

Present: Chairperson Borowski; Vice-Chairperson Belaustegui; Members: Bliven, Domzal, Fox, Jensen, Robiner, Smith, and Tillman

Absent: None

Also Present: Building official, Byrwa  
Council liaison, Walsh  
Planning consultant, Birchler

Chairperson Borowski called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. in the Village municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Borowski stated that Village resident Kevin Good would like to comment on a pathway that exists between the two subdivisions just north and west of Groves High School. He will make his presentation prior to agenda item #8, "Review and discuss alternative solutions for pathway plan".

#### **APPROVE MINUTES OF A REGULAR PLANNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2000**

MOTION by Bliven, supported by Domzal, that the minutes of a regular Planning Board meeting held on Wednesday, April 26, 2000 be approved as submitted.

Motion passes unanimously.

#### **REVIEW PROPOSED GROUND SIGN FOR WOODS OF TURNBERRY**

This sign request will be held over until later in the meeting when the applicant and building official Byrwa are expected to be present.

#### **REVIEW PROPOSED SIGNS FOR BED BATH & BEYOND**

David Kampo with Frank Rewold and Son, construction manager for Bed Bath & Beyond, was present requesting approval of signage for the building site at 31535 Southfield Road. As part of the approval process for the Bed Bath & Beyond building renovation, representatives of the company appeared before the Village Zoning Board of Appeals to request a variance from the Sign Ordinance. A request for variance was granted by the ZBA at its July 19, 1999 meeting. Before the Planning Board for consideration is the proposed signage for this site.

Kampo stated that four signs are proposed on the property: a 5' x 20' sign on the east elevation, a monument sign, and an 18'-8" x 1'-4" sign on the wall at the south and west elevations. The total square footage proposed is 161.27, which is less than the 181 square feet approved by the ZBA. The individual letters will be white and will be internally lit. In answer to inquiry, Kampo stated that these signs will be the same as the standard signs seen at the other Bed Bath & Beyond stores.

Birchler indicated that the planning consultants were not asked to review this application.

Domzal questioned the material used on the ground sign and whether brick was considered.

Kampo stated that the monument sign will have a split face block base to match the lower ring around the east elevation of the building. The upper portion of the monument sign will be masonry with Dryvit attached to match the east facade. There will be tile behind the letters saying Bed Bath & Beyond.

Board members asked about the color of the signs. Kampo stated that they will be white with white lettering. The split faced block on the ground sign will be the same color that is on the east facade and the Dryvit portion will match the color of Dryvit on the east facade. Kampo thinks that the tile behind the white letters on the monument sign will be black.

The location of the ground sign with respect to the property line was questioned. Kampo responded that the sign will be located just inside the north side of the driveway. He could not indicate the specific distance from the property line.

MOTION by Robiner to table the Bed Bath & Beyond sign application until the building official is present later in the meeting.

Motion passes unanimously.

### **REVIEW ADDITIONS TO ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES**

At the last Planning Board meeting, planning consultant Wyrosdick discussed several traffic calming techniques that could be considered in conjunction with various pathway alternatives. She indicated that information on traffic island techniques would be presented at the next meeting.

David Birchler from Birchler Arroyo stated that these techniques are referred to as horizontal deflection. These types of traffic calming measures include a traffic circle and a mid-block pedestrian crossing. He displayed a diagram of each of these measures. Birchler remarked that there are a variety of alternative techniques presented in this pathway study. All of them will not be applied by the Planning Board in the pathway plan, but they are methods to consider in terms of their application.

Birchler explained the meaning of horizontal deflection. One of the ways that traffic can be slowed where there is a roadway with a straight path is to have a slight deflection in the path of the traffic. This can be done either by a curve in the roadway or by developing a small residential roundabout or traffic circle at an intersection. It causes vehicles to yield before they come into the intersection. It deflects the path and causes motorists to slow down.

