A meeting of the Spring Lake Township Planning Commission was held at Spring Lake Middle School, 345 Hammond St, Spring Lake MI 49456.

A. **Call to Order**
Latsch called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He welcomed Carolyn Boersma, the new Board representative.

B. **Approval of Agenda**
Ketchum made a motion, support by Tiles to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. **Approval of Minutes**
Latsch made a motion, support by Ketchum to adopt the Planning Commission April 19, 2023 regular meeting minutes, including the paragraph related to comments made by Mike McGraw. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. **Public Comments**
A time for public comment was provided. One comment related to the zoning text amendments was made.

E. **Rezoning Consideration – 250 Acres from AG and RR to R2**
Hill noted that the application from P5 Properties incorrectly indicated that parcel 70-03-03-400-015 was zoned AG, when it is zoned RR. The application correctly noted that the request was to rezone that parcel to R2 Medium Density Residential.

Nick Curcio was present to facilitate the public hearing, to let the Commissioners concentrate on the comments.

Motion by Latsch, support by Ketchum, to reopen the public hearing at 7:13pm.

Thomas Joiner, 16061 Harbor View, asked if the developer has presented a plan of what he intends to build.

Anthony Petix, 16448 Van Wagoner, stated he looked up developments by P5 and they are all crowded. Existing residents should get a bigger consideration because they purchased where they want to be. The rezoning seems like intentional overkill.
Linda Petix, 16448 Van Wagoner, addressed Section 109B 7a, regarding changed conditions in the community. She stated there were not changed conditions, and there was not enough community notice before the Master Plan was changed.

Bob Grunstra, 16093 Terrace, addressed Section 109B 7f, land suitability. The land is 20% wetlands with a high water table. Development will decrease the open land for percolation of surface water. An infrastructure study on surface water control is needed. Also, people like low density in Spring Lake Township. The traffic volume was last studied in 2017, and there have been new developments built that will increase the traffic volume.

Rob Lyttle, 17188 Van Wagoner, stated he is in support of the rezoning. From a real estate perspective there is a real need for housing.

Lennie Kawka, 18675 W Spring Lake Rd, stated the waste hauler letter referenced minimizing trucks on Township roads. Adding heavy trucks for construction will destroy the roads.

Rob Derck, 18274 Kristina Ct, stated he heard multiple blueberry farmers were bidding on the property. The area drains to Terrace, and residents will need to pay for a drain district. Spring Lake High School has no school of choice students because the high school is full.

Michael Wade, 16215 Terrace, says the Master Plan cites a study that says there is a need to increase capacity in Pump Station 10, and sewer will need to be added to Taft. Who is going to pay for that? Also, how is the R2 zoning going to be enforced? Spring Ridge has lots that are less than 12000 square feet.

Lisa Swejkoski, 18628 180th Ave, is concerned that security was present at the last meeting. She wants the Planning Commission to truly listen. Section 7 of the Master Plan action program relates to sewers. Who is going to build and maintain the sewers? Also, the Master Plan indicates the Township will promote rural areas.

Nicole Larabel, 16814 Virginia Ave, states she sent emails about the -015 parcel being zoned RR and not AG. Hill has admitted it is RR but called it AG. All Eastbrook Homes responses to the rezoning were focused on changes from AG. Eastbrook Homes should be required to resubmit their application and address the rezoning from RR. Also, there are 153 acres of existing homes who will have their zoning changed. They will lose their RR rights for short term rentals and larger accessory buildings.

Kasey LaPres, 16325 W Willow, addressed Section 109B 7i, related to development patterns. This section requires that development be kept near other development. The additional acres were added just to satisfy this requirement, and residents don’t want rezoning.

Jeff Ferguson, 18629 W Spring Lake Rd, stated he is in opposition to rezoning everything. He does not want to rezone productive AG land.

Michael Johnson, 16162 Coventry Ln, stated the rezoning request is for too many acres. People were not notified properly. He does not want rezoning without owner approval. Studies have
not been done to make sure this development will be feasible. Commissioners should reject the proposal.

Carrie Uthe, 16192 Old Orchard, stated she is opposed to the rezoning. The Master Plan is a guide. The Master Plan was amended in 2022 without proper public notice and input. Tax dollars were used for a sewer study to support a developer. Residents want to keep the current RR and AG zoning. Also, how is the water going to be handled?

