

WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting – February 27, 2007 @ 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Russ Zupanic called this special meeting to order shortly after 7:30 p.m. Roll call indicated five members of the Zoning Commission were present: Jill Kemp, James Likley, Russ Zupanic, Scott Anderson and John Miller (alternate). Wayne Brezina was absent due to illness. Also in attendance were the approximately 90 people who signed the attendance sheets, which are attached hereto. (Note: Trading Post reporter Gayle Foster and Cleveland Plain Dealer reporter Terry Oblander did not sign the attendance sheets.)

It was noted that the Zoning Commission regular meeting scheduled for February 13, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. had been cancelled due to hazardous road conditions. It was further noted that the minutes from the January 2007 meetings would be reviewed at the next regular meeting scheduled for March 13, 2007.

Chairman Zupanic announced that tonight's special meeting had been called in order for the Zoning Commission to seek public input regarding a possible new zoning district in the Lake Road/Greenwich Road area of the township that would allow for large retail stores. This is an information only meeting – there is no application pending before this Commission at this time. Due to the Ohio Department of Transportation's revamping of the I-71/I-76/SR-224 interchange, the area is ripe for potential development.

Basic procedure rules were outlined to the audience – each person who wanted to talk would be allowed to talk one time before any individual would be given an opportunity to talk a second time – there would be a 3 minute time limit on each speaker – the meeting will end no later than 9:45 p.m. providing all audience members who wanted to speak had done so – rude comments and/or unruly behavior would not be allowed.

The following is a summary of tonight's meeting, which was recorded on audiotape.

Special Meeting Business

Chairman Zupanic stated he had a brief power point presentation. He proceeded with his "Zoning 101" presentation, which outlined what is allowed in the Rural Residential, Suburban Residential, Local Commercial, Highway Commercial and Industrial Districts. The majority of the township is RR. There are some strips on both the West and East portion of Greenwich Road that are currently LC. He also showed the drawing of the revamped interchange area and how the project had taken some land from various township landowners. The State has redesigned this interchange area to make it much more accessible and to alleviate traffic. The interchange was super-imposed on the current township map to show some of the changes that are being made, including a new service road to the soccer fields/campground since the redesign took away the access. It is expected that the entire State project will be completed by 2010. Tim Kratzer is one of the landowners affected by the taking of land and is one of the people considering doing some type of development.

Landowner Tim Kratzer indicated that his property runs along Greenwich (by Hulbert Road) to Chippewa Ditch to the interstate. He is bordered by the interstates on the North

and West sides. In 1917 his grandfather bought the property known as Bates farm and then SR 224 came along and took 100 acres off the back. His father purchased the farm and then I-71 came through and took another 40 acres or so, which left 125 and now he is left with 105 acres. He briefly explained that he had been working with planners from Akron regarding the potential development of approximately 105 acres that he owned. The front of his property is already zoned Local Commercial. He is considering rezoning for a commercial venture of retail stores (examples: grocery store, sporting goods store, home improvement store, restaurants and some smaller stores). Architect George Winkleman was employed to put together a little synopsis of a proposed plan.

Mr. Winkleman presented map/boards that showed Kratzer's property and the potential venture. Each of the three map/boards showed a blowup of an area on the property map. Essentially the front could be small commercial businesses or restaurants (along Greenwich). There are some bigger stores, which could be the grocery or home improvement stores around the back. Another area as drafted could be a pedestrian mall-type area (possibly similar to Legacy Village). One blowup showed a bigger store that showed parking and circulation. The plan is only an idea – there's nothing cast in stone – it represents about one million square feet of development. It would provide for access road entrances at both the East and West end of the development. It provides storm water management in that calculations are made before development takes place to determine how much water runs off the property especially into Chippewa Ditch and it's a requirement when the development is finished that the storm water is maintained on the site and it doesn't run off any faster after the development than it does before the development.