Advantages of a traffic circle include reducing vehicle speed and vehicle conflicts and providing a unique identity to an area. They can be used in areas to restrict access by large vehicles. A disadvantage is the moderate to high cost associated with these improvements. Another consideration is driver education since people are not familiar with traffic circles in this state. This may not be an appropriate use in areas where there are emergency vehicle routes.

Birchler referred to the illustration of a mid-block crosswalk. This can be used at a place in the middle of a block where there is a large demand to go from a neighborhood area to a park or a school. People sometimes do not go down to the intersection to cross the street and come back. This method provides an opportunity for crossing on a long straight section of road that may have a speed problem. A mid-block island will identify the fact that there is a crosswalk. The crosswalk can be identified with signage. It provides an area for landscaping. Pavement texture or color can be used to highlight a crosswalk. These measures will slow down motorists so that they approach the area more carefully. It gives pedestrians a chance to get across and provides refuge in the center of the street. The advantages and disadvantages are similar to those for the traffic circle.

Fox stated that she has been observing traffic in her own neighborhood after learning about traffic calming techniques. There are a couple of long residential streets on the west side of the Village including Eastlady, Vernon, and Bellvine. People tend to speed on these streets. Fox sees the possibility of a mid-block island on a couple of spots on those streets as being useful to slow traffic.

Bliven read an excerpt from the 1961 Village Master Plan: "As major or collector roads are improved, there should be built in speed controls where possible. For instance, to prevent Pierce Street from becoming a race track, islands should be built at the intersections to insure against automobiles traveling at a high rate of speed."

### **PRESENTATION BY RESIDENT ON PROBLEMS WITH EASEMENT NORTH AND WEST OF GROVES HIGH SCHOOL**

Kevin Good and Cindy Mills of 20760 Kennoway talked about an easement that extends from the north part of Kennoway to the south part of Eastlady across a bridge over the Rouge River. There is a heavily wooded section of about 300 feet where the path cannot be seen from either Eastlady or from Kennoway. The easement was apparently designed as a public road some years ago but then closed to vehicle traffic. Good and Mills are disturbed by the fact that primarily Groves High School students are using the path and heavily wooded areas as a gathering place, and there has been evidence of drinking and drug use. They would like to see the easement closed.

Good explained that Groves High School has a flex hour policy on certain days when students are allowed to come to school an hour later. Good and Mills see kids on the path on some mornings. Cindy Mills feels that their children are in danger if they use this path because of the kids hanging out in that area.

Good recently spoke with the Director of Public Safety about the misuse of this easement by young adults. Officers were sent to the area where they rounded up five or six youths violating the law. Since the police came out, Good has seen only one person using this path. He is asking the Village to close the easement or have it supervised by the Public Safety Department.

Byrwa stated that he spoke with Public Services Director Spallasso about this situation. The control of the bridge and the easement is within the jurisdiction of the Kennoway and Peaceful Valley Subdivisions. It is a private easement owned by those two subdivisions. Good was advised to contact the subdivision associations with his request to close the easement.

Board members suggested that this issue be referred to Village legal counsel with respect to restricting people from an easement. Borowski stated that this is a potentially important Village safety issue. He suggested that the Village Council be advised of this situation. It was mentioned that the public safety department has officers that patrol the Village on mountain bikes. Patrolling this area at the right time would help eliminate the negative element.

The Planning Board is particularly interested in this because board members have talked about pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the Village by various means including these kinds of easements.

Fox commented that she has lived on Glenhill Court since 1985 and both of her sons have used that easement to go to Groves High School. She walks on it frequently and has not seen beer cans or kids loitering. She questioned whether this behavior is something the residents have observed only recently.

Good stated that his neighbor Julius Rutzky has lived here for 20 years and has seen evidence of suspicious behavior in that area. Good will leave a video he filmed of the wooded area and path with the Planning Board for review.

Belaustegui commented that the kids do not reach the pathway from the school or the sidewalk. They go across the field on school property through a hole in the fence and across a residential property on Kennoway. The school can control that.

