



Lodi Township Planning Commission Minutes

August 24, 2022 7:00 PM

**Lodi Township Hall
3755 Pleasant Lake Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103**

1) Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Chair Strader at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

2) Roll Call of the Commission

Present: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard and Warner.

Absent: None

Others Present: Supervisor Godek, Township Attorney Jesse O'Jack, Planners Hannah Smith and Kelly McIntyre, Township Engineer Ron Cavallaro, and numerous members of the public, including Candice Briere (Midwestern Consulting), Amy Miller, Leslie Blackburn, Dourguam Ali, David Dixon Hammond, Clive Wooten, Charles Bielak, Barbara Bielak, Deb Markum, Andrea Salemi, Ann Damon, Gilda Johnson, Aleia MacDonald, Tim Schumacher, Ryan M, Kate Bond (Midwestern Consulting), Mufid Farha, and Dr Hazin. Don Rentschler.

3) Public Hearing

Public Hearing to receive comments on a request by Mufid Farha to rezone a 3.12-acre parcel, M-13-12-400-003, located at 2730 W Ellsworth Road, from the current zoning of AG, Agricultural District, to PSP Public/Semi-Public Services District.

Moved by Thelen, seconded by Swenson, to open the public hearing.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.

Nay: None.

The motion passed unanimously.

Leslie Blackburn – Stated that she has concerns about the trees, sound, creek water, wildlife, storm water, well, septic, lighting, signage, traffic, and roads.

Tom Mayne - Wondered why the parcel needs to be rezoned and is concerned about what could go into that space in the future. He also is concerned about increased traffic at the corner of Ellsworth and Ann Arbor-Saline Roads.

Ann Damon – Likes the current rural character of the neighborhood. Considers the Ellsworth/Ann Arbor-Saline Roads intersection very dangerous. Also has concerns about parking, noise, how many people will be visiting the “community center”, and the environment.

Linda Williams - Lives in the area, but does not use that corner because it is too dangerous. Concerned about it no longer being a single-family dwelling.

Ryan M – Lives immediately next door to the parcel on Ellsworth Road and is concerned about privacy, increased traffic, and changes to the land. Moved to the area in April for peace and quiet. Has heard music coming from a speaker at the house. Asked where the water would go if they put in a parking lot.

Karen Seltz – Has the same concerns about noise, traffic and the environment as her neighbors.

Aleia MacDonald – Does not feel she has had enough time to understand the details of the project. Prefers to keep the neighborhood in its current character because as a neighbor, she is someone that will be most impacted by the project.

Ronny Furrha - Does not believe the proposed project is what the neighbors think it is going to be. Stated that the sound will all be inside because the building will be well insulated. Does not think that traffic is a concern. Believes it will be a peaceful area. States they can only fit 30 or 40 people in the building at a time.

Mufid Farha – Stated that the music involved was for an engagement party and was coming from a small speaker that he has now banned. The facility is used by family and generally has about 10 people at a time. He invited the neighbors to come to visit the property. Stated that he has 380 family members in the Ann Arbor area, but most would not use this property. He stated they will not have any speakers. Said there are no plans to destroy the environment and the trees were taken out in conjunction with the installation of the septic field.

Jan Godek – Asked about a traffic study based on all the other uses that would be permitted once the property was rezoned.

Dr. Hazin – Stated that he owns a farm in the area and when he is done working there, he enjoys using the Reflection Center to pray. Said he and his wife are usually the only people there when they use the property.

K C Farha – Stated that the project is meant to be a peaceful place and they want to get along with the neighbors. Wants to do this with the community and make it right for everybody.

An audience member commented that the issue is not just what will happen today, it is also about what the rezoning could allow in the future.

R Hazin – Stated that many of the people that will be using this facility live in the area and pay taxes locally. Wondered if there was a way to have the prayer space without having to impact the neighbors.

Another citizen mentioned that they support the concept, but not the location.