Winkleman further explained that a preliminary plan is put together showing the potential of different types of stores that could be accommodated in the development. The process is you make a suggestion as to different sizes of stores and how many square feet of space can be developed on the site. Then we come before the board that determines the zoning and, if that occurs, we go out and start to market this project. There are all kinds of companies that will be approached to find out where the interest may be. We don't know who may or may not be interested – we have no one selected. The square footages illustrated could represent many types of stores. For example, we know that Home Depot and Lowe's are around 200,000 sq. ft. and Target is around 150,000 sq. ft so those are the type of blocks represented but at this time they are just blocks.

Chairman Zupanic restated the fact that the Zoning Commission does not have an application before it at this time but it had been indicated that an application might be forthcoming. This meeting is to get feedback concerning this type of development. The Zoning Commission needs to consider many other factors as well and also consider what is best for the community as a whole and what would be best for the township in future years. Tonight the tentative proposal is about Kratzer Acres but this type of development is open to other landowners as well and the once the interchange area is completely revamped that whole area is ripe for development. The Zoning Commission needs to look at things long-term and we need to look at the best use of the land. Chairman Zupanic than opened the meeting for input from the audience.

(Note: Individual names and subject of question/comment have been condensed and responses/comments from Zoning Commission members are summarized at the end of the public input.)

Bryan Smith – has concerns about how traffic would be handled if this retail area was developed; regarding the Lake/Greenwich Road area – why can't the truck wash, the old house on the corner and the vacant truck stop area be developed prior to expanding any further.

Pat Edington – what would be the justification to bring in large development; there would be traffic along Greenwich and through the Village (Westfield Center); what benefit to the area; no problem with LC but why a large development that could overwhelm this area.

John Scheiring – with all the intersections, who would want to build a house there; if you think it should be farm land, pay the price and farm it; what's the man going to do, his family was here before we came; farming on smaller acreage isn't that beneficial any more (100 acres is smaller).

Jane Morse – has been to Legacy Village and thinks it's a bit of a come on; more likely this would attract low-end like a WalMart type of store.

Tom Micklas – we already have the outlet mall nearby – check crime reports and vacant stores; we left Medina because of traffic, development and increased crime – those are the considerations to look at and do you have all the infrastructure available to handle (police/sheriff protection).

Lyn Methlie – is there a way to control this growth; do we want to stay in a cocoon; what are the tax advantages to us as a township; what would be the advantages/disadvantages to us as taxpayers; doesn't agree that we would attract the lower-end stores; we can zone and protect what it is that we want rather than avoiding – Brunswick is a classic example of ignoring what was coming – we need to have control of development and make it come the way we want it to come.

Inaudible (Pete ?) – Maybe I'm disillusioned but the truck stops were supposed to be a benefit to the community - but belligerent truck drivers plus the pollution, I don't think it's for the betterment.

Rich Bailey – just opened a business in Seville and this kind of development would take business away from local businesses; traffic problems; who would pay for widening Greenwich Road; there's developments 15 minutes in either direction (Wooster, Medina and Wadsworth). I know you can't stop this type of development but it's something that needs thought out very carefully.

Unknown woman – attended the meeting where the sexually oriented businesses amendments were discussed and wants to keep the soccer fields there; thinks we should bring in the type of businesses we want there and we should be looking at some of these larger businesses so we don't get a bunch of little ones.

Tom Bombard – what areas are being considered for rezoning – owns properties each way on Lake Road and Greenwich Road; he has property next to Deerpass that is LC; he has property on corner of Lake/Greenwich zoned HC and would like to see LC or retail; is considering making a proposal/application for rezoning and would be interested in retail on the property he has.

Unknown man – moved out here for the peace and quiet and once you start development it just goes on and on.

Unknown woman (Cathy ?) – all of this will take more water – how is this going to be handled.

JoAnn Woosnam – you are sitting on what was my farm; how many were here in 1955 when they started putting I-76 through because Westfield Center didn't want the traffic of the trucks any more; after I-76 we got I-71 coming in; how many moved out here because of those highways - it's a fast trip to Brookpark and a fast trip to Columbus; concerned about the swamp land where the soccer fields are and future use; you have to look at your township to see what has been going on and what the zoning boards and trustees worry about and work on.