Bliven affirmed that the easement is a subdivision easement belonging to the Kennoway Subdivision and the Peaceful Valley Subdivision. The Village has no jurisdiction over that particular easement. He suggested that Good review the deed restrictions of the subdivision to see what it says about the easement.

The building official entered the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

#### **Review proposed ground sign for Woods of Turnberry**

Larry Albert from Argyle Sign Co. was present requesting approval of a ground sign for the Woods of Turnberry development at the southeast corner of Lahser and Turnberry Court. He described the sign as a 4' x 12' block structure that will be located on Lahser Road. The sign will be constructed of natural fieldstone and will be 2' deep. The lettering will be brushed gold. The sign will be located about 10 feet from the sidewalk and at least 6' from the road right-of-way.

Byrwa stated that the proposed sign is located on private property. It meets Village Sign Ordinance requirements with respect to size, height, letter style and location. He recommends approval of the sign.

MOTION by Robiner, supported by Smith, to approve the proposed ground sign for the Woods of Turnberry development as submitted and reviewed by the building official.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion passes unanimously.

**Review proposed signs for Bed Bath & Beyond**

Byrwa related that a variance was granted by the Village Zoning Board of Appeals at its July 19, 1999 meeting to approve a total of 187 SF of signage for Bed Bath & Beyond. This would allow for a 5' x 20' sign on the front of the building, a 12 SF monument sign, and three 25 SF signs over the south and west entrances. The variance was granted based on a hardship in allowing the front of the building to be visible due to the set back of approximately 200' from the front property line. Byrwa stated that the total square footage being requested is 161 SF. The signs seem reasonable over the south and west entrances. The monument sign is located on private property. He recommends approval of the signage.

Byrwa had no additional information on the color of the ground sign or the tile behind the lettering. He stated that the ordinance allows one background color and three colors on the sign. David Kampo from Frank Rewold and Son believes that the background color of the monument sign is black.

The board questioned the exact location of the sign. It was noted that there is a bond required if the sign is located closer to the property line than the height of the sign. The sign is shown on the drawing with no dimensions from the property line indicated.

Domzal reiterated his concern regarding the quality of construction. He thinks a brick motif would better meet the design standards for commercial areas as indicated in the site design handbook.

MOTION by Bliven, supported by Belaustegui, to approve the signage requested by Bed Bath & Beyond as submitted subject to the ground sign being located 6 feet west of the property line. The sign colors must be in compliance with the ordinance.

Roll Call Vote:

Bliven	- yes
Borowski	- yes
Domzal	- no
Fox	- yes
Jensen	- yes
Robiner	- yes
Smith	- yes
Tillman	- yes
Belaustegui	- yes

Motion passes (8 - 1).

**REVIEW AND DISCUSSION ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR PATHWAY PLAN (FOCUS AREAS 1 & 2)**

Birchler reviewed that the planning process involves the following: analyze existing conditions, establish goals and objectives, develop alternatives, and select the appropriate alternatives. The Planning Board has done a fair amount of analysis of the Village's existing pathways and has established that there are missing links in the system that make it difficult for children and adults to get from one point to another. The board has looked at a number of different techniques that can be used to calm traffic, assist pedestrians in crossing roads, and provide safety for people on bicycles. Focus areas have been identified. The Planning Board has divided the Village into four focus areas for purpose of studying those areas and developing alternative solutions to some of the breaks in the system that it would like to correct.

The board was provided with material from the planning consultants to assist in its discussion of alternative solutions for the first two focus areas. The first focus area extends from 14 Mile Road to 13 Mile Road from the westerly village limits to an imaginary line between Bellvine and Westlady. The second focus area begins from that line in the Valley Woods area and extends east to about one-quarter mile from Evergreen Road from 14 Mile to 13 Mile Roads. Both focus areas were divided into a north and south segment.

There are recommendations for each of the focus area. The format for the recommendations is based on the goals established for this study. The Planning Board decided that the goals for the pathway plan should be to promote safety, provide for an attractive system, and result in a useful and connected system. This was kept in mind for each of the recommendations.

