



MILAN TRANSPORT
Special Land Use for a Motor Freight Warehouse Operation

Planning Commission Staff Report
By Tim Johnson, MainStreet Planning Company
February 6, 2008

The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing regarding the above project on February 11, 2008. The job of the Commission is to approve this project, deny it or approve it with conditions.

APPLICANT: Milan Transport, Inc.
1111 Broedway SE
Lowell, MI 49331

REQUEST: Special Land Use for a motor freight warehouse operation in the LI zone.
See attached information provided by the applicant for more information.

LOCATION: South west corner of Alden Nash and Cascade Road

PARCEL SIZE: 6.89 acres

EXISTING LAND

USE: The site contains a 40 ft. x 80 ft. pole barn type building and a truck scales.
The site is currently used by Milan Transport for parking of tractor trailers and trucks.

ADJACENT

ZONING: *North:* AG-1, Prime Agricultural
South: LI, Light Industrial and IPUD
East: LI, Light Industrial
West: AG-1, Prime Agricultural and IPUD

**ADJACENT
LAND USES:**

North: Agricultural field and farm market across Cascade Road and vacant building along the north property line.
South: Mobile gas station and convenience store and sewage lagoon for gas station and apple orchard.
East: Agricultural field
West: Single family dwelling

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION:

The Township Master Plan recommends Industrial land use for this parcel and land to the south and west.

RELEVANT ZONING REGULATIONS

All uses in the LI Zone require approval of a Special Land Use permit from the Planning Commission. Site plan approval is also a requirement for all Special Land Uses. Thus, the request for a motor freight transport facility requires the Commission to review this proposed land use according to the standards contained in Section 4.7.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Special Land Use

1. For any land use, the main question should be “Is this the appropriate location for this use?” The Planning Commission must determine the answer to this question by reviewing the standards of Section 4.7.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, which are attached. These Special Land Use Standards must be met in order for the Commission to approve a Special Land Use.
2. The Planning Commission may attach conditions to the granting of the Special Use Permit such as number of trucks parked on the site, hours of operation, outside activities and others as may result from the public hearing.
3. The **Special Use standards** generally pertain to compatibility of the proposed use with the character of the area and adjacent land uses and consistency with the Township Master Plan. These standards are discussed below.

- ◆ The proposed use is well located to accommodate industrial truck traffic; Cascade Road is a paved Kent County Primary Road and Alden Nash is also known as M-50, a State of Michigan highway.
- ◆ The Master Plan recommends industrial land use for this site due to the supporting road system including its close proximity to I-96 and the small number of houses nearby.
- ◆ The proposed use is a sufficient distance from the houses on Maple Run, a private road serving five homes to the north and west so that residents there are not likely to be adversely affected by noise or exhaust from truck traffic on the site itself. A few other houses are located on Cascade Road to the west of the Milan site but truck movements on the site itself are not likely to affect these residents.

Residents along Cascade Road to the west and east may see and hear Milan Transport Trucks as they travel to and from the site but this is to be expected as Cascade Road is designed to be used by industrial truck traffic as it is an all season county primary road.

- ◆ Residents in the house immediately to the west will likely be affected by truck noise and movement. However, the adjacent land itself is recommended for industrial use in the 2002 Township Master Plan as is the land on the west and south sides of the LaLone property so any future industrial uses on adjacent property will have an impact on the residents of this dwelling.

A stand of mature trees exists between the proposed truck parking area and the house which provides an effective visual screen in the non winter months. **Some additional evergreen trees should be planted along the west side of the parking area to create a better year round screen.**

- ◆ The applicant estimates that on a typical day 12 trucks would enter and 12 trucks would leave the site which is not excessive. The site has two existing driveways; one each on Cascade Road and Alden Nash. The sight distance for each of these driveways is sufficient. The installation of a traffic signal at the Alden Nash / Cascade intersection which will occur in 2008 will make for safer truck movements into and out of this site.
 - ◆ The site has been used for truck operations in the past including truck use of the scales with little or no negative impact on nearby properties to our knowledge. The scale will not be available on a commercial basis for trucks other than Milan Transport.
4. The building on the site contains a working bathroom according to the applicant. Because the use is changing the Commission should require that the current septic system meets the requirements of the Kent County Health Department.
5. The applicant's narrative states there will be no fueling or truck repairs on site except for emergency repairs such as a flat tire.
6. The building on the site is used to house trucks and there is neither office use of the site nor any employees who work in the office. Drivers pick up the Milan Transport trucks at this location and then return them. The driver's personal vehicle is left on the site.

