

**Alma Planning Commission
May 5, 2008 Regular Meeting**

Chairperson Lambrecht called the regular meeting of the Alma Planning Commission to order at 5:30 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building.

Members Present: Lambrecht, Wheeler, Knarr, Stone, Walkington, Ayers & Pellerito
Absent: Nyman & Moore

Others Present: Kirt Smith, Neil Kraay, Pete Lorenz, Janet Feltman, Cindy Bosley, Ken Kaboski, Harold & Barb Vosler and Victor Campos

A motion was made by Knarr and supported by Pellerito, to approve the April 7, 2008 Planning Commission minutes.

Yes: Lambrecht, Wheeler, Knarr, Stone, Walkington, Ayers & Pellerito
No: None

Due to a conflict of interest Mr. Timothy Lambrecht, relinquished the Chair to Vice Chairperson Wheeler.

Vice-Chairperson James Wheeler opened the Public Hearing for comments. This Public Hearing is to consider a request for a Special Use Permit submitted by Leisure Living Management, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The applicant proposes to build an Adult Foster Care Congregate Facility on a site commonly described as 1220 Pine Avenue. The property is zoned OS Office Services District. OS does permit Adult Foster Care Congregate Facilities within its boundaries through the issuance of a Special Use Permit.

Mr. M. Daniel Stasa of the Inspection Services Department noted that Mr. Neil Kraay of Leisure Living Management would be addressing the Commission concerning the proposed Adult Foster Care Congregate Facility. Mr. Stasa also noted that the property was zoned OS (Office Services) and that zoning district does permit Adult Foster Care Facilities within its boundaries through the issuance of a Special Use Permit.

Mr. Neil Kraay of Leisure Living Management gave a presentation to the Commission and the surrounding neighborhood persons that attended. The developer noted that this project would be the 23rd of its kind here in the State of Michigan. A power point presentation showed what the building would look like. Mr. Kraay noted that before any decision to proceed; they come and talk to the community leaders to see if there is a need. Pictures showed a similar building structure in Ludington, Michigan.

Neighbors asked whether or not medical staff would be on site and what the average age of the residents would be.

Mr. Kraay noted that professional medical staff includes registered nurses as a prerequisite and that the average age of the residents is around 80.

Mr. Kraay wanted the Commission and the neighborhood residents to know that his company was one that promoted the value of dignity for the residents it serves. The residents dine together and have a communal sitting area.

Commission Member Knarr left the meeting at 5:52 p.m.

Mr. Pete Lorenz, P.E., P.S. of Lorenz Surveying & Engineering, Inc. reviewed with the Planning Commission the site plan and landscape review for Leisure Living Management. Mr. Lorenz noted that the site plan presented did not have any screening or buffering between them and the Alma Public School property to the north.

Mr. Stasa noted that the Commission has the authority to waive or modify the requirement of screening or buffering between land uses.

The neighbors adjacent to the proposed project were concerned about traffic on River and Carnahan. Mr. Lorenz showed the adjacent property owners the site plan that included a one-way drive entering from the south of the property and exiting to the north of the property on Pine Avenue only. No other driveway openings are proposed for this project.

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Discussion took place regarding the location of the original proposed sign that was in the front yard, in the Parking Lot Greenbelt area. The proposed setback for this sign is approximately eight (8) feet off the front property line. The required setback for ground signs is ten (10) feet. Mr. Lorenz noted that they have relocated the ground sign to comply with the City of Alma Sign Ordinance.

Mr. Lorenz noted that they would comply with the lighting requirements for the site.

Public Services Director, Ron Turner discussed with the Commission his memorandum about the layout of the parking area to accommodate better traffic flow within the facility and not increase traffic congestion on Pine Avenue. Other issues such as the proposed storm sewers and catch basins should not present a problem. All surface water needs to be directed to the storm sewers either directly or via a swale toward the detention basins. Water and sanitary sewer service are acceptable. Storm water management is a requirement of the Gratiot County Drain Commissioner. A soil erosion permit may be needed and obtained from the Gratiot County Permits office.

Mr. Stasa noted that the Director of Fire Control has reviewed the plans and has approved them for accessibility.

Ms. Cindy Bosley, representing Masonic Home and Mr. Kraay discussed the licensing procedures and the type of assisted living that is proposed.

Vice Chairperson Wheeler asked if anyone wishes to further comment on this issue.

A motion was offered by Walkington and supported by Stone to close the public hearing and grant approval of the Special Use Permit to allow for the construction of an Adult Foster Care Congregate Facility on property commonly referred to as 1220 Pine Avenue with the following stipulations.

1. Wave the landscape buffer requirement along the north side of property only.
2. Follow City of Alma Staff Comments and recommendations
3. Lighting for the site to fit with the required zoning of the City of Alma.

Yes: Wheeler, Stone, Walkington, Ayers & Pellerito
 No: None

Commission Member Lambrecht re-assumed the chairpersons roll.

Mr. Stasa noted that he had received a request to re-zone some of the Alma College property to a newly created zoning district called "Campus District". There letter stated in part that while it would be nice to have 100 percent of the land they own on the main campus to be included in this Campus District, the College understands there may be reasons why the City would not grant such a request at this time. Their request included all property lying north of Superior Street and the land south of Superior Street bordered on the east by Maple, on the south by Center Street and on the west by Philadelphia Street.

Mr. Stasa noted that a June 2, 2008 meeting could be held.

Being no further business to discuss, motion was offered by Wheeler and supported by Stone to adjourn the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Yes: Lambrecht, Wheeler, Stone, Walkington, Ayers & Pellerito
 No: None

M. Daniel Stasa, Secretary
 Alma Planning Commission