Focus Area 1-A includes Metamora, North Georgetown, and part of Nottingham. The first recommendation in Focus Area 1-A, which is the southern half of that focus area, is an internal pedestrian connection to allow North Georgetown and Metamora to be connected with the southern end of Robinhood. That would allow all three of those neighborhoods to have a connection for children and pedestrians from one neighborhood to the other without going on 13 Mile Road. This would provide a complete pedestrian route from 14 Mile south to 13 Mile Road.

Birchler pointed out that these are private properties so there would have to be some securing of easements and finding an appropriate way to establish that connection so that it does not disrupt people's use of their property. It provides for a very short connection that links a large area of the Village and three large residential neighborhoods.

The second recommendation is to construct the missing piece of sidewalk on 13 Mile Road approximately from Woodside Athletic Club to the Road Commission property. This would complete the east-west connection from the western Village limits to Lahser Road. This extension would compliment the previously mentioned recommendation, which calls for pedestrian easements between subdivisions in Focus Area 1-A.

The third recommendation is to provide some identifiable crosswalks along Lahser Road at a couple of locations to accommodate children going to/from Detroit Country Day High School and Berkshire Middle School. A well defined crosswalk could be used to indicate special areas within the Village for motorists and pedestrians. Brightly colored and signed areas would encourage pedestrians to cross at designated crossings as well as slow vehicle speeds in those areas. Crosswalks would provide an extension of the Village pathway system and indicate to pedestrians safe areas to cross major roads. Crosswalks could be constructed within existing right-of-way and in many cases would be an inexpensive improvement for the Village.

One proposed location for a crosswalk would be at Hampton and Nottingham. The other recommended location is at Stafford, which would provide an identifiable crossing for the Stafford Street neighborhood and the Metamora area.

The final recommendation in Focus Area 1-A is to provide sidewalk connections along the east side of Lahser Road where they are currently missing from Turnberry to the crossing at Nottingham Drive. There is ample right-of-way in this area to accommodate a sidewalk connection. This would be an obvious improvement the Village could make to complete the system along some of these major roads.

The north half of Focus Area 1 provides for some identifiable crossings at a couple of locations. There is a stretch of sidewalk on the west side of Lahser that could connect the Valley Woods area to Nottingham except that there is not a good crossing of the street at that location. This would be an area where an identifiable and upgraded crossing for pedestrians would provide a considerable benefit at a low cost.

The second recommendation for Focus Area 1-B is to extend and connect the sidewalk along the southern portion of 14 Mile Road and the western side of Lahser. Extension of the pedestrian pathway system would provide a safer alternative for those who walk for recreation, health or as an alternative mode of transportation. These gaps should be completed in order to make existing sidewalks more valuable to the community and connect residents with destination locations such as commercial areas and community facilities.

The next recommendation suggests extending that sidewalk along 14 Mile Road to get to Evergreen Road. This would provide an opportunity for the Nottingham area to access Berkshire School, Kensington Academy and the Presbyterian Church. In addition, the Valley Woods neighborhood would be able to use that same walk by coming up Bellvine to the middle school.

There is a recommendation in this focus area for internal pedestrian connections to the middle school property from E. Valley Woods Drive and between Bellvine Trail to Turnberry Road along the utility easement. There could be coordination with Berkshire Middle School and Kensington Academy to extend internal sidewalks toward E. Valley Woods to connect with a potential pedestrian easement. Internal connections would provide a continuous pathway system within sections of the Village. Pedestrian use would be predominant along residential streets within Valley Woods Subdivision.

Morris Brackenbury from Metamora Green Subdivision asked if the crosswalks suggested across Lahser Road would consist of painted marks on the highway. Birchler responded that there are no specific proposals as to how those crosswalks would be accomplished. It could be a painted crosswalk, a pavement texture change, or a simple marked crosswalk with crossing signs. There are a variety of different techniques. Approval would be needed from the Oakland County Road Commission if the Village were to do more than a painted crosswalk with signage. The idea is to provide something that warns drivers that this is a place where they can expect pedestrians to be crossing so that they are more cautious.

