



Meeting called by: Chair Rick Sevey @ 7:01 PM FROST CREEK CHURCH, 15671 Algoma Ave NE, Cedar Springs

Members Present: Chair Sevey requested Member Roll Call

Brad Carey __AB__ Hal Babcock __X__ Mark Hoskins __X__ Keith Sawade __X__ Rick Sevey __X__
Jon Tilburt __X__ Joe VandenBerg __X__

Others present: Attorney – Leisman; Zoning Admin – Gross; Supervisor – Ellick

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes - Motion to accept February 25th, 2026, meeting minutes by Sawade, second – Hoskins, all Ayes, Carried.

Approval of Agenda - Motion to accept Agenda by Tilburt, second – Sevey, all Ayes, Carried.

Public Comment - Matters not the Subject of Public Hearing/Agenda Items: Representative of Point North Homes, 2535 17 Mile Road, reading and submitting letter to Planning Commission.

Patrick Snyder, 1937 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: I am against the rezoning because of the topography, not amendable to higher traffic, many blind driveways, will end up as bad as Edgerton and White Creek and Algoma at 17 Mile Road. Please think about this while considering rezoning.

Agenda Items to be reviewed by the Planning Commission:

Agenda Item #1: Scheduled Public Hearing – DRAFT 2 - Rezoning 17 Mile Road, Algoma to Division Ave Ordinance Amendment.

Leisman: Public hearing on rezoning, implementing the future land use map, first phase was rezoning between 131 and Algoma Ave to Highway Commercial and Light Industrial. This is the red part of the map, narrower and consistent with the Master Plan. The PC recommended the Board amend the definition of the regulations for neighborhood commercial to further support the remaining residential uses in that district. The reason there's DRAFT 2 is there were some of the properties that we just described being rezoned as the south 330 feet of the properties in Section 28, for example, to add additional information, we put the addresses in. So DRAFT 2 is the exact same properties as DRAFT 1, we just added the addresses. So this is before the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing and decide whether or not you want to recommend it to the township.

Public Hearing Comment:

Duane Gritter, 1651 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: Roller coaster, farmers struggle, accidents, terrible area. Will get must worse with rezoning. West on 17 Mile Road turning South on Pine Island many issues. Please use common sense.

Laurie Brace, 995 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: Benefit to rezoning? Traffic goes 70 miles an hour, think they are still on expressway.

Hoskins: Trying to control the building up, neighborhood commercial is not commercial, as you would think of it. We already have Robinsons and Atwoods. It's a Class A road. Has existing power down through there. Neighborhood Commercial is very light commercial, examples; hair salon, dog grooming, something out of your home, not looking at that as a large commercial development.

Sevey: Robinsons took three months for driveway approved by state. Long process.

Tilburt: What is included in Neighborhood Commercial from the zoning book?

Leisman: (Zoning Ordinance) *Neighborhood commercial is intended to provide convenient shopping service opportunities for the local neighborhood township residents. Needs of the travelling public would be limited in size and number of locations compatible with the residential agricultural district uses, should preserve and be compatible in appearance and use of the rural character of the agricultural residential district areas of the township. Uses that generate higher traffic volumes, that must attract regional customers, generally not appropriate in this zoning district. Examples of permitted uses with Special Land Use required for larger things:*

Retail sales, convenience and miscellaneous retail shops: Sporting goods, books, stationery, jewelry, art, hobbies, crafts, toys and games, gifts, novelties, souvenirs, etc.

Food and grocery stores: Butcher shops, fish markets, fruit and vegetable markets, retail bakeries.

Other examples include: Apparel stores, flower shops, drug stores, hardware, paint, glass and wallpaper stores, advertising agencies, direct mail services, photocopying, art and graphic design, pest control, beauty and barber shops, laundry dry cleaning, dance, art and music studios, cafes and catering.

