

MINUTES  
CASCO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2016

Present Members: Stan Pankiewicz, Joe Stevens, Jim Edwards, Cynthia Goulston, Eric Reeve, Keith Teltow.

Absent: Denise Page.

Also Present: Supervisor Ruemenapp, Planner Stephen Cassin, John Monte.

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. THE PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge to the flag was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Member Goulston, supported by Member Pankiewicz to approve the July 19, 2016 minutes as presented.

Ayes: Members Pankiewicz, Stevens, Reeve, Goulston, Teltow, Edwards.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Ayes: Members Pankiewicz, Reeve, Stevens, Goulston, Edwards, Teltow.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Members Stevens, supported by Member Pankiewicz to move New Business, Site Plan Review – Northpointe Storage ahead in the meeting.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

Mail for the Planning Commission members distributed advertising the Citizen Planner course. Cost is \$295. Member Stevens completed the course and indicated it was a very good course. Supervisor Ruemenapp will check with the township insurance company to see if they will subsidize the expense if anyone wishes to complete the course.

Citizens Research Council Michigan is having a dinner on 9-22-16 from 5:30-8:30, guest speakers are former Governors Engler and Blanchard and cost is \$50 each.

Jim Edwards has been approved as the new member of the Planning Commission, replacing Sue Macker.

Steve Cassin is now working for ClearZoning and has taught Citizen Planner courses and could teach elements of that course to this board. An option would be training in lieu of a canceled meeting. Supervisor Ruemenapp will circulate a list of items that have been identified as future training topics.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) SITE PLAN REVIEW – NORTHPOINTE STORAGE

John Monte indicated that Northpointe Storage is going to do half the lot at this time, and eventually do the other portion towards Bethuy Road, filling in the gap with landscaping on the next phase. There is natural vegetation for screening for neighbors in the back.

Member Teltow suggested to the board that he would like an easel or something which would indicate what's being proposed and would like a visual during the meeting. There have been a variety of things approved on the site and a visual would be helpful. Mr. Monte indicated the photometrics have been added to the plan as requested by Member Teltow.

Planner Cassin wants some modification to the marking plans before approval which just show exactly what is being approved, but the plan was satisfactory.

A motion was made by Member Pankiewicz, supported by Member Goulston to approve the Site Plan Review for Northpointe Storage, LLC, and Mr. Monte is to remove anything relating to future plans. Mr. Monte is to submit stamping sets to the planner and the planner to make sure they have the corrections requested.

Ayes: Members Pankiewicz, Reeve, Stevens, Goulston, Edwards, Teltow.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

7. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

None.

8. PUBLIC HEARING

None.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS

Planner Cassin referenced a letter that was sent regarding wind energy, background for changes made in the ordinance. Member Stevens asked who inspects them. Planner Cassin indicated that it is MDARD, but they don't do that often.

Planner Cassin indicated there were concerns that bump shops weren't included under the auto ordinance and that has been addressed and changes have been proposed in the document presented. This allows vehicles to be stored for up to 14 days. Member Stevens indicated 14 days seems reasonable, but it can be revisited at a later time.

Member Teltow asked about the height of the fencing being 4', as Member Teltow believes fencing taller may be more appropriate.

Member Stevens indicated if it's a masonry wall it would be expensive, but a wooden fence may fall into disrepair. Planner Cassin indicated fencing is normally 4'6" for office and residential and commercial fencing at 6' if it abuts residential. Planner Cassin was asked to look at something higher by Member Stevens. Member Teltow requested updated information prior to action.

Planner Cassin presented a \$4,000 proposal regarding creating an overlay district in the Adair District. Overlay districts are created for certain areas with perhaps different standards, smaller setbacks and build to the lot lines. Proposal to create a section in the zoning ordinance of a few pages outlining the standards. This proposal would need to be submitted to the Township Board for approval.

Member Teltow would like to see something addressed in Adair District which would be reasonable and prudent. Currently anyone who wishes to make changes or additions to their property must seek a variety of variances through ZBA.

