

**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 25, 2003 MEETING  
TUESDAY – 7:30 P.M.**

Members Present: Howard Balzar, Joyce Benedetto, Neil Distelhorst, Glen Hymer, and Hulda Moffitt.

Members Absent: None

Others Present: James Strunk - Zoning Inspector, Prairie Township  
Jackson B. Reynolds III – Attorney, Smith & Hale  
Larry Stewart – Homeowner, Westpoint

Call to Order: Howard Balzar, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes: Moved by Howard Balzer, seconded by Neil Distelhorst, and unanimously approved, that the Minutes of the January 28, 2003 meeting be accepted as submitted.

Old Business: None

New Business: See items A and B.

A. Prairie Township Zoning Resolution

Mr. Strunk informed the Commission that the Zoning Resolution as updated with the amendment stated in Application No. 161-RZ-02, and approved by the Board of Trustees (December 23, 2002), was in the process of being reprinted. Entire new books will be available in the near future.

B. Application for Zoning Amendment  
Prairie Township, Franklin County, Ohio  
Application No. 162-RZ-03

Applicant: M/I Schottenstein Homes, Inc.  
Attorney: Jackson Reynolds, representing M/I Homes.  
Owner: Davis and Son, Inc.

Administration of Oath to tell the Truth

Chairman Balzer swore in persons who wanted to speak in regard to the Application being heard.

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*Presentation of Application No. 162-RZ-03*

James Stunk stated that the applicant is seeking to rezone 74.313 acres south of the Westpoint subdivision, north of the Conrail tracks, and east of Hubbard Road from R-8 to R-6 zoning for the purpose of extending the existing single-family subdivision. The site is currently vacant.

Referring to the Staff Report<sup>1</sup> and to the Application, Mr. Strunk highlighted the following details.

1. M/I is requesting a down zoning from higher density R8 (High Density Residential) to lesser density R6 (Medium Density Residential).
2. R6 zoning is compatible with existing zoning and single-family residential development in the Westpoint subdivision and appropriate to other developed areas surrounding the site. There are single-family subdivisions to the east, south, and north of the 74.313 acres, which demonstrates the appropriateness of the R-6 zoning district.
3. R6 zoning is in accordance with development objectives found in the Township's Comprehensive Plan, currently being written by the Steering Committee with the assistance of the Franklin County Development Department.
4. The existing R-8 zoning is incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood and the Township's future development objectives.
5. At the February 12, 2003 meeting, the Franklin County Planning Commission's vote on the Application was 5 to 5. A majority is needed for approval. The three Franklin County commissioners, Arlene Shoemaker, Dewey Stokes, and Mary Jo Kilroy, voted to approve the Application. Apparently, some Planning Commission members' votes were influenced by concerns about subdivision development issues that surpass the purview of rezoning.
6. In considering the Application, it is important to recognize that M/I Homes is requesting rezoning only. Development issues, such as water and sanitary sewer services, storm water management, and

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<sup>1</sup> The Staff Report, Case Prair-03-100, was prepared by the Franklin County Development Department for the Planning Commission meeting on February 12, 2003.

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traffic control, are beyond the scope of the Application. The subdivision process, in which all these issues must be satisfactorily addressed, is distinct from and subsequent to rezoning.

Following Mr. Strunk's presentation, Jackson Reynolds said that M/I Homes had taken over development of Westpoint from the owner of the land, Davis and Son, Inc. He summarized M/I Homes' case for requesting the rezoning and illustrated his position using a detailed site map.

*Donation of Land to Prairie Township*

In the course of his remarks, Mr. Reynolds expressed M/I Homes' intention to donate the following land to the Township:

- 30 acres to the east of Proposed Westpoint 3, Sections 1 & 2.
- 25.4 acres north of the Contrail tracks and east of Hubbard Road.
- 25 to 30 additional acres east of the 25.4 acres, amount depending upon actual platting of the 74.313 acres that are the subject of the Application.

*Vote on Application No. 162-RZ-03*

Chairman Balzer inquired as to whether there were other persons who wanted to address the Zoning Commission. As there was none, he called for a motion on the Application.

Neil Distelhorst made a motion to approve Application No. 162-RZ-03 and recommend it to the Board of Trustees for approval based on:

- Considerations in the Staff Report;
- That down zoning from R-8 to R-6 is an appropriate land use, which is compatible with existing zoning in developed areas surrounding the site; and
- That R-6 zoning is consistent with the Township's future development plans for the location.

The motion to approve Application No. 162-RZ-03 was seconded by Howard Balzer and unanimously approved by the Zoning Commission.

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Announcement: There will be a special meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Tuesday, March 11, 2003 from 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Zoning Commission will be Tuesday, March 25, 2003 at 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment: Howard Balzar adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Hulda Moffitt, Clerk

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