

**Ganges Township Planning Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes for May 28, 2025**  
**Ganges Township Hall**  
**119th Avenue and 64th Street**  
**Fennville MI, Allegan County**

**I. Call to Order - Roll Call**

Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call: Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** - Present

Vice Chair: Dale **Pierson** - Present

Secretary: Phil **Badra** - Present

Commissioner: Edward **Gregory** - Present

Commission Trustee: Dick **Hutchins** - Present

Zoning Administrator: Tasha **Smalley** - Present

Recording Secretary: Katie **Wolfe** - Present

Township Attorney: Ron **Bultje** - Present

**II. Additions to the Agenda and adoption**

**Badra** made a motion to amend the agenda, moving Old Business before the Public Hearing. **Hutchins** seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**III. General Public Comment -**

Thomas **Myers** - 1768 66th St. noted concerns about traffic flow and high speeds on 66th St. He continued that he has adjoining property to the proposed campground and is also concerned about a buffer for privacy.

**IV. Correspondence and Upcoming Seminars**

**Badra** to Kelley Re: Private road

**Smalley** to PC Re: FOIA request

**Hebert** to PC from Tyler and Brianna **Dokter** Re: Private road

2 emails **Phelps** to PC Re: FOIA request

**Phelps** to **PC** Re: Remote participation. Response from Township Attorney.

**Cunningham Dalman** to **PC** Re: Campground

**Varnum** to **PC** Re: Campground

**Smalley** to **PC** from **Popielewski** Re: Campground

**Badra** to **PC** Re: LLCs for campground

**Gregory** to **PC** Re: Zoning books

**Gregory** to **PC** Re: Campground

**Phelps** to **PC** from **Clahan** Re: Campground

**Phelps** to **PC** from **Brandon & Lisa Trombley** Re: Campground

**Smalley** to **PC** Re: Campground

From: **Kronemeyer, Anonymous, Hughes & Mackey, Greiner, Jenewein, Denny**

**DeZwaan** to **PC** Re: Campground

From: **M. Solomon, J. Solomon, W. Solomon, S. Solomon, V. Rockholt, Jensen, K. Rockholt, Cottrell**

**Smalley** to **PC** Re: Campground

From: **Duffin, Fredrickson, Ludwig, Cook, Ensfield**

**Pierson** to **PC** Re: Campground

From: **Slayer, K. Slayer, Richards, Harringsma, Williamson, Richards, Geirnek, Andringa, Rewa, Abrahams, R. Abrahams, N. Nielsen, J. Nielsen, C. Mannion, K. Mannion, J. Kiss, C. Kiss, C. Knight, T. Knight.**

**Smalley** to **PC** Re: Campground

From: **J. Leslie, Rodriguez, Harrig, Bale, Dokter, Harrig**

Letters turned in at the meeting: Re: Campground

From: **Lastscolt, Friedrickson, Ludwig, Cook**

**V. Old Business** - North Cove Homes Neal Kelley, Final Site Plan Review for Private Road Blueberry Lane, Parcel 07-015-028-00

**Pierson** noted that one of the conditions was not completed; the pathway drawn on the updated plans should be extended back to the centerline of the cul-de-sac.

**Badra** made a motion to approve the final site plan for Blueberry Lane with the provision that Mr. **Kelley** bring a corrected site plan to **Smalley's** office. **Pierson** seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**VI. Public Hearing** - Central Florida Resort Property Management, Bobbi Jo & Dan Beyersdorf & Michael O'Connor, Saugatuck Meadows Campground, Parcels 0307-021-001-00, 0307-021-001-10, 0307-021-001-90

**Opening of Public Hearing - 7:15 PM**

Sarah **Ross**, the Project Representative, introduced herself and the project. **Ross** noted that Bobbi Jo and Dan **Beyersdorf** own two campgrounds in Michigan and they reached out to **Ross** wanting to build a new campground in Ganges TOWNSHIP called Saugatuck Meadows. It is an internal and external piece of property and the **Beyersdorf's** have investors and partners in the project.

**Ross** stated that when she started with the site plan, she followed Public Act 368, then she went through the local and county requirements. **Ross** also noted when they did the boundary survey, it was determined there could be over 200 campsites, however the **Beyersdorf's** prefer campgrounds with more space. The state minimum requirements for campground size is 1,200 sq ft, these campsites are all over 3,000 sq ft. The roadways within the campground have to have a 20 ft easement for fire trucks, so that is included in the plan. **Ross** noted she also created an emergency access drive on the north side so there are two ways in and out. This drive is on the property owners land so it will not require an easement.

**Ross** mentioned that she met with the county and dug test holes to determine well and septic plans, then determined the size of the septic field. Septic design for the State of Michigan for campgrounds is required to be 75 gallons per day per site. However, the average use from the campgrounds that **Ross** monitors is about 11 gallons per day per site, so the actual use tends to be much less than the requirement.

