

Unapproved Minutes
Grass Lake Charter Township Planning Commission Meeting
June 21, 2018 @ 7:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Public Hearing, Case #18-05-0006

Vice Chairperson, Ken Elliott, opened the Public Hearing at 7:02 pm for the Tony Spink application #18-05-0006 for rezoning parcel 000-10-18-200-002-06 from AG-Agricultural to R-1 Single Family Residential.

Tony Spink indicated that the parcel is slightly over four acres and it is the intent to split the parcel into 4 lots approximately one acre each.

No comments were made from the public.

Vice Chairperson, Ken Elliott, closed the Public Hearing at 7:04 pm and called to order the Planning Commission Meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chairperson, Ken Elliott, called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

ROLL CALL: Members present: Ken Elliott, Tom Brennan, Rob Doerr, Lacey O'Quinn and Roger Memmer. Members absent: Jere Hinkle and Jim Warbritton.

ALSO PRESENT: Doug Lammers, Township Zoning Administrator, Mark Olinyk of Harvest Energy Solutions and approximately eight citizens.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Moved by Brennan and supported by O'Quinn to approve the agenda. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Moved by O'Quinn and supported by Doerr to approve the May 17, 2018 meeting minutes with one correction. Under the paragraph, Proposed Business for Next Meeting, change next scheduled meeting date to June 21, 2018. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Rezoning request Tony Spink, Case #18-05-0006
Moved by Brennan and supported by O'Quinn to change the zoning classification of parcel 000-10-18-200-002-06 (Case #18-05-0006) from AG-Agricultural to R-1 Single Family Residential. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried.

b. Public Hearing for amending the Zoning Ordinance, Solar Energy for Residential and for Large Solar Energy Systems-Utility Grade, case #18-05-0007.

Vice Chairperson, Ken Elliott, closed the Planning Commission meeting at 7:08 pm and opened the Public Hearing. The purpose of the public hearing being to receive comments on the proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance for regulating small and large Solar Energy Systems.

Mark Olinyk of Harvest Energy Solutions, which leases land for solar systems and sells and installs small and large solar systems, presented a general overview of the status of solar systems. He indicated that utility companies support solar systems that are installed to offset electrical use by an individual, farm, or company however, currently the utility companies are not interested in purchasing excess power generated from privately owned large scale solar systems. Mr. Olinyk indicated that many solar companies are trying to lease property for future larger scale solar systems, should the utility companies change their policy regarding the purchase of power from large scale solar systems.

Mr. Olinyk reviewed the proposed ordinance amendment and found it to be very comprehensive, however, he suggested that the ordinance may need to address three tiers of solar systems in order to better reflect the systems being considered. The three tiers would be:

1. Small Residential systems.
2. Agricultural/Commercial systems where the owner uses the power generated from the solar system and
3. Utility scale systems where the owner sells the generated power to a utility company.

No public comments were made in support or in opposition to the proposed zoning ordinance amendments.

Vice Chairperson, Ken Elliott, closed the Public Hearing and reopened the Planning Commission meeting at 7:41 pm.

After discussion, the following additions/modifications were suggested:

1. Reduce the maximum output of Residential solar systems from 150 to 75kw.
2. Revise the definition of Solar Energy System, Large, as follows (this revision will also need to be further revised per item 3. below):

Solar Energy System, Large: A utility-scale solar energy system where the primary use of the ~~land~~ **solar system** is to generate electric energy or other energy by converting sunlight, whether by Photovoltaic Devices or other conversion technology, for the sale, delivery or consumption of the generated energy by more than one end user, and typically the power output of the system is equal to or greater than 1 megawatt.

3. Add requirement under Section 17, paragraph SS.B. requiring site plan information to include general topographic and general soils information.
4. Revise ordinance amendment to reflect three tiers of solar systems:
 - a. Small Residential systems.
 - b. Agricultural/Commercial systems where the owner uses the power generated from the solar system and
 - c. Utility scale systems where the owner sells the generated power to a utility company.

Zoning Administrator, Lammers, will contact the Township attorney for assistance in revising the proposed ordinance amendment to reflect the three tiers of solar systems.

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION:

None

TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT:

Tom Brennan reported that the Township Board adopted the Agricultural Business/Agricultural Tourism amendment that was previously approved by the Planning Commission.

OLD BUSINESS:

a. Zoning Ordinance, Section for LI/HC:

Item was tabled. Consideration to rezoning affected parcels and establishing a LI/HC overlay district to be addressed at a future meeting.

b. Rezoning Project:

Item was tabled.

PROPOSED BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 19, 2018. Business to include continued work on:

1. proposed solar energy systems amendment,
2. zoning ordinance section for LI/HC change to LI or HC and
3. the rezoning project.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by O'Quinn and supported by Doerr to adjourn meeting at 8:30. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,

Roger Memmer, Secretary
Grass Lake Charter Township Planning Commission