Unknown Fire Department man (leaving for emergency call) – Lodi Fire Department didn't hire extra personnel nor did they buy another truck to do anything at the outlet mall.

Rick Blankenburg – nothing is before the board but yet we had a presentation; look at what's already developed before we look at something new; suggestion that you drive up on to Avon, Ohio, which is now built up and traffic problems everywhere and retail on every corner.

Dave Palamountain – concern that our area doesn't turn out like Brunswick, Medina or Wadsworth in their boom; Weymouth (between Brunswick & Medina) didn't go boom – who do we want to be like.

Jack Franz - we have enough development surrounding us and if this proposed development goes down the tube we will be left with vacant stores; not the time for Westfield to address this type of development.

Wayne Noall – contends that in 25-50 years there's going to be one big metropolis and it's going to be a 200 mile long corridor from Cincinnati to Columbus to Cleveland and 35 miles wide; we should indeed plan for growth; the free market will dictate whether or not we're ready for a big box store; there's problems that will need to be addressed but I suggest it is time for this kind of development.

Carolyn Sims – opposed to big box retail; immediate concern is traffic at the intersection of Lake/Greenwich Roads; not interested in having four lanes on Greenwich; traffic and retail will turn into North Court Street confusion; wants to keep clear separation between commercial and residential; concern about farmers getting crops to Seville; wants board

to consider an overlay district for agriculture so farmers can utilize their property to the maximum benefit (like Magical Farms with llama's, selling wool and also a tourist attraction).

Melissa Spitzer – would love to see something like that but it's not profitable; who is willing to front the money to start that for farms; Kratzer property has been in the family there for years and each generation the highways have taken more and more of their land and now there's not enough land to make a profit in farming; not profitable for small farmers any more; he has the best interests of the township in mind because he's lived here his whole life.

Lyn Methlie – the traffic issue will be addressed before permits are allowed by our county departments; Magical Farms is a romantic farm fantasy that raises animals and sells wool – it's not a real farm, it's a land development corporation owned by attorneys – they have sucked up every farm within 20 miles of them and when they are ready to develop they will kick you in the back of the knees – be cautious of it and don't let it happen here. I'm from a farm family but there isn't a farmer in this room who farms only on his land in order to make an adequate living; the idea of rezoning and keeping it agricultural isn't feasible, we have to help them. I moved here like a lot of you and thought I was in the country but I can no more delude myself into believing that it won't happen because we can't just say we don't want it and it will stop. We need to have control of development so let's get together and organize so it's done well.

Gene Harrison – why this particular piece of property that has terrible traffic patterns going through there; the infrastructure costs are going to be prohibitive; maybe there is a different use for this property.

Bryan Smith – my biggest concern is the Greenwich Road, Lake Road and Chippewa Road area – are we going to develop this one little section and leave it at that; probably wouldn't have a big problem with it because it is basically surrounded by highways anyway, but doesn't want Greenwich Road to turn into a Route 3 where homes may lose property value.

Unknown woman – why not wait to see what develops at the old truck stop; on Daniels Road there are already truck fumes from the truck stop and we don't need more traffic from trucks in that area.

Carolyn Sims – some residents called my home and expressed an interest in a local grocery store; consider allowing for a grocery at the old truck stop.

Bill Toth (?) – inquired how far east does Westfield Township go - response was approximately ½ mile past the Kratzer Acres property.

Unknown – there could be a bigger issue here – if this would develop I wouldn't come through the truck stop to get to it, I'd come down Route 3 or come through Westfield Center and if this is something that will increase traffic perhaps we should consult the other township.

John Miller – Lake Road and Greenwich Road are county roads, when it comes time to widen them who is going to pay for it, most likely the county taxpayers but the township will bear some of it also because it isn't all going to be subsidized by the state.