**Ross** continued that the Road Commission's Driveway Entrance Requirement is based on traffic use. 118th Avenue is a Class A road and 66th is a Class B road, so a 50 ft taper is

required. The entrance is also the proper distance away from the property lines based on the Ganges TOWNSHIP Ordinance.

**Ross** also followed the storm water ordinance. When testing the site, they went down almost 6 ft to find good sand where the septic fields are, and on the other side of the site it is solid clay. So to be conservative while doing the drainage plan, **Ross** used mostly clay ~~undergrowth~~ UNDERGROUND with the sand that will be put on top of it, stating that any fills will be sand. The detention basins will detain the water if it ever gets there but the slopes are very low across the site. There are also two existing water ponds on the site; to utilize those and to make sure the storm water is being taken care of, they are going to be used as big recreation storm ponds. These ponds will be a relaxing area for the guests; they may be stocked with fish, or have a kayak or dock. They are not swim ponds, they are storm water management ponds. There is a pool for swimming. There is an outlet structure on each pond, and those outlet structures release AT the rate that it goes into the existing pond, then it goes to the county drain.

Following the landscape ordinance, there is a buffer on the perimeter of the site everywhere that there are existing trees, and there will be a berm with spruce trees on the north side of the property. Maintaining a 30-70 ft tree buffer we give an automatic buffer system to the neighboring properties. **Ross** also said they are not going to get close to the ponds/wetlands with any of their development.

On the current plans the lightposts meet the requirements as they are downward facing. However, the goal here is lighting that is closer to the ground so **Ross** plans to propose even shorter lights to the owners.

The objective for this project is a quality campground experience for guests and to make sure it's a safe environment. The plans include a bathhouse and a check-in shed by the entrance. The shed listed is a steel building but it could be a wood, premade shed. The main office/poolhouse/store/bathhouse will be in the middle of the campground by the pool and recreational area. SHE SAID those buildings meet all campground requirements.

**Ross** shared a copy of the rules that the owners have at their other campgrounds, just to get a feel for their other campgrounds. These are the kinds of rules they are planning to have at this proposed campground.

The **Beyersdorf's** do not intend to have any activities that are outside of what is allowed in the Zoning Ordinance (ZO).

**Ross** stated that she read through the Master Plan (MP) and ZO and confirmed that the site plan addressed everything on the site plan checklist.

**Ross** mentioned that traffic concerns will come up. MDOT has a document that talks about traffic usage, and campgrounds are in the lowest impact zones because guests come in and out at different times so they do not have a high volume at a specific time. The highest percent use for a campground is typically Fridays and Sundays around noon, which is not the highest traffic time for roadways.

**Ross** continued that the campground should not place any demands on public services and facilities, because they have all of their own infrastructure in the campground. It is also designed with all the fire code requirements. **Ross** stated that she has never had a campground that had police presence. She also contacted the county office and they did not have any record of big incidences at any campgrounds in the area.

As far as the other approvals go, **Ross** cannot get the EGLE permit without the storm water permit, the road commission permit, approval from Ganges TOWNSHIP and the Health Department permit. **Ross** wondered if it would be possible to get the site plan approved with one of the conditions stating that they cannot be licensed or build the campground without an EGLE permit.

#### **Public comments -**

Charles **Mannion** - 6611 Deer Trail stated that according to the MP, Ganges Township's focus for the future is protecting and maintaining its existing rural character and high quality of life. Also critical, is ensuring that land uses are targeted to areas that have the capacity to accommodate those uses. The Township has always been known for its rural/agricultural charm and he urged the Planning Commission (PC) and Township Board to consider this when making decisions regarding special land uses.

Marsha **Maslanka** - 1811 66th St. believes that three campgrounds in the area is enough. She continued that there's no oversight at Campit and urged the board members to attend one of their events. **Maslanka** noted that she has called the police in the past, specifically

for the parking across the street and for noise complaints. She asked if Campit has an alcohol permit. She is also worried about traffic as she has seen many accidents at the corner of 118th Ave. and 66th St.

Kim **Mannion** - 6611 Deer Trail went out canvassing. Some things she heard along the lakeshore were: people are worried about water supply, people did not want to have a yard sign or talk about the campground because they were worried about retribution, they feel that the Township does not do anything to help, and people were misinformed thinking that the campground would bring in tax dollars for the community.

Ernie **Kessler** - 2173 66th St. stated that he is worried about water. Everyone in this area is dependent on groundwater. We're drawing from underground water sources and an adjoining county is already dealing with a water issue due to increased population.