Dennis Page of 30470 Lincolnshire, former Planning Board member, stated that he is in agreement with developing a pathway plan for the Village. He concurs with the areas identified as needing a pathway plan. Page understands that there will be discussion on how to accomplish this and which techniques to use. He would like to see the neighborhoods connected.

Fox asked the children present in the audience how they get from one neighborhood to another and what would they like to see in Beverly Hills.

Kaitlan Shane of Georgetown commented that she likes to ride her bike with friends to the Stroh's Ice Cream store but finds it difficult to cross the roads without a crosswalk. She highly recommends that the Village provide sidewalks.

Karen Callanan of 22656 Highbank Drive in South Georgetown stated that her son attends Beverly School and has friends in the West Beverly area. He cannot visit his friends or Beverly Park by bicycle because the neighborhoods are not connected with sidewalk. She said that the longest distance they can ride is the loop around South Georgetown or cross precariously at the light and go to the playground at Bingham Farms School. Callanan is a runner and expressed concern about the safety of running in the area of 13 Mile and Lahser. She commented that her neighborhood has many young children, and it is unfortunate that the area is so contained.

Morris Brackenbury of 31411 Sleepy Hollow displayed a color coded map showing existing sidewalk and gaps on Lahser Road from 13 to 14 Mile Roads. He understands that topography problems may be the reason why the sidewalks were never completed. Sidewalk construction began 37 years ago.

Brackenbury stated that Beverly Hills is surrounded by communities that are installing sidewalks. The Village is going to be a little island without sidewalks if something is not done. He sees walkers, joggers, roller bladers, bicyclists, and young mothers with baby buggies all using the sidewalks until they end. He stressed the safety factor. Thirty-seven years is a long time to wait for the sidewalks to be connected. Brackenbury endorses the idea of finishing the sidewalk connections and thinks that most people would be willing to consider a special assessment for this purpose.

Brackenbury identified people in the audience who share his view and who live in Georgetown and Metamora. He is collecting signatures on a petition signed by people who want the sidewalks connected.

Joan Brackenbury of 31411 Sleepy Hollow stated that she rides her bike often. The only way to get from 13 and 14 Mile Roads is to go out onto the shoulder of Lahser Road for about a block, which is very dangerous.

Lori Hicks of 30337 Lincolnshire in Georgetown congratulated the Planning Board for its progressive efforts in preparing a pathway plan. She thinks that it is wonderful that this group is

trying to make Beverly Hills a walkable community. Hicks believes that the people who live in Beverly Hills come for the families and neighborhoods. Hicks stated that she and others in Metamora, Nottingham and Georgetown would like to show their support for sidewalks connecting the neighborhoods. Petitions from people asking for sidewalks are being circulated. She asked the Planning Board how they can help the process and make their voices heard.

Borowski affirmed that the Planning Board has discussed having another public forum for discussion of sidewalks. Neighborhood association presidents will be notified. This would be another way for people to convey their opinions and direction to the board.

Belaustegui recalled that the first public meeting on sidewalks held by the Planning Board was overwhelmed by two neighborhoods that were strongly opposed to sidewalks of any kind in the Village. The Planning Board is an advisory body to the Council. He suggested that these residents could go before the Village Council and make their views known.

There was discussion by board members and planners on the recommendations proposed for the two focus areas reviewed by Birchler.

Brackenbury questioned the role of the Planning Board in this process. Birchler explained that it is the board's role to prepare a pathway plan and recommend it to Council.

David Tillman of 30665 Vernon Drive, which is in Focus Area 3, commented that the recommendations for his area does not include a proposal to construct sidewalk from Groves High School to Detroit County Day School. It would be nice to have continuous sidewalks. Belaustegui commented that this is a difficult area and a dangerous road for bicycles and people.

A recess was called at 9:28 p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 9:37 p.m.