Leslie Blackburn – Stated that the neighbors are already starting to see the impact of increased use of this property. Mentioned that at least 4 cars were coming out of the driveway when she was driving down Ellsworth Road and due to a blind spot, she almost hit one of them since they pulled out in a row. She does support more spirituality in the area, but is just not sure this is the right location. Pointed out that the entrance to the property should be to a primary (arterial or collector) roadway per the Lodi Township Zoning Ordinance, and Ellsworth Road at this location is neither.

Blackburn also requested that the following written comments be entered into the public record.

August 23, 2022

Hello friends and neighbors in Lodi Township

I am writing in response to the proposal for rezoning of 2730 W Ellsworth Rd.

We moved here as the trees called us in. We have a particular resonance with the agricultural and rural nature of the area, and came here to be able to disappear in nature and still be close to downtown Ann Arbor. Trees, nature and the earth are my spirituality, I pray with them. Moving in next to the already established Unitarian Universalist Church and what I've known as the Amma Center (I see it is now called "MA Center"), both of which I have a positive relationship with, feels really good as we establish our own spiritual connection here with the land.

At first it was unclear what the rezoning was for since there are no other areas zoned PSP on the Lodi Township Zoning map (printed Aug 17, 2022 from the website). The UU Church and Amma Center property both appear to be zoned Ag. Then as I did research and got more information from the township I found that it is to establish a Muslim prayer hall. Adding to the spirituality of our community feels really good.

After researching the best I could with the given information, I have several concerns and questions to clarify how the intended use will be executed, as well as some requests. It is really important to me that anything created here be in right balance with the land, water, animals, trees, plants and the people who live here.

I do see that there appears to be some care in maintaining some of the natural features, including preserving a barn for its age and character. Thank you. Yet I also notice some misrepresentations and inconsistency in action and words.

I now wish to comment and ask on the following topics: **Trees, Sound, Water/Creek, Stormwater, Well and Septic, Lighting, Signage, Traffic & Road**

Trees

Trees and the natural environment are not only important to me, they are a crucial part of the character of our area and part of the Lodi Twp Master Plan. Note the first two fundamental goals to ensure the future Township character is maintained are listed as:

- 1) Maintain preservation and management of existing natural features within Lodi Township.
- 2) Ensure that development projects are designed and constructed in a way that preserve or enhance the integrity of natural systems." - Lodi Township Master Plan section 3.5, p 19

Proposal states: "The proposed project has a footprint that is mindful of maintaining a negligible impact on the existing conditions of the site" - yet there has already been major impact to the site through tree removal that the owner has done that is not noted in the application.

Nearly all the trees in the western corner, formerly a beautiful Scotch pine forest, have been removed already (this was done in August/September 2021). The loss of these trees hurt my heart, I did much grieving during that time. Only a few remaining individuals stood at the edge with large gaps in between. Then later, since the root network has been so badly compromised (trees support and communicate with one another), one fell into the fiber optic cables running along the street (mid April 2022). It now lays dead at the edge of the road and created a vast opening at the Ellsworth edge. This clear cutting has already impacted how much sight line and sound bleed is happening between Ann Arbor Saline road and the golf course and the properties on the south side of Ellsworth.

Proposal states: "Trees make up a majority of the site as well as bring present on the entire site border" this is no longer true with the clear cut that was done to add a drainfield at the expense of many trees, it changed the character of the space, changed the street view and the aerial view no longer matches what's in the proposal.

It added about 14% more clear cut area to what is shown in the photographs.

Proposal states "About 12% of the site consists of grassy area" yet this is incomplete: I see 24% clear cut on the aerial view, including the house, and add 14% more to that for septic field.

Proposal states: "The amount of trees being removed is minimal" - there were significant tree removals done for the drain field. What more are planned to be removed? Size? Species?

To be in right balance with the land, in part, means planting new trees in honor of the ones removed and this is missing from the proposal. Do you have a plan for replanting the trees that were removed? Consider options to replant on this and other properties or donate to tree replanting organizations.

Proposal states: “The existing garage and shed will be removed” - can native trees, shrubs and plants be planted to replace these? I recommend local companies who specialize in native plantings: Feral Flora and Native Restoration Solutions are two options, as resources for that type of work.