**Kessler** has also noticed an increase in roadkill and deer because developers are taking away all of their habitat.

Barbara **Andrews** - 1738 66th St. stated that she is mostly worried about noise and traffic, adding that the woods do not cut out any noise as she can hear music inside her home. She has also had Chinese lanterns land on her roof, and has seen campers dumping trash in the neighbor's trash cans.

Natasha **Popielewski** - 6635 Foote Trail commented that many of the township residents moved here for the peace and quiet and now they will lose all quality of life.

Stephanie **Hughes** - 6645 Foot Trail representing herself and Sue Mackey shared several points in opposition to the Special Land Use (SLU) request. Campit has operated a large-scale outdoor entertainment venue that has failed to adhere to basic community standards around excessive noise and disorderly behavior. She shared a list of events that start early in the day and end around 3AM. Additionally Campit advertises all day, all access 3-4 day passes or even daily passes for outside individuals to use the facilities. Their events and the volume of guests attending them add up to a huge impact on the resources of the community: safety personnel, water usage, pollution generated, and a direct and immediate impact on the surrounding neighbors and our quality of life. This proposed campground is directly connected to Campit and has been publicly promoted by Randy Henry, the Campit Operations Manager, in a podcast interview that references all year round to allow members a place to live, 24/7 all access passes, a store selling beer and

wine, and massive pool parties. The immediate neighbors of the proposed RV park expansion are being subjected to increased noise, traffic, safety risk, smoke pollution, and a loss of property values.

Jamie **Andrews** - 1738 66th St stated that he is worried about accidents and traffic, as there is already enough now.

Randy **Abrahams** - 6653 120th Ave. noted that they can hear the noise from Campit as well. He also wondered if there will be limits on how long guests can stay at the new proposed campground; adding that he is concerned that this could turn into short term rentals. **Abrahams** also worries about the management of the land and how it's being used.

Dave **Laakso** - 1735 66th St. commented that the site for the proposed campground is zoned Res/Ag requiring 1 ½ acres for each residential lot, however this proposal may potentially include up to 250 RVs on less than 0.1 acre each. Ganges Township ZO states in Section 4.5 that Ganges Township does not accept or consider conditional rezoning applications. In the same document under Section 6.2 B. it states if a use is not listed in the table below it shall be considered prohibited, the table does not list an RV park, grocery store or swimming pool. **Laakso** reviewed minutes from the March 2006 township meeting and summarized a statement from a current PC member. He said why was the community survey, and the work sessions for the MP all ignored for the benefit of a few; this document should serve as a land use guide for our community for many years.

Randy **Schipper** from Cunningham Dalman, representing several in attendance tonight, stated that the PC can only approve the requested SLU if it meets all six of the standards in the ordinance, Section 18.3. He continued that he feels it does not meet any of the requirements. Much of the recreation areas are along the edges of the site, where they are most likely to disrupt the neighbors rather than internal to the site. The proposed plan will nearly double the size of Campit given the applicants affiliation with Campit through Mr. **O'Connor** and the proposed plan of creating a pathway between the two. Campit is already out of place with the surrounding area; it is inconsistent with the MP. Outdoor entertainment events every weekend from May to October, late into the night disturbs residents and impairs the rural and residential character. This would magnify all the

problems that Campit already creates for the area. This would have people crossing 118th Ave. late at night in a poorly lit area. If the PC finds any of the standards are not met, they must reject the proposed SLU and that's what we ask the PC to do.

Aaron **Kronmeyer** - 6556 118th Ave. noted that EGLE is trying to rework parts of the Public Act 368 because too many campgrounds are taking advantage of the loopholes. He wondered if the PC could wait to make their decisions until EGLE made their changes.

**Kronmeyer** mentioned that at the last PC meeting, pedestrian safety on Blueberry Lane was an important issue. He continued, if that is a concern for seven houses on 20 acres, it should really be a concern for 86 units on 25 acres. **Kronmeyer** questioned how many sites there would really be, he noted in the health department application there were 120 sites, but in marketing it seems like they're selling 326. Lastly he noted that increased enforcement would mean that taxes would increase for residents in the township.

Laura **Bale** - 6462 118th Ave. noted that she can hear the music and smell the smoke from Campit and she is about a mile away. She stated that there needs to be quiet hours. She is also worried if they expand it will only get worse.

Drew **Scholten** - 6548 118th Ave. stated that his main concern is traffic. Noting that he has had to slam on the brakes due to people turning into Campit. He moved here due to the agricultural land and farming community; he understands growth but there needs to be a limit.

Leslie **Huntington** - 1419 66th St. stated that she worked at the prosecutor's office for victim rights and after every weekend there were always cases coming through from Campit of domestic assault.

