

Bainbridge Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

October 18, 2021

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Dale Kreitner at Bainbridge Township Hall, 7315 Territorial Rd, Watervliet, Michigan 49098 at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL

Present: Dale Kreitner, Melissa Morlock, Jim Doroh, Dave Peden, Don Baiers, Scott Blushke, Chad Yetzke, (Alternate)

Absent: Ron Bjies

PUBLIC COMMENT:

OPENED 7:00pm CLOSED 7:01pm

NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 7:01pm

Motion by Scott Blushke / Chad Yetzke to approve Minutes September 20, 2021

Voice Vote: All in Favor

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: 7:02pm

Request made to edit the agenda by Chairman Krietner. Connecting two bullet points as one item (Revisit Amendment 4-19-21 and Vacant Zoned Districts). As well as adding review current zoning and future zoning maps to the agenda. Motion by Don Baiers / Chad Yetzke to approve the agenda.

Voice Vote: All in Favor

BUSINESS:

Open Public Hearing: 7:02

- **Special Land Use, Air Strip** – Applicant, Elizabeth Amundsen, is located at 9450 N. Branch Rd, Watervliet, Michigan 49098. Her husband and her are both airline transport rated pilots, airframe and power plant mechanics with inspection authorization from the FAA. When they are home, they like to go around the pattern once or twice with the kids. She has stated they aren't trying to do a business out of there or flight training. Chairman Kreitner asked her how many aircraft they would have. She has a small, two seat, stock factory built 1946 Aeronca Champ, looking to take the kids out for a fun day. It's your standard 4 stroke, not super loud, no louder than a tractor or a lawn mower. She was asked by Chairman Kreitner how long her property is, it is 1,600 ft long from the south line to the barn. She would need 1,000 ft to fly and has 500 feet leeway with a little bit built in at the end too. Board Member, D. Peden asked if there was already an existing run way there. She said, there used to be one next to her but not on this property where a buddy of hers would fly his ultra-light. This one would be a lot longer than what his was. Chairman Kreitner mentioned that he noticed from the north side she had powerlines at the

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end and some trees on the other side when he drove by. If they get the approval, they would like to get the rights to the land or purchase the land to the south of them. They would like to remove some trees so that they can clear it not so they can land on it. Chairman Kreitner asked her what kind of FAA requirements she have for the strip. She replied there is no requirements with the FAA just to work with the local authorities. There are only visual flight rules, no night flying, no instrument flying, just nice weather, flying on a sunny day. Board Member, S. Blushke said he was concerned about the power lines and the fact that in his line of work he makes approaches into Benton Harbor and concerns if he would paint them on his T-cas. He also mentioned this runway is North and South and the prevailing winds are East and West. She agreed and said it would be just like the one at Watervliet Airports, with fair weather flying.

- **Adam Grochow, located at 9585 Danneffel Road**, questioned night flying, plans to change aircraft, and if she carried liability insurance.
- **John Kamer, located at 2670 Wolf Rd**, stated that his wife and him own the property directly continuous with the line and the Amundsen's, at one time, trespassed and removed trees from his property without permission. There was never any good faith effort to be good neighbors and they are strongly opposed to this. He also mentioned that it is hard to hunt deer with an aircraft zooming by. He had sent in correspondence prior to the meeting for the board to review. Mrs. Amundsen said she had already apologized for the trees. They were going by what they could see on Google Maps for where the property line was. They thought they were still on their property until the survey markers went up, they did not know they were not on their property. She mentioned they stopped immediately and didn't know how to get ahold of Mr. Kamer. Mr. Kamer replied to Mrs. Amundsen that the property line was marked quite well. And they were all done cutting the trees that were in their path. The property line was marked with a fence post, at all corners and a no trespassing sign, on a board. He said if you wanted to know where the line is and you were operating in good faith you know where it is. Board Member, S. Blushke asked if she or her husband have any accidents or incident record with the FAA. She replied that her husband had an accident taking off out of Watervliet, the engine failed to make power, and he and his passenger were ok. Other than that, there is no accident on either of their records and that's after he has had over 10,000 hours.
- **Steve Kraklau, located at 9320 N Branch Road**, wanted to know if his insurance would rise due to aircraft being flown so close to his home or considered a more dangerous zone.
- **Lauren Hutson, located on 9550 Danneffel Road**, stated that it is a nuisance to have an aircraft flying over her home.
- **Ken Thomas, located at 9410 N Branch Road**, read correspondence that he sent to the board. Air strip has been in construction since the Amundsen's have moved there. Neighbor's trees were cut down on the neighbor's property and numerous loads of dirt have been hauled in. He is assuming it is to raise up the ground because it is wet and soggy. Mr. Thomas asked the room, if the take-off and distance to clear a 50 ft. obstacle on pavement, with the aircraft described in the permit is approximately 583 ft and the landing is 880 ft over a 50 ft obstacle. What would be the take-off and landing distance on a grass field, that is not level, on that same 50 ft obstacle. Why would they need to

