

**Alaiedon Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Public Hearing**

March 18, 2019

The Alaiedon Township Planning Commission met Monday, March 18, 2019 at the Alaiedon Township Hall for a public hearing.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Laurie Koelling at 7:05 pm.

Roll call was taken. Present were Laurie Koelling, Beth Smith, Kim Hafley, Bill Schneider, Matt Oesterle and Barb Kranz. Absent was Roger Cook. Also present was Township Attorney, Molly Coscarelli of McGinty Law Firm.

Beth Smith moved to approve the agenda. Matt Oesterle seconded. Motion approved.

Matt Oesterle moved to approve the minutes from the February 19, 2019 meeting. Barb Kranz seconded. Motion approved.

**Old Business**

None.

**New Business**

1. Consider and receive public comment on a Special Land Use requested by NJ Sanford Properties LLC for Dog Gone Fun. This property is located at 2869 Jolly Road Okemos, MI in Alaiedon Township. If granted the Special Land Use Permit would allow the property owners to operate a Pet Care Facility for dogs during the day, grooming services, obedience classes and overnight boarding. This property involves parcel #33-06-06-05-101-005 Section 5 containing .952 acres in a I-1 Light Industrial District Zoning.

Chair Koelling explained the evening's process and that the parties requesting the Special Land Use Permit have the opportunity to present their information and the floor will be opened for public comment.

Deb Dansby - spoke on behalf of Dog Gone Fun. She based her presentation on the 7-page memo she delivered to the Alaiedon Township Hall for the Alaiedon Township Planning Commission. The memo submitted by Ms. Dansby is attached to the minutes.

Specific points emphasized by Ms. Dansby include:

- To optimize dog traffic flow she will be requesting a variance to allow 5' wide fenced walkway from the southwest door to the play yard.
- The number of private dog bedrooms for boarding has increased from 19 to 24.
- The plan calls for a reduction in parking spaces from 49 to 41.
- There is not a lot of data on industry. Key statistics provided by Ms. Dansby
  - 90% of dog day cares are located in industrial zones (No source)
  - Traffic patterns are heavy between 7-9 and 4-6. She provided actual data from a dog day care located in Ferndale MI.
- Ms. Dansby brought a display with photos illustrating that two vehicles can pass on the road going back to the proposed site for Dog Gone Fun.

- Ms. Dansby noted that the traffic with Dog Gone Fun will be significantly less than of previous tenants. She reported that there had been approximately 85 employees/cars 10 years, 80 employees/cars 5 years ago and 70 cars last year. She also noted at times during the past 10 years there have been additional one or two tenants in the building at 2869 Jolly Road.
- There is lighting in the parking lot. Electrician is working on making sure it is up to code.
- Proposed signage is way under allotted sign requirements.
- Odor – cleaning up dogs immediately and good waste management.
- Air quality - Most expensive part of renovation is state-of-the-art air exchange with low bacteria.

Questions and Response Summary from the Planning Commission:

**Planning Commission Question:** How many dogs per day?

Ms. Dansby responded that the maximum capacity is up to 102 dogs. She believe it more likely to have 90 dogs a day. She continued that clients typically people stay 5 minutes when dropping off or picking up their dog(s). She stated based on the traffic survey from Ferndale, the maximum number of cars per hour is 30 cars.

**Planning Commission Question:** Having driven back to the building, the road seems very narrow and the parking lot very tight for clients likely to be in a hurry when dropping off or picking up a dog particularly in the winter when there may be snow, is this safe?

Ms. Dansby responded that all roads support 2-way traffic. She stated that they used two large trucks and took the pictures shown on the board to illustrate that vehicles can pass. Additionally in the future, she stated that they will give snow removal vendor detailed instruction on how to move snow it keep road as clear and open as possible.

**Planning Commission Question:** You referenced the number of cars from previous tenants, the difference is that with the previous tenants all of the traffic was going in the same direction. With your business model, you will have a lot of two-way traffic during drop-off and pick-up times.

Ms. Dansby responded that the road meets the MDOT standard of 24'. In terms of parking, Ms. Dansby suggested Josh Sanford speak to the topic.

**Planning Commission Question:** What is the surface of the outdoor play area?

Ms. Dansby responded that the pet area covered will be covered with pet turf and drainage system with sand underneath. The sand slows the run-off. She stated that she would need to confer with the vendor for additional information

**Planning Commission Question:** What about the distance between loading dock and east boundary?

Ms. Dansby responded that it is approximately 24'. Dog Gone Fun will not be using the dock. The 4-yard dumpster will be located in front of the dock and will be picked up frequently – daily if necessary.