Delaney **Kronmeyer** - 6552 118th Ave commented that in the Ganges Township MP, preserving rural character, farmland, country scenery, language of that matter is mentioned 32 times throughout the plan. A campground with 89 sites does not meet that agricultural feel. The Ganges Township aquifer yield is less than 70 gallons per minute, which is one of the lowest recharge rates in Allegan County. One of the highest water usages in Allegan County is also Ganges Township, mainly due to farming. The applicant mentioned that the new campground will fit in with our community, but farm land is our community. After attending a Township meeting, he learned that Campit has not filed for



any outdoor event permits and he is worried that this will follow with the new campground.

Alayna **Tomlinson** - 6552 118th Ave. asked how many permits Campit had pulled for events this year. How many times have the police been called to the campground in the past year? Tomlinson added that she knows of people that have called for noise. Also, when the applicant noted the rules the campgrounds use, do we have any way to know that these rules will be used here? Do they get approved by the township and will they be enforced?

Janet **Leslie** - 1841 68th St. shared that the general consensus is that Campit has not been a good neighbor in our community, it would be bad to expand on that. Adding that the water table is a huge concern.

Kevin **Perkins** - 1741 65th St. asked if there ARE any inspections that go on in the campground? He also added that he can hear the noise from Campit.

Barb **Meyers** - 1768 66th St. asked who is going to keep the guests from wandering onto her property.

Linda **Rodriguez** - 1665 65th St. asked why it is called Saugatuck Meadows. She noted that she has lived here for 52 years and wants peace and quiet.

Tony and Michelle **Adrianse** - 1421 Scurio Lane stated that they did live on 66th St. but they gave up their beautiful home due to the noise from Campit. They sold their property to a family who has since moved out because of the noise. Tony added that he cannot imagine Campit doubling in size and what this will do to the community.

Randy **Abrahams** asked if there is a way for the Township to get a handle on Campit before they can expand.

Stephanie **Hughes** stated that she did not grow up in the area so now that she lives here, she feels that it is a privilege to live in this community. The proposal is from someone that doesn't actually live in the community.

Brad **Adamson** - 6533 116th Ave. noted that he moved here to raise his kids and now that one just got a license, traffic is a huge concern. The noise is also an impact.

**Adamson** stated that he is a property manager that manages campgrounds. As campgrounds have expanded, the capacity does not seem to be an issue but the discharge

is. He added that he would be interested to see what is being proposed to know what kind of discharge issues the campground might have.

#### **Close of Public Hearing - 8:35 PM**

### **VII. Approval of Prior Minutes**

Motion made by **Gregory**, seconded by **Badra** to approve the April 22, 2025, Regular Monthly Meeting minutes, with corrections. Motion passed.

### **VIII. New Business**

#### **A. Saugatuck Meadows Campground**

**Badra** asked where correspondence should be sent. **Beyersdorf** replied that any correspondence could be sent to her and she will distribute it.

**Badra** asked if **Beyersdorf** is an owner of the property. **Beyersdorf** responded at this time, Michael **O'Connor**'s LLC is the owner of the current property. She continued, once this SLU application goes through then they will be partners. If this does not go through, then they will not create the LLC. **Beyersdorf** stated that her and her husband are the developers, and they will be developing the property under a business called Innovative Outdoors. **Badra** noted on the LARA website, the business is called Innovative Outdoors, with an 'i'. **Beyersdorf** replied that is not what she applied for but that is how it came back from the State of Michigan.

**Badra** asked if the PC can accept the SLU application even though the name is incorrect. Ron **Bultje**, the Township Attorney, replied that the PC can certainly ask the applicant to correct it, but the PC will not accept or reject their proposal on that basis.

**Badra** asked who the applicant's EGLE contact is? **Ross** replied ~~either Josh Aiden or Zack Wagoner.~~

**Badra** asked who the onsite manager is. **Beyersdorf** replied that they do not have one hired at this point, but there will be one.

**Badra** stated that he wants an absolute statement backed by the attorney and everyone else that this is not an extension of Campit. **Beyersdorf** replied that this

is a stand-alone family friendly campground. The affiliation is that Michael **O'Connor** owns that land. **Beyersdorf** continued that she is not willing to purchase and develop the land until she knows that it is going to be able to be used for what's intended.

**Badra** noted that if the PC does approve the plans for 89 campsites, that is it.

**Beyersdorf** replied that she does not know where this 250 number came from.

**Ross**, in response to how it is not an extension of Campit, stated that the owners do not plan to sell packaged beer or wine and they are not planning any outdoor music events requiring permits from the township. There will be adequate parking for guests and the only permanent structures on site will be the existing house, the bathhouse/store, and the check-in booth. As far as an extension, **Ross** said she does not know anything about Campit or how it is run. The proposed campground is a regular transient campground.

