



Minutes
Natural Features Protection Review Board
February 29, 2024
Regular Meeting

Held at City Hall, Commission Chambers

4:00 p.m.

- A. Call to Order: Director Martin called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Members absent: None.

- B. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Bergstrom stated that there were two amendments to the agenda. Both new business cases should state that they are seeking relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals for the NFP Slope Preservation Standard and Slope Setback Standard.

Motion to adopt the agenda as amended made by Director Fuller, supported by Director Glasser, motion passed unanimously.

- C. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the January 23, 2024 NFP Review Board Meeting made by Director Fuller, supported by Director Bassett, passed unanimously.

- D. General Citizen Comments

There were no general citizen comments, either in person or by phone.

- E. Board Comments

None.

- F. New Business

- 1. Approval of a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant relief from the NFP Slope Preservation Standard and Slope Setback Standard for the Angling Road Realignment Project at 4100 Oakland Drive.**

Laurie Davis, a landscape architect with Hurley & Stewart, gave a brief presentation. The request is regarding the new clubhouse for the Kalamazoo Country Club. The entrance drive will come out on Oakland Drive across from Angling Drive. The intent is for the new entry drive for the Country Club to be across from Angling Drive with a new signal at that intersection. The city has requested that the Angling Road would be re-aligned to come in at a 90 degree angle, which is



safer for all forms of traffic. A site map of Angling Road was shared. Slope setbacks are shown. The only place where slope setbacks are entered is at the corner, where the road will be re-aligned to a 90-degree angle. This plan minimizes slope impact.

The demolition plan was shared, showing the removal of existing pavement and the maximum footprint of construction. A final layout was also shared with grading information.

Mr. Bergstrom shared the staff report for the project. He stated that there is a portion of the property that is also going before the tree committee on March 5th for tree removal approval. As stated, the current angle of Angling Road makes it difficult to not impact that area to make the intersection improvements. Some pedestrian amenities will also be added to the area. The staff recommendation, based upon the development of the site, will be to provide the variance so that the work can continue. He noted that there is not an alternative recommendation to squaring the intersection without impacting the slope and slope setbacks.

Public Comments:

- Sue Schultz
 - o Ms. Schultz stated that lives across the street on Ridge Drive, and she is worried about how this will protect the properties across the street and the church. She noted that there are wetlands on their side of the street. She questioned whether handicap access could be added. There are no sidewalks and many bicycles. She noted that the boulevard may not be necessary in favor of making the road safer. She stated that her sister is blind and it needs to be safe for her to walk to the bus stop.
- There were no phone-in comments.

Director Fuller asked how the slope would be stabilized after construction. Ms. Davis noted that the slope will be graded and established with grass and plantings. Once the grass is established, the slope will be stable.

Director Lettow asked if any alternatives were considered. He affirmed the comments by the public regarding the swale and boulevard. Ms. Davis stated that she was not involved in the design of that aspect. Mr. Bergstrom stated that this was designed by the traffic engineer who was on the site plan committee. He stated that we follow-up with the traffic engineer would need to happen to understand the feature.

Director Lettow asked about the sidewalk and the small bike lane that currently exists. Ms. Davis stated that there would be a signal to make it a safer crossing. Sidewalks on the east side of the road would be restored after the project.

Director Fredrickson asked if there were any plans to install new trees? Ms. Davis stated that there is a meeting with the Tree Committee in the near future. They are removing 8 trees, 6 of them are healthy. It is yet to be determined if they will request understory trees or plantings in another location. She asked if why the NFP Board was not reviewing landscape. Mr. Bergstrom noted that the Tree Committee handles landscaping in the public right of way. The development on the Oakwood Bible Church site will involve some woodland impacts but they are meeting their preservation impacts.

Director Fuller asked about ownership. It was noted that some of this work is done on the right of way and some on a grading easement that has been obtained by the church.



Director Glasser stated that boulevard medians are aesthetically pleasing, however, it is unclear what the impacts are on walking and biking. He noted that if removing the central median would allow better walking and biking, this should be considered.

Director Lettow asked about the removal and impact of oak trees and stated that Oak wilt is a possible issue with April 15 – July 15 being the high risk period. He stated that best case scenario for this tree work is late fall or winter. He noted that Oak wilt can transmit to the entire stand, far beyond the site. He encouraged them to do this work in the dormant season.

Director Hollander asked if the entire width of the easement will be used, and this was affirmed and discussed.

Mr. Bergstrom stated that this case will be a recommendation from the NFP Board which will then move this case to the Zoning Board of Appeals on March 14, 2024, which will have its own public comment period as well.

Director Fuller motioned to approve the recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant relief from the NFP Slope Preservation and Slope Setback standards, supported by Director Hollander. Vote was taken by roll call and passed unanimously.

2. Approval of a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant relief from the NFP Slope Preservation and Slope Setback standards for the addition of an upgraded pump house at 1609 Whites Road.

Mr. John Fulling gave a presentation. He noted that they will be moving from an 1800-gallon to a 3000-gallon pump station. The new location is just to the north of the new property. He explained that this will replace the existing pump station. The current pump station is undersized, old, and inefficient. The old unit is also located directly inside a future golf hole. It is also too far from a future power source. The new pump station is closer to the new property, the correct size and closer to the new power source. It is located out of golf play and has minimal tree disruption. There will be some minor disruption to an unnatural slope. He presented three possible placements. The ideal placement location was shared. Mr. Fulling shared details of slope disturbance. This will disturb approximately 1500 sq ft, which is 0.5% of the total slope disturbance. Woodland disturbance is 0.0%. Tree disturbance is 0.5%. It is unlikely that they will cut any trees down. There is limited disturbance to the critical root zone. Mr. Fulling shared a graphic of critical root zones and how the three placement locations would affect this. It was noted that the most northern option affects the trees the least.