Native species

The primary native trees of this area noted by Joseph Wampler in 1819 who surveyed along this line (Ellsworth Rd is a Range Line from that survey), are:
Hickory, White oak, Red oak, Bur Oak, Beech, Linden (American Basswood), Ash and Elm (which are both now succumbing to pests in this area) With understory of spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) & ironwood (also known as musclewood, or *Carpinus Caroliniana*)

Trees and Original people here were forcefully removed. Have care and bring back native species so that they can help the ecosystem remember its roots and balance.

Sound

My experience in Egypt was that Muslim prayer halls use amplified speaker broadcasting to the surrounding area for call to prayer 5 times daily including the earliest at 4am. Is this planned? And if so, what decibel level? What duration? What times of day?

What are the expected and maximum numbers of people congregating? Are they gathering outside and inside or just inside?

Sound concerns have already begun, our neighbor at 2720 has just shared with me their concerns - we will speak to those separately.

Water

Creek & wildlife

There is a natural creek, noted as a south running creek about 3.5 feet wide at the range line (now Ellsworth Rd) in the 1819 survey by Joseph Wampler and his team, runs onto and through our property. Note it's even shown on the township maps back in the 1800's on the wall of this room (Lodi Township hall meeting room)! It is now at least 10 feet wide during the dry season and already at max capacity during wet season - flooding is common. I am very concerned about how stormwater from a parking lot will impact this flow. This creek continues on to eventually join the Saline River as a part of the River Raisin watershed.

This stream and ecosystem are vibrant and living.

There's a great blue heron that fishes in this stream at the north edge of our property, which is right across the street from you. There are fish in the creek, and frogs and toads. We've had red-backed salamanders under rocks on the land, and salamanders are often indicators of a healthy ecosystem. There are animals that rely on the creek for drinking water, many animals that live here on this land. We have bats, wild turkeys, deer, skunks and possums, coyotes and rabbits. Turkey vultures breed and live here. Red-tailed hawks hunt here. We hear Barred owls, Great Horned owls. And of course, squirrels and raccoons live here too. We have birds of many species. In fact, during the May 2022 breeding bird survey, the only blackbilled cuckoo observed in all of Lodi Township was observed here on the UU Church wooded trails that are in contiguous relationship with our property and the other surrounding areas (verified by the President of the Washtenaw County Audubon Society). The black billed cuckoo is rather elusive and it needs “thick secondary growth. Often sits motionless for long periods of time and is difficult to spot.” We also believe the northern flicker is nesting in the area of our property/UU church land, which is a bird whose numbers are declining as noted by the River Raisin watershed map (referencing recent breeding bird surveys).

Proposal states: “Intermittent stream from cross site drainage” As noted above, this is a natural feature of the ecosystem that has been present for hundreds of years, not a manmade drainage ditch and needs to be treated with care

Note also we’re in the Ann Arbor Greenbelt - our 2725 property and these surrounding ones including 2730 - see Master Plan (sec 2.3 p 8). This is to note, with gratitude, Lodi Township’s cooperation with this strategic plan for preserving areas in this region.

Proposal states: Findings #4. “The property to the south is a church.” And names the other properties to the east, north and west. Yet is missing one: the other property to the south of 2730 is our zoned Ag residential lot (2725), with the creek that leaves 2730.

We live and steward the land here with awareness that, just like all of us in this room (or most if not all), we are not the original peoples of this land. We are committed to do our best to be in right relationship with the land, trees, animals, plants and neighbors here.

Stormwater Management

With the awareness of the creek and land comes the concern of stormwater management on the property. We don’t want to damage these natural habitats and we don’t wish to add more flooding concerns.

Parking lot and driveway surfaces

Proposal states: “A concrete driveway is located on the east side of the property” Yet the current driveway near the road is two track dirt, is it concrete further north? Will it remain unpaved at the south end?

Proposal states: Parking added is “several parking spaces” at north end plus the “15 paved parking spaces”? How much more paving does this mean?

“Majority of disturbance located in the center clearing where the proposed parking lot will be located” - 15 in the center?

Can you clarify the proposed parking area, will it be in the clearing? Or north of the structure? Or both?

