It was also noted that in many checked off boxes a commitment to a course of action by the applicant is indicated but has not been satisfactorily documented. Dr. Grobbel stated that it is common in larger

projects to have some conditions on approvals to be satisfied later. Vreeland noted that having too many open conditions creates delays later in the process and creates opportunities for items to be missed. Jocks noted that it is ultimately the Commission's job to determine whether the conditions for approval are demonstrated to be satisfied, and the documentation should be there.

Mr. Boyd stated that the need for draft easements is something the applicant inadvertently neglected, but otherwise they believe they have satisfied all requirements.

**Signage:**

The proposed signage development plan is for all of the development and not just for the Meijer store. It addresses not only building signage but development-wide signage. It is essentially a sign ordinance for this particular project. This is because the SUP requires that a signage plan for the development be submitted to and approved by the township, and that it be based to the greatest extent practicable on the township signage section of the ordinance, and reasonable visibility and scale with the project. Tegel asked if the applicant could appeal the Commission's decision to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Jocks said that the ZBA can't modify the Commission's decision in this regard, but might be required to decide on future proposed variances from a signage plan approved subject to the Conceptual SUP. The matter is somewhat unclear due to the unique circumstances and he needs to review it further. Once approved, the signage design standard document will become the standard for considering signage for all phases of the project.

Yamaguchi asked which documents providing standards for the application take precedence over the others in situations where the various standards conflict.

Tegel asked to be provided with the dimensions of the signs on the Hartland Store. These would be obtainable through either Meijer or through the zoning department where the store is located.

The Commission will have to consider the appropriate interpretations of terms in the SUP such as "greatest extent practical," and "ensure visibility."

**8. New Business, Part II:**

- c) **Consider [Process Plan for Shoreline District Placemaking Initiative](#):** Vreeland summarized the brief process outline provided in the meeting packets. The staff is envisioning a process over which the Planning Commission would have direction and oversight, but the detailed execution of which would largely be delegated to others. The members of the Shoreline and Parks and Recreation advisories are particularly eager to be deeply involved. The Commission would also ensure that a broad range of public participation occurs and that all appropriate community partners will be included. Tegel asked who the partners might be, and Vreeland offered an initial list including the Acme Business Association, the GT Regional Land Conservancy, the Watershed Center, and that the full list should be determined by the group as a whole. Tegel recommended that local resident: Henry Morgenstein, who wrote the book "Traverse City I Love Thee", and the local Sea Grant representative would be excellent resources to the project. Sea Grant has a program called "Michigan Upwellings" which includes the concept of a "water trail."

Tegel also mentioned that the Traverse City Area Placemaking Guide content will be formalized by the end of the month. She asked the NW Michigan Council of Governments if Acme could make use of the draft material immediately and was told

yes. She also referred to the Planning Commissioners Journal article saying that Planning Commissions needs to do more planning. She feels it is very important for the Commission to be intimately involved in shoreline placemaking process and suggested that additional Commission meetings for this and for the Master Plan update, which are intertwined issues, may be a good idea.

Tegel was part of the group that participated in the Waterfront Smart Growth Readiness Assessment Tool administration this past summer and asked for a status update on that report. Vreeland reported that she only recently received the rough draft for editing from MSU Extension and expects it to be useful in the placemaking process and in final form shortly.

White is opposed to the shoreline project because it reduces the tax base and creates more expense in an era when many municipalities are closing public parks due to lack of funding.

Feringa and Wentzloff noted that there is a lot on the agenda for the next few months and that the proposed timeline is an ambitious and possibly overwhelming. Yamaguchi agreed and felt that the timeline might need to be expanded. David does not believe the township has the resources to get involved in this project at this time.

