

Meeting of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals.

Date: March 25, 2021

Agenda: The request is made by Heather Houser on behalf of Newt Investments. The request is for a group home located at 815 Timmons, Tuscola. The property is zoned D-2, General Dwelling District, which does not allow a group home without a Special Use permit.

Minutes: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hilgendorf, at 7:00 PM. Roll call was taken and six members were present. Hilgendorf declared a quorum and continued by reading the requests for the Special Use application, Also, present was Drew Hoel, City Administrator, Andrew Bequette, City Attorney, and Mike Salmon, City Building Inspector.

Bequette made a statement on how the proceedings would take place.

Hilgendorf asked the applicants if they would like address the board with their request.

Heather Houser, Newt Investments, gave a brief overview of the project and talked about the surprising demand of the need for group homes in Tuscola. She stated they had some issues at some of the other properties concerning parking but feel they have addressed the issues.

Bequette asked the applicant if this was everything they wished to submit for the Special Use and David Armbrust submitted paperwork on the fair housing act.

Bequette read a letter submitted through email by Julie Slaughter stating that there were multiple daycare providers in the area and was concerned with sex offenders.

Bequette asked if anyone else would like to speak:

TJ Onstott, 813 Timmons, submitted a letter which was read by Onstott concerned about drainage, right of way, and parking improvements that will be made, and how they will affect existing issues in that area. He also stated that in the past it was said by Newt Investments that only 4 group homes would be established.

Steve Slaughter, 809 Timmons, asked whether having a group home in the area would raise or lower property taxes. Hilgendorf answered that was a question for the assessor.

Bequette asked for anyone else to speak, as there was none the planning commission could discuss.

Bennett asked Hoel to discuss the right of way parking, Hoel stated parking was allowed in the right of way pending city approval. Hoel noted that right of way parking was present in many locations around the city.

Reynolds stated he owned rental properties next to existing group homes and has had no issues with tenants at those locations. As the seller of the property at 815 Timmons he said there is an existing drainage problem in the neighborhood.

Hilgendorf asked if a drainage study would be required for improvements for adding a new parking area, Hoel stated that the new owner was not responsible for fixing an existing drainage issue but would not be permitted to make it worse.

Hoel stated that parking has been an issue at the other four locations, but to his knowledge those have been resolved.

Houser addressed the questions of parking and drainage, she stated they have no plans to add any parking or change anything on the outside of the home. Starting a new home requires extra parking for training and getting setup but they will not need that at Timmons. She said she was unaware of drainage but was willing to work with neighbors on improvements. She said the original plan was for only four homes but demand has exceeded expectations.

Hilgendorf read for the commission the conditions the last group home that was approved by the City Council.

With no further discussion, Bequette asked for a motion for 815 Timmons.

A motion was made by Bennett that the requirements of the city has been met and to approve with the conditions of no more than four individuals with intellectual disabilities and with twenty-four-hour supervision. The motion was seconded by Poindexter.

Motion for 815 Timmons

Name	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Brett Adkisson		X			
Brad Bennett	X		X		
Randy Hastings	X				X
Alan Hettinger	X			X	
Steve Hilgendorf	X			X	
Terry Poindexter	X		X		
Jerry Reynolds	X				X

Bequette reminded everyone that since the vote was a tie no recommendation will be sent to the City Council.

Hilgendorf stated the City Council will decide on 4-26-2021

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Prepared by Secretary Reynolds and Inspector Salmon.