Note: Washtenaw County: Procedures & Design Criteria For Stormwater Management <https://www.washtenaw.org/221/Rules-Design-Standards>

Proposal states: that there is “no jurisdiction of stormwater management on the property” by Washtenaw County, what does this mean? The standards are noted at the link above.

The UU Church was first designed with a smaller parking lot and church. When the addition for the classroom spaces were added, and the additional parking lot that wraps around the east side was added, many changes were made - prompted by the previous owner of our property, to ensure the stormwater runoff was managed correctly. A vegetative swale was added, and designed to send water south toward the pond. The pond then has an overflow relief that slowly drains into the woods if needed. Having the swale for filtration and retention through it and the pond, plus changes that were made subsequently at the north end of the swale when the system didn’t operate as planned, have eased the flooding concerns on our property.

What are the plans for this proposal? We don’t want to create more flooding problems.

Well & Septic

Proposal states: “Property is currently serviced by on-site drainfield and well which is sized adequately for the proposed use” This current drainfield is different than was present when the owners bought the property (12/23/2020). I saw this drainfield being put in place in Aug/Sep 2021, according to the statement above then presumably being sized for this use. It was put in many months after the purchase and before this application. So it appears the property was purchased with the intention for the prayer

hall and zoning change. Why was a residential property purchased with this intention without review in the township first?

It appears that the drain field was sized for an institutional use that has not yet been approved for this property and in doing so it removed significant portion of trees and damaged the character of the area.

Was a new well put in when the drainfield was changed or is this the existing well from residential use? What is the increase of usage expected? What will be the impact to the surrounding neighbors' wells?

Lighting

Will exterior lighting be added for the driveway and parking? How will this affect neighboring properties?

We've had concerns with lighting overflowing our property from the UU Church parking lot. And grateful that through our good relationship with UU Church, they've done modifications to their lighting to support our needs.

Signage

Will there be signage at the road, where? Signage of any kind will impact the character here and is counter to a residential area. How big, what are the guidelines? Per the Lodi Twp Master Plan: "It is imperative that these characteristics are incorporated [including] controlled signage" Sec 3.3, pg 18

Traffic

How many people are you planning to have come? How often? What times of day?

How does this change traffic flow - skinny driveway with low visibility - I had a problem on a recent evening (Aug 2022) with at least 4 or more vehicles coming out of the driveway in succession, and one not stopping - presumably not seeing me, and nearly creating an impact with my vehicle. Our neighbor at 2720 has also shared concerns with 16-20 cars leaving the property and sounds impacting their family and sleep.

There's a fence on the neighboring property east of the drive, and trees on the west. Removal of even more trees at the road line is very much not desired. I also believe the neighbor does not wish for their fence to be removed.

There's a blindspot by the fence which is a **safety issue**. Emerging from the driveway has to be done very slowly with care to be able to see both directions. In the current residential use with only one vehicle coming out at a time, this is not a problem and can be navigated. Yet the nature of humans driving in groups, when groups of cars are following each other, it is often the case that people rather blindly follow the leader and don't look when exiting - making this blindspot a safety issue for larger volumes of cars. For example the case I just described above. This is also an example of what could happen in the case of a mass exodus from a large event.

Also note that the intersection at W Ellsworth and Ann Arbor Saline Rd is already dangerous as it is, what will be the impact of this additional volume of traffic at the intersection?

Road

Ellsworth Road where the driveway enters is a dirt road, which is desired by residents and part of the rural character of the township.

Per Lodi Township Master Plan Sec 3.4 Future Community Character, p 19 "The quality, character, and scale of rural roads shall be maintained and not subject to overuse."

Per Lodi Twp Zoning Ordinance Section 41.14 Institutional Uses:

#2 "Institutional uses shall have direct vehicle access to a primary road classified as an arterial or collector by the master transportation plans of the Township"

Per the Lodi Twp Master Plan - Map 10 - Ellsworth is a “Local Roadway” **not an arterial or a collector.**

Also per Lodi Twp Master Plan Part 13.2: Development of Institutional Uses, pg 81 “The location should have direct frontage on, and access to, one or more public roads that can safely and efficiently accommodate the expected traffic generated by the facility. Locating new institutional uses on local roads or unpaved roads should be discouraged.”