Unknown – what will happen to those of us who have these properties that aren't going to be zoned commercial, is it going to downgrade the value of my property.

Unknown – moved out here for rural; doesn't mind the 15-20 minute drive to get to other areas for Home Depot and grocery stores,

Unknown – has 12-acre farm and concerned about driving hay wagon down Greenwich Road if it's four lanes and where would she get her feed.

Mike Cook – seems to me that Tim is going to do something with his land; would rather have some type of retail than factories or anything like that or a large housing development; there would be some heavy traffic times with retail but we have heavy traffic times now on Greenwich Road.

Velvet Eby – how do we know the big box stores even want to come into this area.

Brian West – you can't just throw up a mall without having a highway study; water and everything has to be done by the county; everybody is worried about the traffic but 90% of the time when I drive to Wadsworth I'm going the highway – it doesn't necessarily mean there is going to be that much more traffic.

Irish Blankenburg – we moved from North Olmsted and they let it happen, a retail mecca; there are problems with North Olmsted, Southpark, Legacy Village and Avon – traffic and fire/safety – something to think about.

Mike (?) – what's the time frame, how soon will it happen.

Bob Gecking – ten years ago there was a township study and this is not what they wanted; the point where the intersection would fight with Lake Road to get to the location is going to be tough.

Unknown – why does the developer think this is a good idea.

Carolyn Sims – the township Comprehensive Plan in 1996 included resident surveys that indicated to keep the township rural and the board should refer to it in their review; it also says that LC and HC is under utilized so the board can choose to go forward with this discussion or let it die here tonight.

Lyn Methlie – no business at all would work from a ten-year old survey; the plan would certainly need to be updated if that is where you were gathering information from; working on ten-year old information is not reliable.

Laura Bailey – we moved out because it was a great location; we like the residential; we can go anywhere we want within 15-20 minutes.

Unknown man – a lot of us did move out here because of those reasons but progress is following us; if we don't have to live with progress, then think about moving about 50 miles off the interstate.

Unknown – in Westfield Center we have something like 64 new houses that can be built on land that has been developed in the last year or so – development is coming; people are coming and are going to buy up the farms and put houses there and the character of the township is going to change but the people who are coming here are not the same – as they come here the character of the village and township is going to change and those people are going to want amenities that currently we may not want but they will. The demographic studies that I have seen suggest that this county is going to explode in terms of population in the next 5-10-15 years. If the township doesn't like Kratzer's proposal Seville is close enough that they may be interested in annexation; there has been a lot of development in the north end of Seville. The township has the opportunity to control this development as long as it stays within the township – you can try to work with the property, try to look at the area and try to work with the board to do what is best for the development of the township.

Unknown – doesn't necessarily disagree with that but then Seville would have the expenses also. Tim's stuck in this situation. The farms that are here will live out there days and they are short in coming. Tim's situation could turn into a domino effect as it goes to the next neighbor and then the next etc. This could be left exactly the way it is even if the entire community around us goes commercial.

JoAnn Woosnam – what's to keep Westfield Center from taking some township land – they've done it before. They keep taking township land and then the complaint is I don't want that traffic – but maybe we don't like that you are running our roads either. It isn't going to stay just like it is.

Unknown – opted to move out here and drive 62 miles one way to work to make a good living and I'm happy with that – I don't mind driving to the stores – people will choose to live here if they want to.

Lyn Methlie – we do have a longer market time to sell a house because we have no commercial to speak up – something to think about.

Unknown – if this were to develop, these companies and businesses will all be in the township, how does that benefit or hurt us in regard to taxes.

