

MINUTES

CASCO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2014

Present Members: Eric Reeve, Stan Pankiewicz, Denise Page, Keith Teltow, Joe Stevens, Sue Macker, Cynthia Goulston.

Also Present: Supervisor Ruemenapp, Lyle Thueme, Planner Rod Arroyo, William MacLeod, James Marker.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Reeve.

2. THE PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge to the flag was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Member Page, supported by Member Macker to approve the October 21, 2014 minutes as presented.

Ayes: Members Pankiewicz, Page, Teltow, Stevens, Reeve, Macker, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Member Stevens, supported by Member Page to approve agenda as submitted.

Ayes: Members Teltow, Stevens, Pankiewicz, Reeve, Page, Macker, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

Member Stevens reported the contact list has been updated for Casco Township Officials. Please review and make any corrections.

6. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

None.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. SPECIAL LAND USE REVIEW – CASCO TOWNSHIP PARKLAND

Planner Arroyo submitted a letter dated November 14, 2014 regarding the application that is submitted by Casco Twp. for special land use approval. The township zoning ordinance allows for ag to be special land use subject to specific conditions outlined in the letter. Planner Arroyo requested a clear discussions regarding demonstration that the agricultural activity will not have a detrimental impact on adjacent property. This property was previously farmed. Proposal is approximately 50 of the 97 acres to be farmed, at least 51%. This property is on the north side of Meisner Road, west of Palms. The sample rental agreement outlines terms of an ag operation using generally accepted ag practices. Planner Arroyo recommends approval subject to clarifications noted in the letter.

Chairman Reeve stated the land as it sits is being progressively overgrown with scrub brush, and the thought from the Township is it needs to be kept in a condition that it doesn't get overgrown. Discussion held regarding what went into the decision to seek a special land use.

A motion was made by Member Macker, supported by Member Goulston to open a Public Hearing for the Special Land Use and Site Plan Review for agricultural use in an ROS District, Parcel #74-12-023-3001-0000 at 7:06 p.m.

Ayes: Members Teltow, Stevens, Pankiewicz, Reeve, Page, Macker, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Jim Marker, Puttycut Road, inquired if this was property given to the township by Consumers Power for the fish kill and Supervisor Ruemenapp stated, yes, but the township paid \$200,000 for the property. Supervisor Ruemenapp stated the property was rented out when purchased. Zoning was a consideration at the time of purchase due to a pending lawsuit. Supervisor Ruemenapp said there have been requests to lease the property.

Member Stevens said the benefit of a lease would be the property would be farmed and cleared which would cut down the expense of any future development, a form of vegetation control. Any monies received in rent would be paid to the township. Chairman Reeve confirmed that any use would be strictly a crop farming operation, no animals permitted. Member Stevens stated this would not radically change the use of the land.

Bill MacLeod, Palms Road, stated this property borders his property and inquired if the woods would be affected. Supervisor Ruemenapp stated the woods would be exempt from any lease. Mr. MacLeod asked what affect it would have on his land and Chairman Reeve stated he would be surprised if there was any effect.

Member Stevens stated the township put gates up blocking entrances on the property. Supervisor Ruemenapp stated he's had reports of people taking timber off the property, but has never found anyone doing that, but there was evidence it was happening. Township has no way to enforce no trespassing signs. Chairman Reeve stated the advantage of a lease it would help control the activity on the property and the leaser may assist in policing the property.

Lyle Thueme stated he was in favor of having the property leased to get rid of some of the weeds. He's been concerned of someone starting a fire in the brush and spreading to his property.

A motion was made by Member Stevens, supported by Member Teltow to close the Public Hearing at 7:17 p.m.

Ayes: Members Teltow, Stevens, Pankiewicz, Reeve, Page, Macker, Goulston.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

Member Pankiewicz inquired as to the duration of a lease. Discussion held regarding length and the benefits of having a multi-year lease versus a one-year lease due to a leaser needing to do some initial clearing on the property.

A motion was made by Member Goulston, supported by Member Page to approve the Special Land Use and Site Plan Review, Agricultural Use, no farm animals, in an ROS District for Parcel #74-12-023-3001-000,

Ayes: Members Teltow, Stevens, Pankiewicz, Reeve, Page, Macker, Goulston.

Nays: None.
Abstain: None.
Motion carried.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Planner Arroyo submitted a memo regarding landscaping as a result of discussions held at the October 21, 2014 meeting to be reviewed. Planner Arroyo stated there are issues recently brought to his attention regarding other St. Clair County communities and their landscape requirements and he would like to present that prior to any further discussion.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Planner Arroyo stated there was discussion at the October 21, 2014 meeting regarding amending ordinance to allow for administrative review of small site plans. The suggested threshold would be expansion of existing buildings up to 10 %, but not to exceed 1000 sq. feet. Planner Arroyo stated a consistent range for approval is between 700-1000 sq. feet, not to exceed 10%. A three car garage is approximately 728 sq. feet. Planner Arroyo will draft language for the December meeting to discuss in more detail.

Member Teltow inquired regarding expansion or parking lots or resurfacing. Planner Arroyo indicated he would look at that also. Planner Arroyo discussed with Member Teltow current requirements regarding parking lots.

Member Stevens asked what the different is between retention and detention ponds. Planner Arroyo said a retention pond holds the water and it stays there. A detention pond initially retains the water and slowly releases it to adjacent properties or streams.

10. PLANNER'S REPORT

He's covered his report in other agenda items.

11. REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

Supervisor Ruemenapp stated that he anticipates Debbie Lipps-Carbone to submit a plan relating to the dog kennel ordinance. Discussion held regarding whether she will need an engineered plan or a detailed stamped survey that shows everything needed for the kennel, dog runs, etc. Planner Arroyo stated a surveyor's seal is acceptable, which is a less expensive way and ensures the information is accurate.

Member Stevens stated he won't be at the December meeting, he will be performing his last official act in the military and has applied for retirement after 33 years.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Member Pankiewicz, supported by Member Page to adjourn at 7:36 p.m.

Ayes: Members Baumgarten, Pankiewicz, Reeve, Stevens, Page, Goulston, Macker.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

The next regular meeting of the Casco Township Planning Commission will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16, 2014 at the Casco Township Hall, 4512 Meldrum Road.

Joe Stevens, Secretary

Christine Ruemenapp, Recording Secretary