

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 9, 2017**

CAL TO ORDER

The Williamstown Township Planning Commission convened at 7:30pm at the Township Hall, 4990 Zimmer Road, Williamston, MI. Chair Eidt called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

PRESENT: Chair Eidt, Vice-chair LaMore, Secretary Brown-Timm, Commissioners Giese, Stanford, and Davis, and Trustee Eyester.

ABSENT: Weston (“excused”). Quorum established.

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Consultant Chris Doozan of McKenna Associates, Supervisor Bloomquist, and Jim Howard, Planning Assistant.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Davis, second by Eyester to approve the minutes of September 27, 2017.

Motion approved 6 – 0. (LaMore abstained since he was not present on 9/27/17.)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kurt Guter of Williamstown Estates commented on the proposed Solar Farms Ordinance language, suggesting that “Community” solar also be included in the discussion.

Supervisor Bloomquist commented on Vice-chair LaMore’s participation on the Planning Commission while also serving as President of MAP (MI Association of Planning), and that it brought a certain amount of prestige to the Township.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Eidt opened the Public Hearing on Telecon Ordinance Language revisions.

Chris Doozan reviewed his memo which incorporated changes suggested/recommended by the Committee. He mentioned item #9 on page 3 which was revised since companies are going away from equipment buildings; item #11 changed to reflect structural integrity issues where co-location is proposed; #12 – Maintenance, which is new; #13 – strengthen language to emphasize co-location; Page 5, item b – Special Land Use/public hearing, installation of sign; Page 6, “Wireless Communications Support Structure” =new language (delete old).

Also mentioned was the need to incorporate language dealing with the long-term maintenance of the landscaping, including the removal of dead/dying trees or shrubs and their replacement.

Eyster mentioned the propagation maps should cover 5 and 10 miles out.

LaMore commented on verifying the need and that the residents and community (Williamstown Township) will be served.

Also discussed was the \$75,000 bond to cover removal, and that the bond would be controlled by the Township and held by a 3rd party.

Chair Eidt then asked for public comments in favor of the proposal (none), and asked for public comments opposed to the proposal (none).

Vice-chair LaMore mentioned item 4.(2) near the bottom of page 2, "Harmony with Surroundings", and suggested "stealth" technology be included.

Motion by Stanford, second by Davis to close the public hearing.

Motion carried 7 – 0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

-Telecom Ordinance revisions:

Motion by Giese, second by Brown-Timm to recommend approval to the Township Board with the revisions incorporated.

Motion carried 7 – 0.

-Elections Committee:

Commissioner Giese reported that Chair Eidt and Secretary Brown-Timm wished to continue, that Vice-chair LaMore wished to step down, and that Commissioner Stanford was interested in the Vice-chair position.

Motion by LaMore, second by (Eyster/Davis?) to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for the slate as presented.

Motion carried 7 – 0.

NEW BUSINESS

-Solar Farms:

Chris Doozan reviewed his draft language. Items covered:

Roof/building/ground-mounted systems, screening and lot coverage; Utility-scale systems allowed in the AG-C, AG-SF and I-1 Districts, no lot coverage requirements for the solar; sign required; no glare; specific areas where not allowed; 6' fence, maintenance plan; lighting and battery requirements; removal specs.

Language will need to be incorporated to include "Community Solar."

Eyster inquired about tile-type facilities and aviation glare.

Also discussion about the lien being on the property/land.

Community solar garnered favorable comments.

Motion by Brown-Timm, second by Giese to hold a public hearing on the Solar Farms Ordinance amendment at the January 24, 2018 meeting.

Motion approved 7 – 0.

-“Distilleries and Hard Cider:”

After some brief discussion Chair Eidt suggested that Mr. Doozan draft ordinance language for review at the next meeting in January.

PLANNING AND BOARD REPORTS AND REVIEW

Trustee Eyster informed commissioners that the board is reviewing and updating policies; also discussing the minimum and maximum amounts for Fund Equity/Balance; looking at the long term maintenance of roads, a large dollar item; also reviewing the policy on food reimbursement.

Chair Eidt mentioned that the Master Plan would need to be updated next year (2018), and that Barkum Creek Farms would be on the agenda for January.

Howard reminded commissioners about the vacancy on the PC and that the Township was looking for someone to represent the AG Community; Regarding the short Term Rentals issue, there is now a website hosted by 8 organizations (AirbnbWATCHMichigan.org); Attended the Solar Farms Workshop the previous evening (11/8/17); The MAP Annual Conference next year will be in Grand Rapids, 9/20 – 9/22/18.

Secretary Brown-Timm commented on attending the Citizen Planner Program which is very educational with lots of good info.

MAP Past President LaMore offered some thoughts on his year as President and that he felt it was a very good organization, now in the capable hands of new President Suzanne Schulz from Grand Rapids, that it used a thematic meetings format, such as “Finding Common Ground.” He also mentioned the civility on display at Twp. PC meetings, a good reflection on the Williamstown Township community.

CITIZEN COMMENT

None.

Commissioner LaMore introduced one of his students, Mr. Chan.

REVIEW

Chair Eidt reviewed tonight’s actions by the PC:

Held a Public Hearing on the Telecom Ordinance Language revisions; recommended adoption of same by Township Board; The Elections Committee reported that Chair Eidt and Secretary Brown-Timm wished to continue in their positions, while Vice-chair LaMore desired to step down, to be replaced by Commissioner Stanford – all elected by unanimous vote; reviewed draft language regarding Solar Farms and set a Public Hearing for January 24th; requested Consultant Doozan draft ordinance language for “Distilleries and Hard Cider” facilities.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Davis, second by LaMore to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24pm.

Jim Howard

Recording Secretary

Secretary Joscelyn Brown-Timm