Planner Cassin referenced B1 and B2 districts with lesser side yard when it abuts another property. Questions have surfaced why that wasn't applicable to industrial. Planner Cassin indicated industrial has much higher of a nuisance factor based on vibration and noise, and those usually are wanted to be kept back from property lines and allow room for emergency vehicles. Industrial typically set back from property lines.

Supervisor Ruemenapp indicated you could have a industrial lot of 1 acre which would not really allow for appropriate setbacks. It would be problematic to build on a 1 acre lot with requirements of water and sewage in this township. There has been a recommendation of two acres at a minimum for industrial. Supervisor Ruemenapp would like Planner Cassin to review all of the township's setbacks before action is taken on this matter.

Planner Cassin defined what was meant by an accessory structure, which is a structure that is clearly subordinate in impact and purpose to the principal use.

Planner Cassin referenced concerns and issues on fireworks sales, that those sales be included as part of temporary outdoor sales along with Christmas and other seasonal products. Recommendation is that temporary firework sales are permitted up to 30 days before a national holiday which is consistent with Michigan law.

Supervisor Ruemenapp indicated this is better than what the Township currently has, but consider that any firework sale would have to be an accessory to an existing business.

Wind Energy ordinance talks about wind energy conversion systems, private wind energy system and commercial wind energy conversion systems. Proposal talks about the distance between them. Private wind energy systems have to come before the Planning Commission and must meet a capacity rating.

Chairman Reeve referenced item 3, under items E and F, asked if Planner Cassin sees a conflict. Planner Cassin says there could be if one overlaps the other. Chairman Reeve stated concern about maintaining the required minimum lot size in order to have 110% of the parcel in case the wind generator was to fail and fall. If the wind generator is put up under the proposed ordinance and then down the road the owner decides to split off the property such that there is no room for the wind generator fall without leaving the property. Chairman Reeve requested that decibel criteria be addressed.

Member Teltow asked who is responsible for a review on a regular basis, such as if they're abandoned would the Township require a performance bond, and whether there is enough teeth to make someone really take a windmill down.

Chairman Reeve requested that the ordinance address a bond issue, such as what's in the solar panel ordinance.

Planner Cassin and members would prefer holding off on any action and address all at the same time. Planner Cassin will submit revisions next month.

10. PLANNER'S REPORT

Planner Cassin submitted a memorandum by Karen on their team who attended MTA and hot topics session talked about a number of issues, such as medical marijuana. MTA is saying you can grow it, but cannot dispense it, but changes are in the works on legislature. No action recommended at this time.

Clarifications on Right to Farm Act, doesn't have to make money, but intend on making money. Religious Act and religious land use discussed at MTA.

Sign ordinances will have to be reviewed. Everything has to be based on district, sizes and heights, not content. Planner Arroyo in the past has indicated that Township sign ordinance is pretty good, but need to work on temporary sign ordinance.

Metal canisters accepting clothing were discussed at MTA and fall under the same ordinance as trash dumpsters. Location requirements for telecommunications discussed at MTA.

St. Clair County just redid their master plan and did a review of how it affects Casco Township. Memo provided is only advisory. Generalized land uses on cultural centers, open spaces, redevelopment areas, urban districts, agricultural areas. Plan identifies the I-94 corridor as a noise zone. There are some conflicts between the county's master plan and Township's zoning ordinance.

Supervisor Ruemenapp said in the past whatever the Township's sent up to the County has been approved and doesn't anticipate a problem. Planner Cassin said there is nothing major worth mentioning or taking action on.

11. REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

Chairman Reeve is planning to relocate to northern Michigan in approximately a year.

Supervisor Ruemenapp suggested a training session with the ZBA, bring in site plans and teach everyone on the Planning Commission and ZBA how to read a site plan.

Member Pankiewicz reported no action with ZBA. Member Stevens reported the hall expansion is progressing.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Member Pankiewicz, supported by Member Stevens to adjourn at 8:41 p.m.

Ayes: Members Pankiewicz, Stevens, Reeve, Goulston, Edwards, Teltow.

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, September 20, 2016 at the Casco Township Hall, 4512 Meldrum Road.

Joseph F. Stevens, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

Christine Ruemenapp, Recording Secretary \_\_\_\_\_