



Memo

To: Acme Township Planning Commission
From: Sharon E. Vreeland, Township Manager
Date: 08/25/10
Re: VGT-Phase I SUP #2009-1P Status Update

Little has changed since the July 20th update. Over the past two weeks there has been a fairly high volume of communication with the applicant specific to updated traffic study preparation and getting the applicant's new traffic consultant, Progressive AE, up to speed on the assumptions to be used. As of communication received earlier this morning, Progressive AE has a fair number of additional questions and items of information they have requested. They have also suggested that a group meeting, whether virtual or physical, similar to that held on February 15 might help them.

The applicant had indicated to me in mid-July that they hoped to submit their revised application by the end of August. They were quoted in an August 7, 2010 *Record Eagle* article (attached) as saying that they expected to submit by mid-September. Given the number of questions we are receiving regarding the traffic study, I believe it may be closer to the end of September when we receive the revised materials. Assuming this to be true, the current **potential shortest conceivable** processing timeline is as follows:

- **September 30:** township receives revised application materials and distributes to MDOT, County Road Commission, legal staff and Beckett & Raeder
- **October 1-31:** Consultant & Agency reviews MDOT needs at least 1 month for internal review both in Traverse City and by their Lansing signalization unit. .
- **November 1 - November 8:** Township staff reviews and assesses consultant and agency submissions and submits compiled response to applicant.
- **November 8 - 19:** Applicant reviews township response internally and (optional) in joint meeting with all parties.
- **November 22 - December 3:** (Optional) applicant adjusts and resubmits application materials.
- **December 6:** Planning Commission receives final materials no less than two weeks prior to preliminary hearing to provide adequate review/preparation time.
- **December 20:** earliest potential preliminary hearing date.
- **January 24, 2011:** earliest potential public hearing date.
- **February 1, 2011:** earliest potential Board consideration date.
- If the revised materials are received by September 15, there is still a very slim possibility that this potential timeline could be accelerated by a month.
- I feel I can't say it enough: this is a **tentative, best-case scenario timeline only**. It should not be regarded in any way as firm at this time. I am keeping consultants and road agencies updated frequently so that workflows can be planned for optimal efficiency.



New Meijer store on track

Acme store may be smaller than originally planned

BY BRIAN McGILLIVARY

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ACME — A proposed Meijer store in Acme Township remains on schedule to potentially open in spring 2012.

Minor setbacks aside, developers said they plan to provide township officials with new plans for a 192,000-square-foot store by mid-September and hope to begin site work next spring.

The store would anchor The Village at Grand Traverse development along M-72 east of Lautner Road that calls for more than 1 million-square-feet of retail space, 800 housing units and a hotel.

To date, the site remains barren.

"There's just been a few setbacks with changing things around; I'm hoping for approval by the township in January," said The Village's representative, Steve Schooler, of Jeffrey R. Anderson Real Estate Inc. in Cincinnati.

The Village kick-started Meijer's latest application process in September 2009 when developers resubmitted five-year-old plans for a project long steeped in controversy, lawsuits and illegal campaign funding.

Acme's staff and consultant in December returned to the developer a 170-page list of issues and shortcomings they wanted addressed. In February, Acme officials met with developers and other regulatory agencies, but the process since stalled, township Manager Sharon Vreeland said.

"It seems to be getting pushed back further and further," Vreeland said, "but its good to hear they are addressing our concerns."

Schooler said the township didn't want a "plain-Jane store," and Meijer is cooperating.

"It's going to be a nice store, it will be well-articulated, a lot more user friendly and won't have a big asphalt parking lot," Schooler said. "It will be pedestrian friendly."

Schooler said despite the project's "hard history," Acme hasn't been tougher than any other local government.

Several residents, led by Concerned Citizens of Acme Township, objected to the size of both The Village and the Meijer store when it was proposed. CCAT sued in 2004, and the politically

contentious issue led to an unsuccessful recall effort and illegal campaign activity by Meijer in two township elections.

Meijer and The Village eventually paid out over \$4 million to settle lawsuits, plus \$190,000 in civil fines for campaign finance violations.

The proposed new store is smaller than the original 207,000-square-foot store, and the Village also has a local engineering firm working on downsizing its overall Village project.

"Personally, I think it's still way too big and I know Meijer can do a smaller store than that, but it needs to go through the planning commission," said Denny Rohn, CCAT president. "If they meet zoning, there's nothing we can do about it."

Whether a new store passes planning commission and public muster won't be known until November, at the earliest.

Vreeland said the state wants a month to review a traffic study and impacts on M-72, including a possible traffic light at Lautner Road.

The plans also will require review by township consultants and time for any final tweaking by developers before it goes before the planning commission.

At the earliest, township planners could do a preliminary review on Nov. 30 and schedule a public hearing Dec. 20, Vreeland said.



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