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cut down trees on someone else's property if you have practically 1,900 ft of runway space? He said it makes him think that the airstrip would be used for larger planes or is it due to not being able to clear obstacles on an aircraft. He spoke on the crash of 2017, according to the APSB the flight instructors did adequate pre-flight planning, which resulted in a takeoff over maximum gross weight, from a turf runway, in high density altitude conditions, and the airplanes inability to obtain a climb rate, of subsequent collision of trees, at Watervliet Airport. The runway he attempted to take-off from was 2600ft long and 200ft wide. Almost 700 ft longer than the proposed main airstrip. Watervliet's other runway is approximately 1,540 ft, which is probably double the size of the proposed secondary runway, that he saw on the permit. The type of plane that crashed in Watervliet, was an Aeronca, which he believes is the same type described in the permit. He didn't find a Tail number to an aircraft registered to the Amundsen's. Mrs. Amundsen replied it is under JP Arrow Holdings. There are two aircrafts registered to 55 Xray which is an LLC, the Amundsens were a part of, which neither fit the description described in the permit and neither are flying. Do the Amundsen's plan to use the proposed airstrip for a business, aircraft repair, instruction, or any other type of business. He also questioned if the Amundsen's had any commercial interest in airstrip for a business due to credentials they possess. How many people will be able to take off and land because any private landing strip can be flown in and out of at any time for emergency use by any pilot. Both Mr. and Mrs. Amundsen were involved with a company called Tailwheels etc., which is owned by Mr. Amundsen's Father. He has heard of at least 4 crashes with that company and at least 4 fatalities. Mr. Thomas stated that he knows how to obtain these inquires because he is an aspiring pilot with over 100 take offs and landings, solo flights, and with the completion of 2 separate grounds schools. He is strongly opposed to this Special Land Use Permit and humbly request that The Bainbridge Township Planning Commission deny or reject this request and use. If the Township allows the use of this permit than he is willing to pursue legal action against all parties involved.

- **Gary Margolis located at 9411 Meadowbrook Road**, wanted to know how far the Watervliet Airport was away from the Amundsen's.
- **Karla Ott, located at 9445 N Branch Road**, said she is directly across the street and has safety concerns.

Closed Public Hearing 7:25pm

Opened Regular Meeting

- **State of Conclusion** - Chairman Kreitner reviewed and prepared the Statement of Conclusion, with the Planning Commission. (attached)
- **Disposition** - Motion to deny Special Land Use made by Dave Peden/Chad Yetzke
Roll Call Vote:
"Yes" Scott Blushke, Chad Yetzke, Dave Peden, Dale Kreitner
"No" Don Baiers, Melissa Morlock, Jim Doroh

Motion Carried

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- Revisit Amendment 4-19-21 and Vacant Zoned Districts 7:35pm
Motion was made to reverse the 2acre minimum, established in the minutes of 4-19-21 and establish the minimum lot size for C- Commercial as 1 acre in Section 5.10, Schedule of District Regulations. supported by Scott Blushke / Dave Peden.

Roll Call Vote:

“Yes” Scott Blushke, Chad Yetzke, Dave Peden, Dale Kreitner, Don Baiers

“No” Melissa Morlock, Jim Doroh

Motion Carried

- Planned Unit Development- Review Current Zoning and Future Zoning -
Chairman will break into committees to review and committee reports will be given at next regular meeting.

ADJOURN: 8:45pm

Motion by Melissa Morlock / Jim Doroh

Voice vote: All in Favor

Respectfully,

Secretary, Melissa Morlock