The following is a condensed summary of Chairman Zupanic and other board members responses/comments in explanation to the questions/comments of the audience during public input:

- . traffic studies would need to be done,
- . the old truck stop can be developed at any time but currently nothing can be done there since Ruhlin Construction has leased the area for a launch site for the interchange development,

- . it is owned by Pride One/Omni,
- . need to look at best use of the land and what are the best things for this area long term,
- . zoning changes constantly – it has to change with the growth of the area and development,
- . in regard to sexually oriented businesses, we put it in our zoning code and it's controlled – we can't stop it but zoning controls it,
- . the sexually oriented businesses are zoned in HC and distances are involved,
- . we would be looking at all the zoning districts to see what's the current use and the best use of the land,
- . we wanted to get input of the owners along Greenwich/Lake Roads as to what direction the Zoning Commission should look at moving ahead with,
- . meetings are the second Tuesday of each month and we consider proposals, applications, site plans – height of signs, lighting and many different things are considered for zoning purposes,
- . don't focus specifically on Kratzer Acres, there is a lot of undeveloped area here and the soccer field is zoned LC with a new access road there – development is poised and ready to come but we need to address it all, not just Kratzer Acres,
- . we need to be proactive; we can't sit around and wait for development to happen.
- . we will look at the whole area and address buffers between zoning districts and by surrounding properties,
- . as to whether bigger stores would want to come into the area, each store has their own planning/forecasting area and each of them would have to make a decision but what this board can do is specify how big of a store we want and that kind of stuff,
- . no decision has to be made because there has not been an application for a zoning change presented to the board; if an application is made there is a time frame scenario.
- . as to taxes, the township collects property tax and we probably get a certain amount of sales tax that goes to the county; we get a portion of funding from the county – we would have to get specific answers for you and that would be part of the consideration.

Zoning Commission members also explained the zoning amendment procedures to the audience - if you have property that you want rezoned or if you want to change the language in our zoning code, there is an application process. Once a complete application is received, the board members review it and it goes to the Medina County Planning Commission for review and comments. A public hearing date is scheduled with at least ten days legal notice being published in the Gazette and notice mailed to adjoining property owners. The board members review the Planning Commission recommendations and comments, listen to the applicant's presentation at the public hearing, listen to other supporting/opposing comments during the public hearing and then the board members discuss the pending application and vote on the matter. Whether the application is approved or denied, the notice process starts over again when the matter then goes before the township trustees. Another public hearing takes place before the

trustees and they would vote on the change. If the residents weren't in agreement with the change, it could go to a referendum by the residents and could go on the ballot. It was noted that Mr. Kratzer has recused himself as a trustee from any hearings or process that involves the trustees relative to this matter.

In response to comments about posting meeting notices, this meeting notice ran for a few weeks in the Gazette, the Trading Post and it was in the Akron Beacon Journal. It also has been on the township website - all meetings and public hearings would be posted on the website.

Chairman Zupanic announced that the board meets the second Tuesday of each month and all are welcome to attend. The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, March 13, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. The Chairman then asked Mr. Kratzer if he had any closing remarks.

Landowner Kratzer – I appreciate everybody coming out tonight. I've heard some good comments; I've heard some negative comments; I've heard some comments behind my back that I don't have any concern for the township. I have lived here for 59 years - my grandfather moved here in 1917 - my father owned that farmland – now I own it - my retirement is tied to that property. I have a lot of respect for anybody that lives in this township but you should also have respect for the people who have lived in this township for many years. Thank you.

Adjournment

Upon motion by Russ Zupanic, duly seconded by Scott Anderson, and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.



Marlene L. Oiler, Certified PP, PLS
Westfield Township Zoning Commission Secretary

(Minutes approved 4/10/07)

**CONCEPT PLAN
PRESENTED AT 2/27/07 MEETING**



115.5349 ACRES
5,418 PARKING SPACES
(NOT INCLUDING OUTLOTS)

 5	PROPOSED SITE PLAN LODI DEVELOPMENT	REVISIONS:	CONSULTING ENGINEER  1500 N. WILSON ST. SUITE 100 WILSONVILLE, OR 97148 PHONE: (503) 261-1111 FAX: (503) 261-1112 WWW: www.foxgroup.com
	PROJECT NO.: 0708-241 DATE: 08/01/07 DRAWN BY: MAF CHECKED BY: JSM APPROVED BY: JSM DATE: 08/01/07		