Jessica Herington, 14078 Division Ave, Cedar Springs: Natural disaster destroys homes rezoned, what happens then, do we sell as commercial or can we rebuild? One year grace period? **Zoning Administrator Gross:** *PC made it permissible to rebuild and replace homes after such an event, their way of taking care of the residents. New homes are not allowed on properties without an existing home. Leisman: Township amended that provision specifically to protect residential uses, exact verbiage available at the township or on website. Gross: There is a time period, unsure exactly what was specified in zoning ordinance.*

Tim Rood, 170 17 mile, Cedar Springs: Why rezoning? Cedar Springs and Sparta, five miles away, this is countryside, raise taxes and draw more money? I say leave it alone.

Pamela Knight, 1050 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: Local towns nearby, 17 Mile Road not equipped to carry more traffic than it has now, multiple accidents, more restrictions on what we can and cannot do with our homes.

Ann Thorsen, 1410, 1490 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: Rezoning splits my parcels, cannot build on half my land, what can I do?

Hanna Walter, 855 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: I own a horse farm, rezoning not helpful to agricultural community, more traffic where tractors go, accidents weekly at 17 Mile Road and Olin Lakes Drive.

Sawade: *Hear what you're saying about it being an agricultural and residential area, but you haven't been at some of the meetings where people are coming in and complaining they have a business next door in the residential area. What we're trying to do is focus the business in a smaller area. This is a Class A road that's controlled by the state, talked to state numerous times regarding a light in front of Meijer. There hasn't been enough people killed there according to them. Sad statement, that's the way they say it. We're trying to concentrate it, rather than having it sprawl all over then multiple people complaining about having a business next door to their house. This is a class A road and we're going with the guidelines.*

*****Chairman Sevey:** *Any comments, you need to come up here and state your name. We're not going to turn this into a circus or we'll just adjourn the meeting and be done. Need to stay calm, that way we can all hear what everybody has to say.*

Patrick Snyder, 1937 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: Said state is not listening, people being killed or injured, why encourage it? **Sevey:** *Any new business, especially on 17 Mile Road, we require the applicant to do a traffic study. What we've been told by the state is, the more traffic studies, the more they look at a business or strip of highway. If a traffic study never comes in, as far as the state's concerned, that road doesn't even exist. I hate to say it, but that's the way they look at it, if a business is going to come in, we require a traffic study. Goes to the state, the more traffic studies that come in on a certain stretch, there's a better chance of something being done. But that's the way the state works, we have no control over it. Sawade: Would like to point out, sometimes state is slow to respond but they do listen, you may have seen the new turn signal at 17 Mile Road off ramp, it's just that it takes a long time and we're trying to work with what we have.*

Lanae Hauser, 17929 Marsh Creek NE, Sand Lake: How are businesses continuing when currently not zoned that way? Masterplan has been reviewed, discussed, amendments made, are these not things that we could further discuss and amend within what may have been proposed or discussed years prior when this was first brought up? With all these things that are currently happening in our township that we're all a little petrified what is going on right now; moved here in 2012, to live and raise our kids in the country. Let's pause, take a look at this as a whole.

Martin Ankerberg, 2290 Point North Drive, Cedar Springs: Told has nothing to do with the data center, but it has everything to do with the data center. Zoning is important for the data center. Research shows a company that supports data centers and gets around community backlash towards their development where zoning falls short, they're trying to help the data center, other communities lack clear guidance for data center development, talks about several different towns. Rezoning has nothing to do with business going in here, they need to rezone to support data center.

Al Damsgaard, 3097 Root Court Drive, Cedar Springs: No new homes, no new subdivisions, size restriction on retail buildings going in?

Lori Trampler, 17680 Albrecht Ct. Cedar Springs: Is the rezoning a gateway for Data Centers?

