

MINUTES
CASCO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019

Present Members: Joe Stevens, Gerald Keller, Keith Teltow, Stan Pankiewicz, Jim Edwards.

Absent: Cynthia Goulston.

Also present: Planner Joe Tangari, Wayne Baumgarten, Roland Suess, Brenda Loper, Hugo Mancini.

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. THE PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge to the flag was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Member Pankiewicz, supported by Member Keller to approve the minutes of April 16, 2019 as presented.

Ayes: Members Stevens, Teltow, Pankiewicz, Keller, Edwards.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Member Stevens, supported by Member Edwards to approve the agenda with the addition requested by Member Pankiewicz to add under 11(c) Zoning Board of Appeals item.

Ayes: Members Stevens, Teltow, Pankiewicz, Keller, Edwards

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

Motion carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

Member Stevens passed a copy of correspondence received which will be addressed under Item 11(b).

6. DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

None.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

None.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. ZONING ORDINANCE LANGUAGE REVISION – PAVED AND UNPAVED SURFACES

Planner Tangari reported there was a request to define open storage and that definition has been provided on the bottom of the page provided.

Member Edwards expressed concern about the definition as provided and whether a vehicle parked on a site might be considered a storage yard and what ramifications that would be if their site plan didn't designate that area as a storage yard.

Member Stevens indicated under the definition you could park almost anything on a site, that this would be a secured storage area for items not being used daily, and there's a difference between that and a parking lot. If trailers, materials or equipment are planned to be stored long term it should be designated on the site plan as a storage area.

Brenda Loper has questions about enforcement regarding violations and would like those addressed tonight.

Planner Tangari would foresee this as being a situation where a site would have something stored and over a matter of months they begin to increase the amount of items being stored and that should be addressed with the owner of the site prior to being cited. The process is meant to be complaint driven. If someone is doing something egregious and they have a de facto storage yard that's where complaints would arise.

Chairman Teltow suggested Planning Commission maintain an option of putting criteria down when a site plan is approved as to what the Planning Commission believes the storage area constitutes if a site plan has a storage area delineated.

Planner Tangari believes having the definition in the ordinance gives an enforcement officer something to point to identifying an open storage area and the requirement to add it to their site plan.

Member Edwards said manufacturing facilities often have storage containers that they work out of that end up being a storage area. As a suggestion, Member Edwards recommends that the Planning Commission allow the site applicant to explain their site plan before Planner Tangari explains it to the Planning Commission so that the Planning Commission gets the applicant's recitation of what the site plan is so that they're not parroting what the Planner recites. Planner Stevens agreed that he liked this idea.

Roland Sues asked for clarification regarding the number of businesses on a site. The Planning Commission didn't want to put a number on it, as it's too restrictive. Chairman Teltow indicated the Planning Commission will do all they can in the planning stage to nail down exactly the nature and extent of a business. Member Stevens stated the nature of a business on a site must be a principal permitted use.

Planner Tangari said the ordinance requires all parking be paved, that operational areas would be places where you would actively be driving vehicles.

Chairman Teltow asked if leaving an operational area and storage area in if there were any benefits to doing that. Planner Tangari said the line between a storage area and operational area is blurry. Storage yards may be paved, and anyone operating a business needing pavement will likely pave their storage area.

Chairman Teltow stated a storage area as approved by the Planning Commission allows the Planning Commission to give input, discretion on approval.

Planner Tangari will make some changes and bring it back in June.

b. ZONING ORDINANCE LANGUAGE REVISION – REVISED LIGHTING STANDARDS

Planner Tangari indicated there's nothing new other than a new intent statement which will change this to a more legible standard for lighting companies. This will be held for the next Public Hearing. The Planning Commission opted not to do anything with a photometric plan, but can ask for it if it's felt it's needed, but it's not going to be required.

c. REVISED SITE PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS – ENSURING STAMPED PLANS SUBMITTED TO TOWNSHIP

Planner Tangari has finished the form (attached to minutes) with the Township contact information. The form would be implemented when the Planning Commission has applicants at a meeting to review a site plan or special land use, everything is in order and the Planning Commission is going to approve the site plan with several conditions. There would be a motion to approve with the conditions in the motion. Once the motion is approved the Planning Commission would take a brief recess to fill out the form, writing out the conditions of approval and have the applicant signs it, the Chair or Vice Chair sign it with a copy to the applicant and the Township will keep the original. This form outlines an understanding of the conditions of approval and that the applicant needs to submit the stamping set. The form includes the email address to send them and the applicant leaves with an expectation. Currently applicants are seeking permits without a stamped plan and no incentive to get a stamped plan to the Township. Stamped plans will make the job in the office easier to match up what's being requested to make sure the right things are being approved. Stamping sets are done administratively, looking at stamping set to make sure conditions are met and move it through the process. Only reason to come back to the Planning Commission is if there's a substantial change.

Chairman Teltow asked whether there will be a requirement to have approval from the Drain Commission before the Planner stamps the set and sends them to the township.