Borowski suggested deferring discussion on Focus Area 2 until the next meeting. The Planning Board will also discuss a general strategy on how to approach and prioritize the strategies for each focus area.

**DISCUSS POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR JOINT PLANNING BOARD AND COUNCIL MEETING OF JUNE 1, 2000 AT 7 P.M.**

A joint meeting of the Planning Board and Council is scheduled for next Thursday, June 1 at 7:00 p.m. Planning Board members suggested topics that they would like addressed at that meeting.

There was consensus that the priority projects identified by the Planning Board for 2000-2001 be discussed with Council. The board requests clarification on its work program for the next fiscal year.

Walsh indicated that the planning budget approved by Council includes the priority projects submitted by the board with the exception of the Southfield Road corridor study. Board members would like to discuss with Council why the Southfield Road corridor study was not funded.

Planning Board members asked to receive a copy of the planning budget and projects approved by Council before next week's meeting. Byrwa indicated that he will look into whether money approved for a project that was not undertaken in a particular year is carried over to the next budget year.

Planning Board members expressed an interest in establishing a regular meeting date for the annual joint meeting with Council and publishing that date in the Village calendar. Bliven will recommend setting the annual meeting in October.

Belaustegui would like to have an understanding from Council on what it expects from the Planning Board. He suggested that Council and Planning Board members review the section of the municipal code that outlines the duties of the Village Planning Board.

Smith would like to know whether the Council is interested in the Planning Board addressing the potential impact of "big foot" redevelopment in the Village. Smith noted that Southfield Township

now has a Planning Board rather than a Planning and Zoning Board. He would like to talk to Council about the Village Planning Board meeting with the Township planning group to coordinate efforts, particularly with regard to the 13 Mile and Southfield Road area.

Domzal suggested that the planning consultant summarize the status and the intent of the ongoing pathway study at the joint meeting. The Planning Board has spent a lot of time on a pathway plan, and he would like an affirmation from Council on the direction of this effort.

#### **PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS**

Bliven referred to page 5 of the minutes of the April 26 Planning Board meeting. He disagreed with a statement made that "a gate attached to poles with no fencing is considered an accessory structure".

Smith has observed earth moving equipment on Detroit Country Day School property near Lahser. He asked Byrwa if DCD has submitted a request to the Village to move dirt. Byrwa is not aware of such an application but can contact the Headmaster and make an inquiry.

Robiner was pleased to hear from residents this evening who were interested in promoting pathways in the Village. Robiner asked when the Planning Board will be discussing the Village entryway signs and was informed that it is a project for the upcoming work program.

Borowski stated that he appreciates the work that Belaustegui did together with planner Wyrosdick on the pathway focus areas.

Borowski mentioned that the Appreciation Dinner for Village volunteers is being held on June 7.

Borowski stated that he received a memo from Lori Hicks, Pam Murdoch, and Karen Callanan. They are in favor of sidewalks and are asking for any assistance the board can give them in this matter. Belaustegui suggested that it may be worthwhile to contact area residents when the Planning Board schedules a review of a particular focus area so that input from the citizens can be heard at that time.

#### **BUILDING OFFICIAL'S COMMENTS**

Byrwa stated that the Village received a site plan for a major renovation at Kensington Academy. The site plan and special use approval will be coming before the Planning Board for review and recommendation to Council. A public hearing will be required as part of the special use approval process. Birchler Arroyo is currently reviewing these plans.

Fox suggested that the planners consider the recommendations in the pathway study for Focus Area 1-B as part of this site plan review.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council Liaison Walsh stated that the Minor Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments were adopted by Council at its May 1, 2000 meeting with only one minor change to the ordinance amendment regarding the maximum length of cul-de-sacs.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

#### **Carry over items:**

- 1- Entranceway signs (10-27-99)
- 2 - Bikeways, walkways and pedestrian safety study (11-11-99).

**Vince Borowski, Chairperson  
Planning Board**

**Ellen E. Marshall  
Village Clerk**