Tilburt: This not a gateway, nor have anything to do with the data center. This proposal was beginning with a master plan back in 2017 or so, where we had a series of public meetings, which very few people attended, had public comment, public survey, based on all that information we took in we proposed the future land use map which showed the neighborhood commercial going to Division Avenue. Whole process started way before we knew anything about a data center, didn't know anything about a data center until this last December. This proposal has been on our desk for months, even years we considered doing this. Sevey: PC has been discussing rezoning and the Master Plan for quite a long time. Sawade: Comes in your tax statement, been mentioned several times. Every five years PC is required to do a review.

Matt Biggins, 60 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs: Premier Auto will be Light Industrial? Taking out more trees, burning brush continuously and all winter. More rights for them to expand? **Hoskins:** Buildings are in Solon Township, land where they are taking out and burning trees is Tyrone Township, question for them.

Pamela Knight, 1050 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs (2nd statement): Getting older, what if I want to split it? Can no longer have my daughter build a home where she can take care of us, if we want to stay in our home and have someone close by. Asked you earlier, if you lived on the affected properties to get an answer; fine, don't answer because you're not doing it really answers the question. Not trying to be rude, trying to have you see where we're coming from, as little people we might need more from our homes, as a residential property and not Neighborhood Commercial.

Nathan Davis, 1450 White Creek Ave, Cedar Springs: The Solon Township zoning map, there's a portion in the bottom left corner in zone 34 it's light industrial, it's orange. Then you go to the Kent County parcel viewer, says it's agricultural vacant. But that to me seems like the only logical access from 17 Mile Road to possibly somewhere south of that, right? But they're not matching on the website versus the zoning map. Can you explain why it says there's two different zoning districts for that piece of property? Parcel number 41-02-34-200-012.

Jon Nix, 13358 Sunset Drive, Cedar Springs: Why rezoning? Not accusing but it gives data center more leverage. How many applications for businesses in the township, there are businesses in my subdivision, Cedar Springs has a lot of vacant lots. Can you answer my question? **VandenBurg:** Know that it's going to affect some people, I get that, I've been affected, not this particular one, but in other things. Have to look at the big picture, 17 Mile Road is a Class A highway and we're trying to keep it in a strip for businesses to go. Ross could attest to the reasons why we have to provide areas for businesses to grow, in jeopardy of getting sued. We have to provide areas for businesses to thrive. And 17 Mile Road is the most logical place. I honestly believe everyone in this room would have to agree that we don't want it all throughout the township, will affect several here, and I'm sorry about that. But do we want to have residential homes up and down that road? School busses stopping on 17 Mile Road, etc., all that comes with developments that are going to go in if farmers want to sell their property to developments, we can't do anything about it. This is a way to get ahead of the curve. **Nix:** What stops businesses with employees leaving work and worried about a school bus? Logic is upside down, build a business anywhere correct? **VandenBurg:** Incorrect. **Nix:** Where can you build a business?

VandenBurg: My point exactly. **Sevey:** Only place they can build is in a commercial zone, trying to avoid 'spot zoning,' state does not like spot zoning, businesses throughout township, one reason is the roads are not equipped for it. Unfortunately, 17 Mile Road is a state road, wish it wasn't.

Pat Anderson, 2875 Wiersma Ave, Cedar Springs: How far from 17 Mile Road to 16 Mile Road will rezoning affect?

Sevey: That was completed a long time ago, expressway to Algoma, we are discussing Algoma Ave to Division.

Anderson: How far back can you go? **Sevey:** 330 feet. **Anderson:** Does that stop you from rezoning 16 Mile Road? Farmland can only be split a little each year, is there a limit, can you just keep going back and back with rezoning commercial? **Sevey:** We are not doing that, you are still talking about expressway to Algoma and we are talking about 17 Mile Road, Algoma to Division. **Anderson:** Would like you to answer question, what size commercial building is allowed? **Sevey:** We do not have answer at this time, information not in front of us.