**Planning Commission Question:** Is there a problem with emergency vehicle access with the 5' fenced walkway?

Ms. Dansby responded that access to the play area could be changed but the 5' walkway is the easiest and safest way to move dogs to the outside play area. Rick Fernberg, also with Dog Gone Fun Day care stated that in case of fire unlikely emergency vehicles would go back to the south door.

**Planning Commission Question:** Has there been any conversation with the condo association about the road situation and how it may be improved?

Ms. Dansby said yes, there have been conversations. However, it is unlikely there will be any immediate changes that all members can agree on. Ms. Dansby stated that there were other businesses in the condo association that were looking for better access, but that all the roads in condo meet requires MDOT entire roads is 24' feet.

**Public Comment:**

**Kim Dudley** of 1808 Hagadorn Road legal counsel to Reichenbachs. Ms. Dudley stated that the property is a little short on acreage per the zoning ordinance and that she and her client are concerned about traffic and parking. She stated the previous tenant had people parking on the grass with the current number of 49 parking spots. The current plan shows dog play area taking up some of these parking spaces. In addition the turns on the road are tight. It seems this business is better suited for B-1 zoning. Site requirements should comply with the ordinance and they do not.

Ms. Dansby responded that the roads meet MDOT requirements. As far as parking, only employees are parked the entire day. Most people dropping off and picking up dogs is 5 minutes the proposed responses are more than adequate.

Ms. Dudley responded she measured the road narrows down in 22'2" on turn. She believes traffic and safety is a huge issue. The township does not do justice when it allows special use permits and the property does not fit the zoning ordinance.

**Jim Reichenbach** owner of 2860 and 2855 Jolly Road. Mr. Reichenbach presented the history of the Maple Knoll Condominium including the role of Phil Crockett, the individual who built the building for 2869 Jolly Road. Mr. Reichenbach stated he purchased his property because of the industrial zoning to fit the nature of his business and his primary concerns are the lack of acreage and potential safety problems due to the road configuration, increased traffic and parking.

Ms. Dansby responded that Mr. Reichenbach bought the building knowing what the rules were. If Mr. Reichenbach is concerned about safety he should start with having his employees, drive and park safely. She also stated to facilitate a safer area, Mr. Reichenbach should use his storage area to load and unload. Ms. Dansby noted that the Alaideon Township Board of Trustees and its attorney communicated at the last board meeting that the small lack of acreage is not a problem. She also noted that her plans include adequate parking spaces per the I-1

zoning requirements and that 90 % of all dog day cares are in industrial zoning. She also mentioned that current owner could speak to the previous parking situation.

**Mechelle Fernberg** of 2869 Jolly Road stated that while parking is tight, she has been in numerous retail businesses where parking is tighter.

**Marty Neumann** of 2040 Aurelius Road and legal counsel to Dog Gone Fun stated that approving the Special Use Permit is a great opportunity to put vacant building to use.

**Josh Sanford** current owner of 2869 Jolly Road stated that when he was occupying the building, he did have about 48 people working and they did use all of 49 parking spaces and sometimes people did park on the grass. Mr. Sanford stated that Earthy Delights another Maple Knoll Condominium resident has talked with Forsburgs about getting another exit road to facilitate better traffic flow.

Chair Koelling stated that the Planning Commissions encourage growth and business expansion, however, it needs to make sure before issuing a Special Use Permit that the business is appropriate for the zoning.

Planning Commission members and Alaieton Township Trustee Beth Smith stated that as she reviews the Approval Standards for the Special Use Permit her concerns are safety as it relates to parking and traffic flow and if the entire road is 24' in width.

Barb Kranz suggested additional slow and yield signs may be of assistance.

Beth Smith made a motion to table any recommendation to the Alaieton Township Board of Trustees until a survey from an independent survey company regarding the width of the common area road is completed and a plan to mitigate the identified safety concerns is submitted to the Township office. Matt Oesterle seconded. Motion carried.

Township Attorney, Molly Coscarelli suggested Kubs Survey to complete the project.

2. Consider Zoning Ordinance amendment to allow mini storage facilities within the B-1 Business District and OW Office Warehouse District with a special use permit.

Beth Smith moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the Alaieton Township Board of Trustees to amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow mini storage facilities within the B-1 Business District and OW Office Warehouse District with a special use permit. Matt Oesterle seconded. Motion carried

### **3. Public Comment:**

Deb Dansby asked if the scale drawing from Maple Knoll Condominium Association could be used. The Planning Commission held that an independent survey for the road needed to be completed.

Matt Oesterle moved to adjourn. Barb Kranz seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kim Hafley, Secretary