Eileen Grunstra, 16093 Terrace, asked the Planning Commission if they represent Eastbrook Homes or the residents. She asked if any of them would live in the proposed development.

Meggan Belanger, 16288 W Willow, provided comments for all residents of West Willow. The don’t support the rezoning. Part of the draw of living where they are is living near AG land. Once it is gone it will never return. Section 109B 7b asks if the property is reasonably able to be used as zoned. The property can still be used as AG. Section 109B 7c asks if there are other areas of the community that are better suited to the use. She believes there are several other areas, although she is not endorsing rezoning those areas. Section 109B 7d asks whether the rezoning is consistent with the goals, policies and future land use map of the Master Plan. Preserving AG and open space was listed as the highest priority in the Master Plan.

Elizabeth Brault, 16322 W Willow, continued the comments for the residents of West Willow. Section 109B 7e asks if the rezoning is compatible with the site’s physical, geological, hydrological and other environmental features. Flooding is a major concern of the neighborhood. Impervious surfaces will exacerbate these problems. Section 109B 7h regards the capacity of the street system. Accidents are on the rise in the area. They object to adding 200 or more homes.

Ramona Opperman, 16205 Highland Dr, addressed Section 109B 7h, capacity of the street system. There is no evidence of data related to traffic increase and capacity. West Spring Lake Rd is listed as a collector road. No study was presented to residents related to street capacity.

Bob Shay, 18555 Zuni Dr, stated he supports the rights of property owners. He served two terms on the Board of Trustees after Woodland Ridge was rezoned and had the site plan approved in one night. The Master Plan was reviewed over two years. There were many reviews and input from many residents throughout the Township. There is a need for housing. Schools are advertising for enrollment as enrollments are going down. This is a logical place for R2 zoning. If rezoned, it will be developed as a PUD with adjusted lot sizes. The developer will pay for studies before a site plan is approved.

Thomas Spelman, 18049 Lovell Rd, stated there is no runoff from the blueberry fields. Development will cause a lot of runoff. Control structures will cost a lot. There will need to be electrical and water system upgrades. Everyone will have to pay for these upgrades.

Kristina Ellis, 18270 Kristina Ct, addressed Section 109B 7, property compatibility. She stated that Dr. Jennifer Jones, certified watershed manager, has prepared a report which was dropped off on Monday. The land being considered for rezoning is unsuitable for building. Spring Lake is already compromised. The runoff will end up in Spring Lake. A survey was done about citizen
priorities. Open space was a priority. There are plenty of homes available. There is no need for this development.

Amalia Ziegler, 18282 Kristina Ct, addressed Section 109 B 7c, e and g. Regarding section c, there are other areas better suited for development. They have identified at least four areas that are more suitable. Regarding section e, both fields are wetlands and development will cause runoff and will degrade the lake. Regarding section g, there has been no data shared with residents about the capacity of the infrastructure. Hathaway Lakes, Spring Ridge, Arcadia, and St. Lazare all have lots available so there is no need for more development.

Martha Adamczyk, 16555 Van Wagoner, stated she owns 10 acres next to a blueberry field. She was surprised that Eastbrook Homes owns the property. She has had issues with water drainage. She has wildlife on her property. She does not want her AG zoning changed.

Molly Rajski, 18110 168th Ave, pointed out the large group vehemently opposed to an item on the docket. Residents have done their homework. The Planning Commission should reflect on their comments. Development will still happen, but R2 is too dense.

Susan Rottschafer, 16121 Old Orchard, stated she moved to Spring Lake for the culture and the environment. Eastbrook Homes has packed developments. Mike McGraw stated he would not have purchased the property if he was not assured of R2 zoning.

Alison Wheatley, 17929 Spring Oak Dr, stated she just moved to Spring Lake. She chose her house because of the blueberry fields. She is disappointed that nobody knows what is going on. Medical providers are overfull and appointments are hard to get.

Rob Henry, 18043 Lovell, stated that he spoke to the Planning Commission about Spring Ridge and how that was developed. Looking at the number of one-way car trips in Spring Ridge, the estimate presented was 500, but the developer stated it would be more like 5000 trips. For this development, is that going to be 25000 trips? Spring Lake High School was built for 650 students. They are above 850 students now. With development the schools will be even more overcrowded.