Tim Rood, 170 17 Mile Road, Cedar Springs (2nd statement): You can deny developments and land splits to keep sprawl out of township? **Sevey:** We can do that but end up in court and cost township a lot of money, trying to get ahead of it, get things in place ahead of time that they have to follow. **Rood:** Just leave it alone. **VandenBurg:** Do you think Nelson Township likes the development happening along 131 expressway? Had no choice, sued or threatened to be sued, cannot slow it down, that is the reality. **Sawade:** They weren't proactive in trying to protect the people. **Hood:** Light Industrial tax increase? **VandenBurg:** No change. **Sevey:** It will go up every year like everyone else. **Hoskins:** We have the lowest taxes in Kent County and the lowest millage.

Sevey: Public hearing is closed and we will see what we can come up with.

Hoskins: Pertaining to some questions; we look at our planning and zoning, every five years according to the state of Michigan, to update it, upgrade it. That's the reason this all came about a year and a half ago or so, as we started looking at this, we try to look at the whole aspect of whether it is highway commercial, whether it is industrial, or whether it is neighborhood commercial, or whether it is residential in your neighborhoods. We try to make sense of where there's natural gas, electric and internet services. There is a Class A road, there is electric and wiring for commercial industrial runs down 17 Mile Road. The future land use map that was put into effect in 2017 or even earlier than that, had neighborhood commercial and commercial coming down 17 Mile Road because it is a Class A state road, semis go down through there 24/7, 365 days a year. It goes from one end of the state to the other end of the state. You're not going to stop the state of Michigan, it's getting busier as the northern part of Kent County develops, there's nothing we can do about it. Everything shifted when M6 was built, took the pressure off from North Kent County and pushed down to southern Kent County. Everything started developing south. It's starting to push back up here north again. We're going to see this along the other businesses down through there. I believe a lot of them, if not all of them, are a special land use permit that we put in there. The sawmill, Robinsons, horse farm and others, this would put in some assemblance and order, it just makes sense. It isn't easy, has nothing to do with the Data Center.

Tilburt: Mr. Chairman, we really don't have to do this. We're trying to plan for the future, 20 years, 30 years out, 40 years out. On the other hand, with all the residences that are currently there and the roller coaster road pointed out and so forth, we could always do what we did for those other businesses you mentioned. We could do special use permits or even do a little bit of spot zoning along 17 mile if we need to as the as the need arose. So no, we don't have to do the whole thing now. Is it a good idea?

VandenBurg: I want to figure out the one-year rebuilding after natural disaster and look at that.

Leisman: Options; next thing on the agenda is that the subcommittee was going to recommend a public hearing on some additional properties on Algoma, you could make a recommendation to the township board to adopt the rezoning, a recommendation to the board to not adopt the rezoning, or table it for further study while you look at these other things and review those provisions on residential protections.

VandenBurg: Motion to table rezoning so we can review the other provisions with existing homes, second by **Sevey;** all Ayes, Motion Carried.

Agenda Item #2: DRAFT 1 – Rezoning Algoma Ave Ordinance Amendment – Public Hearing to be scheduled.

Hoskins: Motion to set the public hearing at next month's meeting on April 22nd for Algoma Ave additional addresses, second by **Sawade**; all Ayes, Motion carried.

Unfinished Business: Ordinance Amendment Draft – Data Centers

Attorney Leisman read through recommendations and updates to Ordinance Amendment Draft regarding Data Centers and updates to the draft. A redline copy and a clean copy were provided. Provisions include but not limited to:

- Small, medium, hyper scale and accessory have appropriate applications
- An analysis of the effect on private utility systems done by a third party
- Township requiring additional escrows to cover third parties or contractors to assist with consideration of a site plan, a special land use approval or continue operation
- Noise restrictions during construction phase
- Additional requirements for water study
- Construction of medium scale, hyper scale data centers and uses are subject to special construction restrictions and subject to approval from Planning Commission
- Medium scale, hyper scale data centers or digital mining uses shall be required to connect to public water and sewer
- Medium scale or hyper scale data center or digital mining use would demonstrate, as part of a special land use application, a low water usage the planning commission makes alternative water and justified.
- Guard station setback of 150 feet
- Planning Commission may require the use of geothermal air cooling, electrical cooling, waste heat energy recover systems and advanced cooling methods which may become available.
- Facility owner operator shall maintain a publicly accessible website and notice to the township for cooling system flushing, conditioning or other maintenance at least 72 hours prior to that maintenance in the event of an emergency, notice would be provided as soon as reasonably possible.
- All cooling system construction, operation and maintenance shall be done in such a manner as to not negatively impact data center or digital mining center lands or adjacent or nearby lands or water
- Generator provisions
- Battery storage
- Requirement of \$5 million in liability insurance
- Special maintenance approval including annual inspections
- Township has the authority to require reports on all water and sewer usage, electric usage, noise and maintenance
- General compatibility with land uses

Sevey: Updated Ordinance Amendment regarding Data Centers will be posted on our website, going back to the subcommittee again, there's things that we wanted to look into that we have not had time to do.

Hoskins: Looking at other ordinances to make sure we don't miss something.

Sevey: New data center that opened New Carlisle, Indiana, about two hours and 15 minutes away. I am going to drive down there to see it, check out noise and if I can find anybody down there to talk to, find out what they have to say. Mark has been in contact with those that have additional ordinances to consider.

Open Discussion for Issues not on the Agenda:

1. Planning Commission Members: N/A
2. Correspondence Received: Representative of Point North Homes, 2535 17 Mile Road submitted letter to PC.

Report of Township Board Representative - Hoskins: N/A

Report of Board of Appeals Representative - Tilburt: N/A

Report of Zoning Administrator: *Gross: One project that will be coming up for future review, a change of venue type situation for something that was approved out in the past. Will keep you updated.*

Additional Public Comment - Sevey: Common courtesy during public comments, two minutes per person, silence phones. Please be respectful of those that are speaking, thank you.

Several people spoke during public comment regarding data centers including members of the Stop Solon Township Data Center Volunteer Group. Many commented on the Ordinance Amendment Draft regarding Data Centers with recommendations. Summary points:

- An environmental attorney has been working with the volunteer group with recommendations for the Draft Ordinance Amendment regarding data centers and ordinance amendments
- Water consumption, data center vs a 70+ housing development vs a farm
- Potential of multiple data centers per application or parcel
- Solon Township staff available to assess and inspect data center regularly to assist with compliance
- Continual monitoring of wastewater dumping, stormwater discharge, energy use, light pollution, etc.
- Special Land Use applications require nonbiased third-party studies.
- Noncompliance will result in stiff penalties regarding inspections and violations of ordinances
- Noise pollution before and after construction is completed and the effects on residents
- Construction vehicles and damage to roads
- Electrical consumption
- Continued transparency from Township officials with some residents asking for members of PC, subcommittee and Township attorney to remove conflicts of interests
- Residents of Solon, Nelson and Algoma townships created a letter to submit to the Moore Family and for residents to sign
- Cyber and physical attacks on a data center and what precautions will be taken
- Existing PFAs contamination, how this effects the water usage for a data center
- Data Center Regulation Act, a bill proposed in Michigan's state legislation

Sevey: Public Comment is closed. Our next meeting will be the Joint Planning Commission meeting with Cedar Springs to discuss the 425 Agreement on March 31st. Thank you Frost Creek Church for allowing us to have our meetings here.

Adjournment:

Sevey: Motion to adjourn by Sevey, Second – Sawade, all Ayes, Motion Carried. Meeting Adjourned: 9:35 pm.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Tuesday, March 31st, 7:00 pm, Joint PA 425 mtg at Sheriff's Department, Cedar Springs.
Wednesday, April 22nd, 7:00 pm, at Frost Creek Church, 15671 Algoma Ave NE, Cedar Springs