So this states that the proposal is in violation of the Zoning Ordinance and the Master Plan of Lodi Township.

Proposal states: #6 pg 8: “not place additional capacity requirements on public services” - yet what about **road grading services** on Ellsworth? Traffic has grown over the years and has become quite heavy on this dirt road. The road grading crews already come often. And what about the impact to **dust levels** that are already a concern by residents?

Final questions for Lodi Township:

One other concern is: if this is rezoned, and the owner sells later or decides to expand on the initial plan, what potentially could happen or then be built on the acreage? How is this managed?

Is it possible to do as a home business without rezoning? What would that mean?

I understand there is a Site Planning process for new development. Regardless of zoning, will this need to go through Site Planning process? Will there be a public review for that?

Why are the UU Church and Amma Center not on PSP zoning?

What is the public road easement that’s on the property?

Conclusion

While we support the nature of a Muslim prayer hall in the neighborhood, we do not support the plan as proposed for the above reasons. We have tried coming over to introduce ourselves several times since the property was purchased and no one has been home. We ask that we have an opportunity to connect as neighbors and together see how we could meet the mutual needs of the area in right balance with the people, land, trees, water and animals that live here, then return to the township in a future meeting.

We ask that today the committee deny the proposed rezoning as written.

I am already in conversation with people from UU about native tree and plant planting, and would like to offer that connection with you as well. I have enjoyed, and I invite you to hear, the stories from the residents that have been here many years about the joys of raising their families in rural farmland. And how the new development causing traffic, dust and other concerns has changed the landscape. Also the stories from the newer residents moving in who have specifically sought out this township to “get away” and be in nature and are struggling with the work already being done on the property. This feels important to honor.

To owner and applicant Mufid Farha - Also, I see this property is actually owned by a company called *762 Properties LLC* at the mailing address you list as yours so I presume that to be your company. I see that company owns four (4) properties in Washtenaw County alone, and it appears many others elsewhere. That indicates to me that you’re very busy with business, development, and being a facilities manager. With so many irons in the fire I suspect you will have less involvement in the personal relationship with the land and the center, and the community here. I’m curious if there’s someone who is in that role and will personally be there at the space on a regular basis and if so who is that person and what is their contact information?

Warmly and respectfully, your neighbor

Leslie Blackburn
313-269-6719
Steward of the land at 2725 W Ellsworth Rd
leslieblackburn1@gmail.com



Area of tree removal that was done for the drainfield Summer/Fall 2021

Moved by Thelen, seconded by Rogers, to close the public hearing.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.
Nay: None.
The motion passed unanimously.

4) Public Hearing

Public hearing on a request by Jason and Amy Miller, 5250 Bethel Church Road, requesting a Special Use Permit to allow for continued use of the Renaissance Farms Stables and Commercial Horse-Riding Facility at 6750 Bethel Church Road. Parcel #'s M-13-29-300-020, M-13-29-300-019, M-13-29-400-008, and M-13-29-400-007.

Moved by Stevenson, seconded by Vestergaard, to open the public hearing.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.
Nay: None.
The motion passed unanimously.

Charles Bielak asked why the residents were not notified by mail of this public hearing. It was determined that due to a clerical error, the letters were sent out with an Ann Arbor address. On August 22nd, when the Lodi Township Office became aware of the problem, they tried to notify residents by phone, with a follow up email containing the letter. Bielak stated that he is opposed to an expansion of the previous use on the property.

Township Attorney Jesse O'Jack – Mr. O'Jack stated that since the township discovered the addressing error without enough time to correct it, this public hearing will be for anyone who wishes to speak, but the Planning Commission will need to reschedule an official public hearing on this request at a future date, with proper notification given.

Clive Wotton states that he previously worked at this property and is familiar with the infrastructure. He is concerned that the septic system, parking lot, and barn facilities would not support the type of enhanced uses that are proposed. He enjoys the tranquility of the area and wants it to stay that way.

Leslie Blackburn commented on public notification concerns and suggestions.