Site Plan

7. The applicant has provided two site plans; (1) a survey dated 1-14-08 illustrating existing site conditions including contours to show how stormwater flows and (2) a landscape plan dated 2-4-08 showing existing and proposed plantings and other details not on the survey drawing.
8. The Township Engineer will need to review the plan.
9. The plantings proposed along Alden Nash satisfy the Ordinance requirements. Along Cascade Road I would suggest moving half of the 10 evergreen trees shown along the north side of the metal building to the area east and west of the Cascade Road driveway.
10. **A number of the following items are shown on the survey drawing. However, in order to provide a more complete site plan for Planning Commission review these items should also be shown on the site plan.**
- Property lines with dimensions
 - Building setback distances
 - All structures, lot lines and wetlands within 100 feet of the site including the lagoon spray area used by the Mobile Gas Station.
 - Direction of storm water drainage and how storm water runoff will be handled. Our concern is how stormwater runoff from the Milan site is affecting the LaLone parcel to the west.

- Dumpsters if any are to be provided and how it will be screened.
- Illustrate handicapped parking spaces.
- Provide a separate lighting plan in compliance with Section 4.3.4 of the Zoning Ordinance
- Illustrate zoning on adjacent properties.
- Location and specifications for any existing or proposed above or below ground storage facilities for any chemicals, salts, flammable materials, or hazardous materials as well as any containment structures.
- Number of trucks expected to be parked outside at any one time.
- Any outdoor storage areas and type of materials to be stored outdoors.

11. Will the dirt piles along the east side of the parking area be removed? If so note this on the plan.

12. The landscape site plan contains a note above the parking area about “milled asphalt storage area” The applicant should provide more information about this as the Ordinance requires all outside storage of such materials to be screened.

SUMMARY

- ◆ The Commission will need to determine if the proposed use meets the Special Land Use Standards of Section 4.7.1 in order to approve the use. **Any motion to approve should state how the proposed use meets these standards.**
- ◆ Truck traffic may have the most impact but the number of truck trips is fairly low for an industrial use. Noise may have an impact on one of the nearby residents to the west but this parcel is also planned for industrial use.
- ◆ This side of Cascade Road has been planned for industrial use for a number of years. The development standards of the Zoning Ordinance regarding landscaping, lighting, outdoor storage and noise are intended to allow an industrial use to operate with minimal impact on other land uses. Given the current and future nearby land uses the proposed use would appear to fit this site if the development standards can be met.
- ◆ Revisions to the site plan will be necessary based on the above requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- ◆ The Township Engineer will need to review the site plan to ensure proper stormwater management measures are met.
- ◆ The Health Department should approve the use of the existing well and septic system.
- ◆ The Commission may attach conditions to the use. The following list should be considered:

**Conditions of Approval for the Milan Transport
Special Land Use at Alden Nash & Cascade Road**

1. The Health Department shall approve the use of the existing well and septic system.
2. The proposed use is limited to the parking and storage of tractor trailers and tractor trucks as described in the narrative submitted by the applicant. Office use of the building to support the truck operation is also permitted provided the well and septic system is approved by the Kent County Health Department to support office workers.

Any additional uses proposed by the applicant or subsequent owner or user of the site must first be approved by the Planning Commission.

3. Outdoor storage of equipment or materials except trucks shall be adequately screened from the view of adjacent properties subject to Planning Commission approval.
4. The number of tractor trucks and trailers parked outside shall be limited to _____.
5. Compliance with the recommendations of the Township Engineer.
6. Provide a revised site plan in accordance with the recommendations of the Township Planner and the requirements for site plan approval as listed in this report
7. Others may be added.