**Badra** asked if there will be any permanent structures (ex. Mobile homes, etc.)

**Ross** replied no, only RVs and other transient vehicles.

**Smalley** asked if the campers would stay there. **Beyersdorf** replied that their other campgrounds are also seasonal and they allow camper storage for a fee. The stored campers are not accessible and are left there until the next camping season.

**Badra** asked what months the campground would be open. **Beyersdorf** replied April - October.

**Hutchins** asked if this is a campground or an RV park? **Ross** replied that it will be licensed as a campground because the sites can have a tent, travel trailer, or an RV.

**Hutchins** asked why they would use Saugatuck Meadows instead of Glenn Meadows. **Ross** stated that the owners came up with the name in the truck when they first visited. **Beyersdorf** added that the name is not in an LLC form or anything until they get the go ahead to move forward. **Ross** continued that they can discuss a name change.

**Pierson**, referencing the public comments heard, asked if Campit will be a problem for the owners and their campers. Campit has used the property across the street as an auxiliary to their property for parking and tenting. There are also

junk trailers on the property. This is a reflection of the management that is going on at Campit and the owners need to be aware of this.

**Pierson** noted that a lot of the problem is that the campground is PERCEIVED AS an extension of Campit. From 2004, when Campit received permission to double the size, there was to be no parking across the street and no concerts or entertainment where tickets are sold to the public. The Township admitted that they have been lax when it comes to enforcing the ordinance. **Beyersdorf** commented that she knows how she runs a campground but she cannot do anything about the way anyone else does. **Pierson** responded that these are all things that she will be involved with as a part owner of the new campground. **Pierson** noticed some typos in the Site Plans and stated that the Site Plans are technical things and they need to be done correctly. He continued if you are not paying attention to the details, things might go awry. **Beyersdorf** ensured that the builder would get things done appropriately.

**Pierson** asked what **Smalley's** responsibility would be if the plans go through. **Smalley** said that she would issue the building permits for the pool, which is also permitted through EGLE. **Pierson** asked who would do the inspection of things as they are being built. **Smalley** replied that she would do the clubhouse, pool, and the check-in shed, as those are the only structures they are building, but EGLE would inspect the rest. At the end when they are ready to occupy, **Smalley** would check to make sure site plan requirements are met. EGLE would also issue a permit for construction and they also do their own inspections.

**Pierson** wondered if the Township should hire an engineer of our own to make sure this is getting done properly.

**Beyersdorf** added that the state contracts with the Health Department on behalf of EGLE, and they come out once a year to inspect.

**Ross** added that she has to ensure everything gets inspected and has to put a seal on it. She has to check all the materials and turn in a materials list to the State of Michigan. She also has to be there to see that the construction correctly matches what is designed on the plans. **Ross** added that she has to get all the sewer and water tested before it goes to EGLE and the septic tanks and septic fields are also

inspected by the Health Department. At the end **Ross** has to send a sealed letter saying everything is done as stated. The engineer is responsible for it all.

**Pierson** asked how **Ross** calculated the lot overage. **Pierson** added that he is including driveways, pads and lanes, plus the house and garage that are going to stay there, the swimming pool, store/office, and check-in shed. This is all lot coverage, which is over 15%. **Ross** replied that lot coverage by definition is structure. **Pierson** read the definition from the ZO: The part or percent of the lot occupied by buildings or structures, including accessory buildings or structures, decks or patios, driveways and parking lots paved or unpaved. **Bultje** stated that the units are not considered a parking lot as they are not a building or a structure. **Bultje** asked **Ross** to reconfigure the lot coverage and send a copy of the calculations.

**Badra** noted that he would need the following before making a decision: a statement from Allegan County Environmental Health Department that the well and septic systems are adequate to handle the 89 RV sites (which according to EGLE can have 8 people in a motorhome), a statement from the drain commissioner that the storm water management system is adequate and the detention areas have some sort of an outlet, not just evaporation and a traffic study at 66th St. and 118th Ave. **Badra** stated that he would like to see those things here before the PC makes any decisions. **Ross** replied that that may be difficult because EGLE wants approval from the Township before making any decisions as well. **Bultje** replied that the PC can issue a conditional approval which says our approval doesn't take effect until we have the confirmation of approval from EGLE.

**DeZwaan** noted that there is a possibility that this site does contain hydric soils which would require a wetlands study. **Ross** stated that she did a wetlands analysis and stayed away from the wetlands; if you are not impacting one of their designated wetland sites, you are not required to get a wetlands permit, so that is why I SHE stayed away from the ponds and those areas. **Bultje** asked if **Ross** identified where the hydric soils are. **Ross** replied yes, they are mostly off site.

**Ross** said she will send the wetlands map overlaid on the site plans. **Bultje** noted that the PC wants them identified so we know where they are located.