Mark Schroeder, 18158 Lovell, stated he is on the Corridor Improvement Authority in Crockery Township. Eastbrook Homes built a sewer treatment system, but Crockery Township was responsible for maintenance. The sewer is now hooked up to the Spring Lake Township sewer. In Hathaway Lakes the roads are public roads but the County won’t maintain them. Eastbrook Homes may build infrastructure but they won’t maintain it.

Hill stated that many letters have been received in the last two months. All have been forwarded to Commissioners via email. Most of the letters are against the rezoning for reasons mentioned at this meeting. He will compile all the letters and will have them posted on the Township’s website for everyone’s review.

Motion by Ketchum, support by Boersma, to close the public hearing at 8:24pm. The motion was approved unanimously.
Latsch noted that he wants time to consider all the information provided.

Motion by Latsch, support by Boersma, to table the discussion and decision on this matter to next month. The motion was approved unanimously.

**F. Midwest V Building Material Review**

Hill noted that he told the applicant it was not necessary to be at this meeting. Hill discussed the Midwest V approval with conditions from last month’s meeting. The Commission wanted a different siding material. Midwest V is proposing LP SmartSide engineered wood siding.

Latsch noted that this is an engineered panel with good ratings. Hill stated it has the appearance of wood but is more durable.

Ketchum asked if this material meets the architectural standards. Hill stated it does. Use of this material will bring Midwest V into total compliance with the architectural standards in the Zoning Ordinance.

Motion by Latsch, support by Ketchum, to accept the materials as presented, and to find Midwest V is in compliance with the condition placed on their previous approval. The motion was approved unanimously.

**G. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Considerations**

1. **Multifamily Dwelling Requirements**
   The Township attorney prepared an ordinance for review. This will be a new general provision for multifamily housing. As defined, multifamily housing consists of three or more units.

   Ketchum stated he believes the mail distribution areas should be covered.

   Ketchum asked if the balcony needs to stick out, or if it could be integrated into the structure of the building. Hill stated that there could be a balcony definition, maybe encompassing more of an outdoor space. He noted that the fire code does not require balconies. Latsch stated that a balcony is a feature that makes the space more livable. Boersma stated that she does not agree with forcing balconies and would like to discuss alternatives.

   Tiles noted that mail kiosks in a secure location is subjective, and an alternative description is needed. Clark noted that the post office helps determine the mail location and proposed changing the condition to “well-lit and covered.”

   Motion by Latsch, support by Clark, to send the ordinance, as modified, to the Board for consideration. A roll call vote was taken. With Tiles as the only dissent, the motion passed.

2. **Multifamily Dwellings in the Neighborhood Commercial District**

   Hill presented the idea of allowing multifamily dwellings in the Neighborhood Commercial district. Redstone Development is considering a development on property near Mobex, and was considering how multifamily housing fits in that area. Hill stated that is a transitional area. The property under consideration is zoned NC. Hill looked at the NC districts in the Township and they
are all located where sewer is available. Multifamily housing is allowed in the Mixed Use district, so it may make sense in the NC district. If the new multifamily dwelling requirements are adopted they will be incorporated in the NC requirements.

Latsch noted that multifamily housing can make the NC district more viable because there is population density.

Tiles was concerned that the conditions of the new multifamily dwelling requirement would be difficult to obtain in the NC districts due to parcel sizes. He does not want to rely on the Planning Commission granting relief for every application.

Tiles stated he wants to consider live-work buildings, with residential units on the upper floors. Boersma stated that her vision of the NC district would include buildings of this type.

Hill will continue to work on the draft ordinance, especially as related to the amenity requirements in Neighborhood Commercial.

H. Commissioner Comments
   1. Township Board: The Board appointed Ande Scherf to fill the vacant Trustee seat. He will serve until November, 2024.
   2. ZBA: The April meeting had two applications. An application on Connelly was approved for a setback variance for an awning over the front door. An application on Pine Bluff requested a waterfront setback determination for a deck, which was approved.
   3. Community Development Director: No report.

I. Adjournment
   Clark moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:21pm. Tiles seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Ketchum, Secretary
Planning Commission