

Unapproved Minutes
Grass Lake Charter Township Planning Commission Meeting
March 15, 2018 @ 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hinkle called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Jim Stormont, Township Supervisor and approximately twelve citizens.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Chairperson, Hinkle, proposed that references to 2017 (located in two places in the proposed agenda) be changed to 2018. Moved by Brennan and supported by Elliott to approve the amended agenda. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Moved by Brennan and supported by Doerr to approve the February 15, 2018 meeting minutes. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Solar Ordinance:

Several Township residents have shown interest in establishing solar energy facilities and there is a need to establish regulations for these installations. Sample solar ordinance regulations developed for Concord Township and Macon Township were reviewed. These regulations would address both large and small installations. Chairperson Hinkle favored the Macon Township ordinance, however it needs to be adapted to our Township.

Moved by Memmer and supported by Doerr to forward the sample ordinances from Macon and Concord to the Township attorney to review, comment on and adapt to Grass Lake Township, giving preference to the Macon Township ordinance. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried

CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION:

Township resident, Bess Miller indicated that she attended a Farm Bureau extension service forum on solar farms. An extension agent recommended that consideration be given to establishing a County wide solar ordinance to help eliminate concerns about boundaries between townships. Other things noted included:

- a. Most solar farms need 5-7 acres
- b. Solar farms are not compatible with PA 116 lands
- c. Representatives from Harvest Energy, a solar company, would meet with the Township, if desired
- d. There is an upcoming webinar on March 25 or 26th

Other comments included:

- a. Clarification that a proposed solar ordinance would regulate both residential and commercial solar farms
- b. The planning commission should write a new ordinance rather than review/adapt an ordinance from someone else.

TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT:

Tom Brennan reported that the Township Board approved the rezoning of the Eschelbach property.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Zoning Ordinance, Section for LI/HC:

Chairperson Hinkle noted that although the current Township Zoning Ordinance has established a Light Industrial/Highway Commercial (LI/HC) district, there are no regulations governing the district in the ordinance.

Based on Zoning Administrator, Doug Lammers request, Mr. John Enos of Carlisle/Wortman Associates, suggested establishing an overlay district along the I-94 corridor that would be a mapped zone that imposes a set of special requirements in addition to those of the underlying zoning districts. Mr. Enos provided an example of an overlay district that was established for the Dexter-Ann Arbor Corridor.

Ken Elliot will follow up with Carlisle/Wortman Associates about how to proceed with an LI/HC overlay district.

- b. Rezoning Project: This item was tabled.

PROPOSED BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 19, 2018. Business will include continued work on zoning ordinance amendments.

GENERAL DISCUSSION: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Brennan and supported by Doerr to adjourn meeting at 7:47. All ayes. Two absent. Motion carried.

Respectively submitted,

Roger Memmer, Secretary
Grass Lake Charter Township Planning Commission