**Pierson** referenced the ZO in Section 16.3 E.2 which says the PC or Township Board may require a traffic impact assessment or traffic impact study pursuant to the institute of transportation engineer standards.

**Ross** confirmed that the PC is currently asking for a traffic study, Health Department and Drain Commission permit, and an overlay of wetlands hydric soil.

**DeZwaan** added that the property is within several drain basins so that's a Soil Erosion and Sediment Control area. **Ross** replied for the storm water approval, she has to get a Soil Erosion permit. She also has to do an EGLE permit for erosion control because they're doing more than five acres.

**DeZwaan** stated she feels that the Emergency Access and the parking/recreation area should not be in the same area. **Ross** stated there will be a gate or signs, whichever the fire department suggests, for Emergency Access only.

**Hutchins** confirmed that the gate will be right off of 118th Ave. **Ross** said yes, the gate will be by the road and there will be signs stating it's emergency access only. **Pierson** noted that the location of the emergency access is part of the problem because it is right across the street from the entrance of Campit, making it a conduit back and forth. In addition, where the emergency access drive meets 118th Ave, there is a blind hill just to the west. Pierson said ideally they would have the gate right off 118th Ave., or two gates one at the road and one at the campground.

**DeZwaan** noted on the Site Plan on C1-01 it says it shows the easements and dedications, but they are not spelled out. **Ross** replied that she believes that is the standard note put on there by the surveyor.

**Pierson** noted concerns about the lighting, and was going to push for a maximum of 8 ft., but Ross mentioned 4-6 ft. lighting which would be even better.

Pierson asked about the berm and tree placement. Ross replied that the berm is 20 ft on center and other perimeter trees are 30 ft. The trees will be 5 ft tall to start, and 20-30 ft when they mature. **Pierson** noted that 30 ft is too far APART. Maybe

20 ft but will still take a few years for them to make a good screen. This is very important for the neighbors.

**Pierson** noted in the landscape section of the Ganges TOWNSHIP ZO Section 17.5 berms can be no more than 4 ft tall. **Pierson** asked **Bultje** if it would be possible to make a condition where it says 5 ft tall instead. **Bultje** replied that there is discretion to make revisions to technical requirements for PUDs but not for SLUs.

**Pierson** noted that Ganges TOWNSHIP has a very slow regeneration in this township for the water table, and we have high iron content in our water. **Pierson** asked what they plan to do to address the high iron concentration. **Beyersdorf** stated that at one of her other campgrounds they went with a commercial Culligan system that softens the water.

**Pierson** asked if the manager would be on scene 24/7. **Beyersdorf** responded that they may not be there 24/7 but they will be accessible 24/7. **Pierson** asked if they plan to rent the house. **Beyersdorf** said no, it will be the manager's house.

**Gregory** discussed the process of creating the MP and ZOs based on the Township residents. When he received the SLU application, he consulted both documents and cannot seem to make the campground fit in our Township. This is a Special Use consideration and when you look at our ZO, it lists all the different types of camping in our ordinance. Campground is a very general term, however RV park is a specific term. RV park is not listed in Res/Ag Zoning, it is listed in Commercial Zoning. When it comes to a density comparison, the Res/Ag minimum lot size that you can put a single family home on is 1.5 acres. These campsites are 14 times greater in density.

**Gregory** noted that he attended a seminar regarding the sensitivity of our aquifer and was informed that there are problems. There is high consumption of water being extracted from our wells, and very sensitive soils that are questionable due to some of the septic systems. Ganges Township does not have a sewage treatment plant or water filtration plant. The Township has septic fields and our groundwater aquifer.

**Gregory** stated that RV units and motorhomes have a blackwater holding tank and a greywater holding tank. The toxicity of chemicals used in treating RV blackwater holding tanks varies significantly depending on the type of product. **Gregory** asked if there will be dumping stations. **Ross** replied that all sites will have full water and sewer connections. **Gregory** shared concerns that the sites will not be using a controlled dump station that is treated specifically for sewer water that is going to go to the septic field. The impact on aquifers can be substantial if those septic fields fail. Over time the septic fields get saturated and they eventually seep down into the water aquifer.

**Gregory** continued that this campground will need to have intense control mechanisms and documentation on how the owners plan to control the park. National Parks have rules and regulations and many have stay limits of 14 consecutive days and no more than 28 days total within the calendar year. This campground has a potential for year round placement of the vehicles.

**Gregory** stated that the Township has to get Campit under control and it cannot be done through these ordinances, it needs to be done through enforcement. He suggested there be a timeout at Campit for an appraisal to look at building codes, water tests, the sewage system and the rules and regulations.