Mr. Fulling shared an elevation of how the pump station would work. The intake pipe is approximately 18 feet below the top of the water, which will not affect tree roots. There will be no disturbance to the shoreline.

A picture of the sloped area was shown at the proposed location. This will be inset into the hill, not obtrusive or extremely visible. Neighbors will not see the building. He noted that there will also be landscaping around the building. Mr. Fulling stated that water draw will not be an issue.

Mr. Bergstrom shared a staff report for this project. Both he and Pete Eldridge, Zoning Administrator, met with the applicant to discuss site selection for the pump house. Due to the size of the trees in that area, and the fact that they are protected trees, and due to the fact that the



20% sloped areas were likely regraded when the golf course was originally developed, the stronger case is for minimizing effects to the trees and recommending a dimensional variance to the slope preservation and slope setback standards. Staff recommendation is to move forward with the recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant the slope preservation and setback variance request.

Ryan Heystek stated that she has concerns about the lake. She is concerned about possible damage to the lake due to pumping and questioned whether this has been ____.

Public Comments:

- Ryan Heystek
 - o Ms. Heystek stated that lives nearby and has concerns regarding the lake. She is concerned about possible damage to the lake and surrounding area. She questioned the amount of water leaving the lake due to pumping and questioned whether the effects of this have been considered/studied.
- There were no phone-in comments.

Director Bassett had questions regarding water quality, erosion, the impact of the installation, and how the use of water would impact the lake and area. He asked for a description of the efforts to prevent erosion and runoff both during construction and after. Mr. Fulling stated that they will take every measure for erosion. They do not expect any construction erosion issues reaching the lake. From a use standpoint, they are going from 1800 to 3000 gallons, however, he noted that this doesn't necessarily mean that they will use more water. He stated that they are also putting in a new irrigation system that is very efficient. He noted that their goal is to use less water, which requires more controls in the irrigation system. They expect to use 15-20% less water on the 210 acres than they did with 150 acres. Mr. Fulling stated that the irrigation system will not impact quality. It pulls water out and then is filtered back to the lake through the grass. No chemicals are run through the system. He noted that there will be no impact to water quality. They will continue annual testing to verify this. It is anticipated that they will use approximately 30-40 billion gallons, which will not impact lake volume.

Director Bassett asked if they had permitting requirements through EGLE. Mr. Fulling stated that they are coming to the NFP Board first, but are working with EGLE to accomplish this. Director Fuller asked if there was a cap on gallon withdrawal. Mr. Fulling stated that there is no cap. He stated that they report to the State each year on their water usage.

Director Lettow asked about the placement of the pump house. He questioned whether the east side placement was done to avoid the 20% slope. He questioned whether moving it to the west would offer any options to be fully outside the critical root zone. Mr. Fulling stated that the further west it goes, the deeper it would have to go as the pad needs to be at a certain level from the top of the water line. He noted that adjustments can be made, but would require more digging. Mr. Fulling stated that anywhere in that area would work for the pump house. Adjustments may need to be made to the depth of concrete in the walls depending on depth. Director Lettow stated that as the slope is artificial that he would advocate for slope disturbance rather than tree disturbance. He noted that work should be done outside of the oak wilt time frame. Mr. Fulling stated that the goal is do the work in late fall. Director Fredrickson stated that she appreciates the directional boring and the efforts that they are taking.

The distance from the lake to the pump house is around 200 feet. An erosion and sediment control permit will also assist in addressing any erosion concerns. Director Fuller asked if their



landscape plan would come before the NFP Board. Mr. Bergstrom stated that this project will require site plan review.

Director Fuller stated that her concern is the relative proximity to the lake and run-off erosion. She wanted to make sure that there is consideration on how to handle run-off and stated that native plantings will assist with this. Mr. Fulling stated that a portion of the roof will be covered. They cannot do the entire building as roof access is needed to get pumps in and out. There will be turf or plants, with the goal to have as little impervious as possible.

Director Fuller questioned if tree disturbance were to happen, they would need to come back to the NFP Board. Mr. Bergstrom affirmed that they are protected trees and encouraged slope disturbance rather than disturbance of the critical root zone.

Director Bassett motioned to approve a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant relief from the NFP Slope Setback and Slope Preservation Standards, supported by Director Fredrickson. Vote was take by roll call and passed unanimously.

G. Unfinished Business

None.

H. Staff Reports and Updates

1. In 2024 staff will be compiling and tracking NFP project information to include in an annual report to NFP Board members at the end of each year. Director Fredrickson asked if status and project can be included in this tracking. Mr. Bergstrom stated that he is working to expand the fields of data. This data will also allow for presentation to showcase statistics. Director Fredrickson stated that the public would be interested in comments on if they are approved and why.

I. Communications and Announcements

1. Mr. Bergstrom stated that tomorrow is the last day for the Community Engagement Feedback survey. Information was included in the packet. Mr. Bergstrom asked them to pass this along to others.
2. Director Fuller stated that a previous discussion was had about an education phase to the NFP Board. She noted that this would help developers and help the general public understand what the Board is doing. Mr. Bergstrom stated that there has been some discussion around an NFP Guide. If the NFP Board would like to form a committee to address this, this can be discussed at the next meeting. He noted that this could also tie into the annual report work at the end of the year.

J. Adjourn Meeting

Director Martin adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.