Charles Bielak commented that the roads become very problematic when it rains. He noted that in one area, the Road Commission has permanently installed “Water Over Roadway” signs. He is concerned that increased traffic will make the situation worse and it may impact the ability for emergency vehicles to respond to the area.

Clive Wotton supported the idea that more traffic would be a great concern on the unpaved roads in the area.

Moved by Thelen, seconded by Vestergaard, to close the public hearing.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.

Nay: None.

The motion passed unanimously.

5) Announcements

None.

6) Public Comment

Nothing further.

7) Approve Minutes

a) Regular meeting minutes of the July 26, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.

Moved by Stevenson, seconded by Rogers, to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2022, Lodi Township Planning Commission meeting.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

8) Approve Agenda

Moved by Thelen, seconded by Stevenson, to approve the agenda as amended.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

9) Old Business

a) Concrete and Asphalt Crushing Operations.

Township Planner Smith explained the revisions that have been made to the draft Concrete and Asphalt Crushing Operations proposed amendment to the Lodi Township Zoning Ordinance. Godek asked about limiting the allowed use to a temporary facility. O’Jack indicated that in his opinion, allowing only temporary facilities could leave the township in a position where they could be accused of exclusionary zoning.

Moved by Stevenson, seconded by Swenson, to recommend to the Lodi Township Board of Trustees, the addition of the proposed Concrete and Asphalt Crushing Operations language, as written, to the Lodi Township Zoning Ordinances.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.

Nay: None.
The motion passed unanimously.

10) New Business

a) Lake Forest Minor Site Plan Request

Township Planner Smith reviewed the basic information about the application and explained why she believes that this request should be a major site plan review. She also noted that the Zoning Ordinance does allow for a combined preliminary and final site plan review process and she suggested that this is an option that the Commission might want to explore. Smith, as well as several members of the Commission, had questions about the scope of this project that were not clear in the current submittal.

Moved by Rogers, seconded by Stevenson, to require this application to be considered a major site plan review based on the size of the project warranting a more intensive review of the information needed to review the plan.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.
Nay: None.
The motion passed unanimously.

Moved by Thelen, seconded by Rogers, to provide the applicant the option to submit a combined preliminary and final site plan for review by the Township Planner and the Planning Commission, as permitted in Section 44.07 of the Lodi Township Zoning Ordinance.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.
Nay: None.
The motion passed unanimously.

b) Rezoning Request at 2730 West Ellsworth Road.

Planner Smith reviewed the report that she prepared for the Commission. She explained that a property owner that wants to use a parcel in a manner that is currently not permitted by the ordinance can apply for a rezoning, which is what is occurring with this application. The reason that other religious institutions are currently permitted to be located in an area zoned Agricultural is because of a Zoning Ordinance change. The 2019 Revision of the Lodi Township Zoning Ordinance created the Public/Semi-Public Services District and this became the permitted area for prayer halls and other religious activities. Churches that were permitted in the Agricultural zone prior to the Zoning Ordinance change are now a legal nonconforming use. This is why most churches in the township are not in a PSP zoned area. Smith also stressed that rezoning is not tied to the use of the property, so that if rezoned, anything permitted in the PSP zone could be proposed for the property in the future, and it could be used for something other than a prayer hall. She did stress that any use of the property would have to go through the site plan process and that is where concerns about water, trees, and traffic would be addressed.

Smith also noted that the zoning ordinance indicates that a rezoning request should be evaluated on multiple criteria, including:

Evaluation of Existing Zoning and Development Pattern

Apparent Demand
Availability of Public Services and Infrastructure
Compatibility
Consistency with the Master Plan
Additional Factors.

Smith went through these factors based on her findings, and reviewed her initial recommendation to the Commission that the rezoning be approved and sent to the Township Board of Trustees. However, based on feedback that was received at the meeting, particularly regarding the concerns for traffic safety at the corner of Ann Arbor-Saline Road and Ellsworth Road, she offered that the Commission could table the request and collect additional information on this use and any others permitted in the PSP District before making a decision.