**DeZwaan** stated that the PC has to follow the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The MP states that we are to seek to do similar businesses and recreation areas as part of our future development. If the plan is consistent with the MP, then the PC is governed by the ZO. In the ZO we have two processes to follow: Site Plan Review and Special Land Use Review. If the PC finds that a plan meets all the requirements, then those are the rules we are compelled to follow. **DeZwaan** continued when it comes to the concerns tonight, the traffic study is something the PC can ask for. The water and sewer concerns are not within our purview, that is Allegan County Health Department. The number of sites is EGLE's purview. The Township is being heard, but many of these things are not something that the PC can dictate.

**Bultje** stated that the definition of campground in the ZO is pretty general and it includes five or more recreational units. Recreational units are not defined, but



recreational vehicles are and they include: boats, airplanes, special purpose automobiles, etc. **Bultje** continued that he does not think it would be a logical or defensible conclusion to say that the PC intended to exclude RVs from the Res/Ag district. So, we can not exclude this application on the basis that it is not allowed in the Res/Ag district. Campit is in the Commercial district and this application is in the Res/Ag district right across the street. Our ZO says that campgrounds in both the Res/Ag and Commercial districts are legitimate uses of the land, as long as they meet the standards for Special Land Use. ~~We~~ THE ORDINANCE already SAYS it does fit if standards are met. The MP is a guide and the ZO is the law, and that is what we have to live with. **Bultje** stated that he does not think the PC can turn the corner on the standards to deny this SLU application, but he thinks the PC should control it through conditions and control it better than Campit is controlled. With regards to Campit, Bultje thinks it's fair to say that **O'Connor** is not just the property owner who is going to sell and walk away, he is a partner and is very much involved in this application. **O'Connor** is also involved in Campit which is causing a huge problem for the Township, so the PC has to look at this as a way to address two issues. **Bultje** continued that there is a legitimate SLU application that is pending before us but there is a real problem across the street with a campground that has ordinances that are not being enforced. **Bultje** stated that he hopes the PC can use this to get a better handle on Campit while approving a legitimate SLU application from this applicant.

**Badra** stated that he agrees with **Bultje**, adding that the PC has a lot of conditions that need to be satisfied before they can decide this.

Badra noted that he still needs reassurance under oath that this is not an extension of Campit, that there will be no entertainment there.

**DeZwaan** noted that the PC has asked the applicant to supply a lot of additional information, so we could make this decision with conditions.

**Bultje** stated he thinks the PC needs to get revised, more detailed plans before making any decisions. When that time comes and a decision is ready to be made,

the PC should go through the standards for SLU and the requirements for the Site Plan and make a very comprehensive list of conditions. In the meantime, the PC should take a look at the ordinances and figure out where to get started with Campit.

**Badra** noted that in 2000 when **O'Connor** bought Campit he came to the PC and was denied, so it went to a lawsuit and he won. **Bultje** responded that he has read the consent judgement and he is doing a lot of things that are not in the consent judgements.

**Bultje** noted that the applicant has a good handle on what they need to submit. He continued that the PC should consider postponing deliberation to another meeting to give the applicant time. **Bultje** suggested when the PC receives the documents from the applicant, he can help draft a resolution that would address the factors and the requirements for approval as well as a list of conditions. **Bultje** asked that the PC send him any conditions they would like added. In the meantime, **Bultje** would like the PC to see what can be done with the Township Board to get THE Campit ~~situated~~ SITUATION FIXED.

**Bultje** continued when the PC puts conditions on an application that is approved, they are counting on the applicant complying with those conditions. When we are working with someone that is not complying, it is worth being very deliberate and careful in our consideration.

**Bultje** said the next steps would be that the PC hears from the applicants and the PC sends thoughts to **Bultje**. Then he will put together a draft of a resolution. Then the PC can reject, adopt, or amend it.

**DeZwaan** asked how much time everyone needs to put this together. **Ross** stated she thinks if she were to finish the construction drawings and submit them to the Health Department, EGLE and Allegan County. They can't approve it, but they can review it.

**Smalley** noted that **Beyersdorf** will want to read the Outdoor Entertainment Ordinance for a definition of outdoor events that need a permit.

**Pierson** asked for a total lot coverage, including the roads.

**DeZwaan** asked that signs (stop signs and the flow of traffic) are included on the site plan.

**Smalley** noted that the PC must have the plans 14 days before the meeting and **Smalley** would also like a couple extra days for her to review. **Bultje** commented that if he is going to get the revised plans, he will need time to draft up a document for the PC. So we are probably looking at a couple meetings down the road. He added that if the PC is tabling for more information, they would not need to post another public hearing.

**Bultje** recommended that the PC table the matter until the July meeting, at the earliest.

**Ross** said she will submit all the plans she is submitting to all the agencies. The other agencies cannot act on them but they will have all the details. **Bultje** noted that the PC could then approve the plans conditioned on approval by those agencies, so if the agencies make a change then the plans do not have to come back to the PC.