- d) **Consider Process Plan for Master Plan Update:** Kilkenny summarized the materials he provided in the meeting packets. \$10,000 is budgeted for outside assistance with the master plan update. He has contacted Kurt Schindler at MSU Extension and learned of a 2-hour course called “Modern Planning Procedure.” It covers a step-by-step recommended process for a master plan update and could be helpful to the entire group if it would like as a kickoff exercise. The group was interested and suggested a potential date of January 16. Tegel suggested that some good resources for this project would include the materials several commissioners and staff members obtained from the New Economy training sessions, including placemaking information, and the chart she and Yamaguchi have been working on that describes the alignment status of the township zoning ordinance, the master plan, the Grand Vision Principles and other initiatives. Carstens mentioned that as a County Planning Commissioner he has reviewed updated Master Plans for the majority of the townships in the County recently. Some of them may contain good ideas for us.
- e) **Planning Commissioners Journal Fall 2011**; Tegel encouraged everyone to read this issue because it focuses on proactive planning, master plan updates and placemaking.
- f) **Minutes of the 10/24/11 Planning Commission Meeting:** Zollinger stated that on page 13 of the minutes there is an error in the commentary about which individuals are on which committees for the County Master Plan update. Zollinger is on the farmland preservation committee, and Tegel is on the Natural Resources Preservation committee. Carstens is also on the Collaboration committee.

**Motion by Tegel, support by Wentzloff to adopt the minutes of the 10/24/11 Planning Commission meeting as amended to correct the committee memberships as described above. Motion carried unanimously.**

David was excused from the meeting.

## **9. Old Business:**

- a) **Continued discussion – [special events in the Agricultural District](#):** Due to the lateness of the hour, Bob Garvey, who brought up this topic, offered that it could be covered at a subsequent meeting. Kilkenny asked if the updated information provided seems to be going in the direction the Commission is expecting. It does need further review and there will likely be substantial discussion. Carstens was intrigued by the suggestion of a separate special events ordinance. Zollinger encouraged commissioners to provide e-mail feedback to Kilkenny so an effective revised draft can be prepared for the next meeting. Mr. Garvey indicated that his initial proposal was for the specific use of “barn weddings” to be added to the list of allowable uses, but the question has evolved into a more complicated “special events” question.

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

Kathleen Guy, 7894 Peaceful Valley, Co-Chair of the Shoreline Preservation Advisory, expressed enthusiasm about the grants the township has received for shoreline district placemaking planning.

Mrs. Hanna asked if the County is planning to alter Lautner Road in relation to Phase I of the VGT. If so, perhaps they would build sidewalks or non-motorized trails as part of the road improvements. She also mentioned that in her community where she is a Planning Commissioner, they use the concept of “meetings in a box.” A Planning Commissioner brings everything needed to a meeting of neighbors in their neighborhood and finds out what people need and want for their community. Mrs. Hanna also reiterated her opposition to the township spending any money on engineering studies for a municipal harbor or on acquisition of a harbor. She feels that this is socialism and that these operations belong in the private sector. She also noted liability issues such as those being faced by Clinch Park Marina in Traverse City right now.

Mr. Engle spoke about the agricultural special events ordinance. He is conscious of the difference between situations where a special event is ancillary or accessory to the primary use of a property, and situations where a special event is the primary use of a property. The latter category seems to be applicable to Mr. Garvey’s property. For wineries the special events were an ancillary event that helped to make the overall business model viable. He has also observed that the issue is becoming more complex as time goes by, and supports the use of barns for events in the agricultural district.

Jim Hanna, 3000 Mt. Vernon Rd, Midland, feels that the Planning Commission did not hold Meijer to a firm enough standard for storm water management and has not received a concrete enough plan.

Mrs. Salathiel is concerned about the amount of impervious surface in the VGT project, and is also concerned about appropriate non-motorized access. Protection of the creek and concern for aesthetics are important – would we want a photo of the project to be used as a postcard for our downtown community? She strongly supports the placemaking initiative and feels that there are very many groups in the community that would be glad to be involved. She expressed appreciation for the hard work the Commission is doing.

Mr. Bourdages also thanked the Commission for its hard and sometimes thankless work. He thanked Kilkenny for his work to date on the proposed agricultural events ordinance, and made mention of Solon Township’s ordinance as an up-and-coming model of how these issues are being handled by municipalities and as interest in agritourism increases. He is glad to continue to help in any way possible.

Mr. Garvey feels the Solon Township ordinance is an interesting example. He feels that we are “missing the boat” in terms of the shoreline project and need to keep momentum going.

He has heard that the governor is looking for some areas in the state engaged in placemaking to get involved with, and that Acme could be in the running.

Jocks reminded the commission that several months ago he offered to speak individually with Commissioners regarding legal questions about the VGT review. He renewed the invitation.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:11 p.m.**