Several commissioners expressed concerns about the safety of the intersection of Ann Arbor-Saline Road and Ellsworth Road and the sight distance available for entering or crossing Ann Arbor-Saline Road. Strader pointed out that there is a Public Roadway Easement from the property to Ann Arbor-Saline Road and perhaps that could help with the traffic situation. There was also considerable concern about what could be proposed for the property if the prayer house outgrows the space and needs to move to a larger facility.

Kate Bond from Midwestern Consulting spoke on behalf of the applicant. She wanted to point out that many of the concerns that are being expressed would be dealt with at the site plan process, not during the rezoning request. She indicated that any physical changes from a residence to a prayer hall would take place on the inside of the structure, and she said that the previous owner had to install the new drain field as a requirement of Washtenaw County to complete the sale. She also said she is very familiar with the process of a church having to rezone to PSP if they want to make any changes because she was involved with the only other church project in the township that needed rezoning due to desired site enhancements. She also feels that a traffic study might be more appropriate when use is being determined with the site plan process. She also suggested that some traffic issues could be addressed by signage on site, such as no right turn signs. She also felt that a traffic study for uses that are not proposed by the applicant would be an undue burden on her client. Township Engineer Cavallaro shared that it would be difficult to conduct a traffic study for all possible uses. McIntyre clarified for Bond that the township is not requesting a traffic study, only presenting options that might help the applicants position as the Commission make a decision about rezoning.

Several residents provided input on the concern for what could also be allowed in the PSP District. Farha expressed that he is just planning a small prayer house.

Swenson indicated that he did not feel a traffic study would be a good idea because he believes that any increase in traffic to the intersection would be a bad idea due to the limited sight distance and the angle that the roadways meet. Strader indicated that the applicant could meet with the planner in a pre-application type meeting to talk about solutions. Smith emphasized that rezoning is not use specific and that traffic is a factor that should be considered in a rezoning application. She mentioned again that the township can not require any traffic information of the applicant, but it is incumbent upon them to provide data supporting their request.

Moved by Strader, seconded by Swenson, to table the request to rezone the property at 2730 West Ellsworth Road

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Vestergaard, Warner.
Nay: Thelen.
The motion passed 6-1.

Moved by Warner, seconded by Stevenson, to set a Public Hearing for a request by Jason and Amy Miller, requesting a minor Site Plan review of the property at 6750 Bethel Church Road. Parcel #'s M-13-29-300-020, M-13-29-300-019, M-13-29-400-008, and M-13-29-400-007. This is a second public hearing on this application due to an addressing error in the notification to surrounding properties.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.
Nay: None.
The motion passed unanimously.

Moved by Thelen, seconded by Vestergaard, to postpone deliberation of the request by Jason and Amy Miller, requesting Minor Site Plan approval for the Renaissance Farms Stables and Commercial Horse-Riding Facility at 6750 Bethel Church Road. Parcel #'s M-13-29-300-020, M-13-29-300-019, M-13-29-400-008, and M-13-29-400-007.

Yea: Rogers, Stevenson, Strader, Swenson, Thelen, Vestergaard, Warner.
Nay: None.
The motion passed unanimously.

The applicant asked if there was a need to complete a new application, and Smith indicated that if there was new information to support the application, they could submit it to her. Clive Wooten asked if the term entertainment in the application could be defined. Charles Bielak asked a specific question about the plans and was told that the Commission could not discuss the issue at this meeting. The applicant, Amy Miller, offered to discuss the plan with Bielak outside of the meeting.

11) Reports

a) Board of Trustees

Swenson review the topics addressed at the Board of Trustees meeting, with the most important issue being the Saline Area Fire Department.

b) Commissioners

Nothing.

c) Planning Consultant

Nothing further.

d) Engineering Consultant

Nothing further.

12) Public Comment

Clive Wooten asked if anyone was familiar with what is happening with broadband service in the western portion of the township. Thelen recommended that he contact County Commissioner Shannon Beeman.

13) Adjournment

Motion by Warner, seconded by Thelen, to adjourn at 9:53 PM.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for September 27, 2022, at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Craig Swenson, Planning Commission Secretary

DRAFT