

MEETING OF THE RIVES TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION (PC)

REGULAR MEETING

HELD AT 8682 LANSING AVENUE, FIRE STATION

September 26, 2022

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm.

Members present: Dwight Carmer -vice-chairman, Christine Beecher-ex-officio member from Township Board (TB), Adam Williams-member Jim Lindstrom – secretary, Zach Rogers – new member 1st meeting.

Motion by Mr. Williams 2cd by Ms. Beecher to approve the agenda as written. All ayes. Motion passed.

Motion by Mr. Williams 2cd by Ms. Beecher to approve minutes of August 22, 2022 PC meeting as written. All ayes, new member Mr. Rogers abstained as he didn't attend that meeting. Motion passed.

Vice-chairman called reports. Mr. Carmer reported that no ZBA meeting had been necessary. Ms., Beecher reported from the fire board that members had asked for raises. That would be looked at for next budget year. From TB Ms. Beecher reported no new business was conducted. Mr. Lindstrom reported that notice of intent of amendment to master plan (MP) was sent out as instructed by Township attorney.

BUSINESS:

1. Elect chairperson- Motion by Mr. Williams 2cd by Mr. Carmer for Mr. Lindstrom to serve as chairman. All ayes. Motion passed. , Motion by Mr. Carmer 2cd by Ms. Beecher for Mr. Williams to serve as secretary. All ayes. Motion carried.
2. Welcome new member appointed to PC by TB. – Zach Rogers was introduced and gave information about himself.
3. Conclude language for amendment to MP for solar energy systems – Chairman lead discussion of 2 language choices the PC has been considering for the actual language to go in the notice of intent for the amendment to the Master Plan (MP). After discussion among the PC members, Mr. Williams made motion 2cd by Mr. Carmer to use the following language supplied by the Township attorney: It is the intent of the Planning Commission to amend Chapter 3, Page 3-2, of the Master Plan by adding a new subsection 4 to the statement of objectives for Agricultural Land Uses as follows: 4. It is recognized by this plan that the preservation of agricultural land uses may include the development of certain renewable energy systems subject to special land use and site plan approvals. All ayes. Motion Passed.
4. Continue working on addition of solar energy ordinance to Code of Ordinances. Lengthy discussion proceeded among the PC members using the 4-22-2019 draft ordinance for solar energy systems prepared by an advisory committee of township property owners, the “General Solar Farm Ordinance Provision Ideas That Are Conducive For Solar Development: provided by Consumers Energy, and the MSU Extension document “Planning and Zoning For Solar Energy Systems-a Guide for Michigan Local Governments”. After extensive discussion the following conclusions were arrived at by the PC members:
 - a. For large solar energy facilities from the advisory committee draft ordinance section 21.04, the Purpose is accepted as written.
 - b. For large solar facilities Section 21.04 A is accepted as written by advisory committee.

- c. For large solar energy facilities Design standards, a. maximum Height is accepted as written by the advisory committee with change to twenty (20) feet.
- d. For large solar energy facilities design standards, b. setback is accepted as written by the advisory committee. Add that fencing is not subject to setback requirements.
- e. For large solar energy facilities design standards, c. safety/access is accepted as written by advisory committee. Add #23, #24, and #27 as written by Consumers Energy ideas.
- f. For large solar energy facilities design standards, d. noise is accepted as written by the advisory committee.
- g. For large solar energy facilities design standards, e. visual appearance is accepted entirely (1), (2) a, b, c, d, e, (3), (4).
- h. For large solar energy facilities design standard, f. medium voltage cable, delete advisory committee language. Add Consumers Energy ideas item # 16.
- i. For large solar energy facilities Local, State and Federal permits is accepted as written by the advisory committee.
- j. For large solar energy facilities Agreements/ Easements is accepted as written by the advisory committee.
- k. For large solar facilities maximum lot coverage is accepted as written in Consumers Energy ideas item #8.
- l. For large solar facilities decommissioning (which was covered in August 22, 2022 minutes as item i., add from the MSU guide from page 36, item 14, b including i. and ii.
 - m. For large solar energy facilities, a periodic review every 5 years of the decommissioning guarantee must ensure adequate funds are available to cover decommissioning costs. The planning commission will recommend an amount with the Township Board to make the final decision.

Public comment was invited at 8:00 pm.

1. Vercilla Hart (resident) asked if the 42-day period had started that MDEQ has a new name, referenced Leslie solar ordinance regarding noise, glare, signage, setbacks, lot size, vegetation, distribution lines, cost of inspection, insurance, stray voltage, and asked if draft PC members will review at next meeting will be published.
2. Stacy Stoner (resident) started she doesn't agree with large solar and asked if zoning enforcer will monitor tree replanting.
3. Bryce Hammond (resident) questioned the time allowed to remedy glare if present and question escrow for future decommissioning.
4. Linda McMillan (resident?) stated "down lighting needs to be defined.
5. Vercilla Hart stated even though advisory committee submitted work in 2019 she thinks PC is "speeding" ordinance work discussion and evaluation through.

Public comment closed at 8:12 pm.

PC members continued discussion regarding safety of solar panels and if a person from industry should address PC again. Discussed that the language for the MP amendment approve will be sent after approval by TB and the notice sent as prescribed, then the 42-day period will begin.

Motion was made to adjourn meeting at 8:25 pm. Meeting adjourned by mutual consent.

Next regular meeting will be held October 24, 2022 at 8682 Lansing Avenue, fire station.