**Pierson** made a motion to table the matter pending further information from the applicant. **Hutchins** seconded. Motion passed.

**Bultje** can attend if the meeting is moved to Wednesday, July 23rd.

## **IX. Administrative Updates**

### **a. Township Board**

Hutchins had nothing to report.

### **b. Zoning Board of Appeals**

Pierson reported that the ZBA had a meeting on April 24th. The applicants at 6024 122nd Ave. petitioned for front and side setback variances to construct a second story on an existing residence. The ZBA approved the side setbacks and denied the front setback.

### **c. Zoning Administrator**

**Smalley** reported that she received an application for a Site Plan Review. The plan is for an office for a contractor on Blue Star Hwy and 116th Ave. **Smalley**

noted that she has not reviewed it yet so she is not sure if it will be ready by the June meeting.

**X. Future Meeting Dates - June 24th & July 23rd**

**XI. General Public Comments -**

Elaine **Troehler** - 1624 68th St. stated that she does not have a lot of faith in the township due to everything that is going on at Campit. She stated that she understands that the PC has to care about the ZO, but the community counts too.

Aaron **Kronmeyer** shared his confusion, at first the owners said they did not know Campit and now it has come out that they are business partners. **Beyersdorf** replied that **O'Connor** owns the land and that is the relationship between the two. **DeZwaan** responded according to the paperwork in front of the PC, it is a different LLC. Yes, they will be a partner with **O'Connor**, but it is not tied to Campit, it is a standalone LLC.

Stephanie **Hughes** noted the video she referenced was the Campit operations manager back in Sept 2024 talking about the expansion that they were going to undertake and it specifically referenced an RV park. **Hughes** also shared concerns about the LLC being created post agreement so right now it belongs to **O'Connor**. **Bultje** said the PC understands the concern which is why they are going to use this as a way to get greater regulation over **O'Connor** because he is involved in both. **Hughes** continued that according to our lawyer, the plan does not meet the six standards and the PC's interpretation is different. The fact of the matter is this application is coming in under **O'Connor**. **Hughes** stated that **Beyersdorf** is not even an owner yet, she is a manager. **Bultje** commented, in the end, there is nothing that would prevent **Beyersdorf** from selling the whole thing to **O'Connor** the day after the plan was approved; which is why it is the PC's job to regulate the conditions on the application to make sure the operation of the campground is within our rules.

Diana **Decker** - 1705 Lake Michigan Dr. shared concerns about a couple things in the ordinances. In the city of Saugatuck they just passed police powers to help with things like noise. In Ganges TOWNSHIP, when you call for a noise violation they would say

they can't do anything because there isn't enough police powers. A traffic study should be done by the township. **Decker** also noted Short Term Rental Ordinances used in neighboring townships.

Delaney **Kronmeyer** stated that he just bought property here and is hoping to raise a family. He feels that the MP means nothing because preserving the rural community is listed 32 times.

Randy **Abrahams** stated that 'Saugatuck Meadows' is a slap in the face to this Township and it is also false advertising, he added that the name should probably be changed.

**Abrahams** also noted that the conduit/walkway/pathway between the two campgrounds cannot happen.

Charles **Mannion** shared that there are challenges to be met with the new campground. He stated that the township residents have woken up and the PC is going to see audiences like this in future meetings.

Randy **Schipper** stated just because an RV park/campground is allowed in the area as a SLU in the Res/Ag district, does not mean it automatically meets all 6 standards, it is just the point of entry. Then you have to ask if it meets all standards. It does not automatically mean it will be harmonious with the surrounding properties. Altering the essential character of the area will be detrimental to people due to the traffic and noise. If the guests at the new campground become additional customers at Campit, that means more events and that is a problem. Schipper also noted that the site plan that he was provided did not identify the uses to the south, and the plan is supposed to show all uses within a mile of the location.

Pat **Leslie** - 1841 68th St. stated that there are already three campgrounds and that gives a reason that we do not need more. There are already over 200 campsites within a half mile section and that is a lot of concentrated usage in one area.

Dale **Pierson** shared that he is happy to see Township residents at the meeting. The PC spent the last few years going through the entire ordinance line by line. There was one person who came to more than one meeting and two people asked the PC to make changes. One of which was part of the Glenn Hamlet new district we created. The second one was something we couldn't actually address and fix the problem. The PC needs the residents here. **Pierson** apologized for the Campit situation and shared that he looked at

the minutes from 20 years ago and was not happy with the conditions that were put on Campit at that time. If the PC decides to approve this project, there will be many conditions.

**XII. Adjournment**

**Hutchins** made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Badra** seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 10:53 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katelynn Wolfe, Ganges Township Recording Secretary