Brenda Loper said currently whatever is in the minutes is what's approved and it's her understanding the form is going to outline the conditions upon which the site plan has been approved. Brenda Loper discussed several instances in the Township where they have granted permits without having a stamped site plan and they have waited months for the stamped set to be submitted to the Township and feels with this form it will be easier for the office to track exactly what needs to be submitted. Brenda Loper will have an understanding of what is required and ease in which to communicate what's needed to complete the site plan. Member Stevens clarified that once the Planning Commission approves a site plan with conditions such as contingent upon the drainage plan, etc., it

leaves this body and the administrative part go to Clerk's office. Brenda Loper is asking for every single condition be placed on the Notice of Required Submittal of Stamping Sets because the applicant will need to meet requirements in the Notice before the Township issues a permit.

Brenda Loper discussed the requirement to submit a site plan 15 days prior to a meeting so that the Planner has adequate time between submittal and the meeting to review the site plan. Planner Tangari stated the time frame to submit stamped set depends on the Drain Commission and Health Department and it might take six months if they have to go to DEQ. Giving an applicant a year to get stamped sets may be necessary, but if they come in for a building permit the applicant will need to have submitted stamped sets meeting all conditions of approval.

Brenda Loper suggested that once the Township gets a stamped plan from the Planner and the Township is anticipating building application process beginning that perhaps Roland Suess and Keith Teltow meet one time to look at the stamped set, read the minutes and review the form. Member Stevens said future applicants sign the form and if they don't have the conditions met that they don't get the permits, no exceptions.

Member Edwards stated the site plans need to be reviewed for changes and don't want applicants slipping stuff in at the last minute.

9. NEW BUSINESS

None.

10. PLANNER'S REPORT

None.

11. REPORT FROM COMMITTEES

a. TOWNSHIP PARK UPDATE

Member Stevens announced the dedication on the Township Park on the date of the next Planning Commission meeting and he would like all of the Planning Commission members present at the Township Park on Tuesday, June 18 at 6:00 p.m. Member Stevens suggested if the Planning Commission doesn't have submissions and there isn't anything major going on that the meeting could be postponed to July. The importance of the Planning Commission's involvement in this project was discussed.

The following Tuesday on June 25th at 6 p.m. Architect Pam Blough will be in the Township for the Park Advisory Committee meeting. She has the topographical survey done which was needed to design the park plan. Planning Commission members are highly encouraged to attend the Park Advisory Committee meetings.

b. MACOMB ORCHARD – BRIDGE-TO-BAY CONNECTION UPDATE

Couple weeks ago, Member Stevens, Treasurer Stover and Trustee Goulston attended the Trails Planning Committee meeting. There is a desire to hook the Orchard Trail to the Bridge-to-Bay Trail. Part of a foundation to make trails in Michigan was to go up Gratiot, but they're looking at the long distance and when it gets into Marysville it gets into vehicle

traffic. The Trails United Michigan group is looking at joining downtowns to downtowns and looking at hooking the Bridge-to-Bay straight down the Fred Moore Highway/Division corridor. If successful in getting funding they could connect Richmond to St. Clair which would pass by the Casco Township Park.

c. ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS ITEM

Member Pankiewicz reported there was a ZBA meeting last Thursday and they granted a variance to Mr. Miller who has a farm on Hessen Road. In May of 2015 he was granted a variance to build a pole barn in front of his house that he let lapse when his marriage broke down resulting in a divorce and it has taken him until now to get it straightened out. One of the members of ZBA cited a Circuit Court ruling on Accessory Buildings. The Planning Commission has an Ordinance 13.04 and it cites detached accessory buildings shall be located in rear or side yards. His house is 500' from the center of the road and between the house and road he has a tile field and well and his property in the back is very low and if he were to build the barn in the back it would be under water. The ZBA member stated with that Circuit Court ruling he wouldn't vote in favor, but there were enough yes votes to carry the variance. Member Pankiewicz suggested the Planning Commission may want to review that part on the ordinance giving some leeway or homes set way back from the road.

Member Stevens stated the Planning Commission came up with that ordinance several years ago. Member Pankiewicz would like that ordinance reviewed to potentially give some leeway if the home is more than 400' off road and outbuilding are not visible from the road.

Chairman Teltow wanted it clarified if the issue was created by the owner. Member Pankiewicz stated in this situation the site plan was approved in May of 2015. Member Stevens said usually an ordinance is revisited when there are recurring issues and felt it's premature to review it again so soon.

Members of the Planning Commission attended the SCC Metropolitan Planning Commission workshop where they discussed redevelopment for ready communities as well as basic Planning Commission training. Chairman Teltow discussed the need to have our minutes clearly outlining the site plan conditions as approved.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Member Pankiewicz, supported by Member Edwards to adjourn at 8:32 p.m.

Ayes: Members Stevens, Teltow, Pankiewicz, Keller, Edwards.

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, June 18, 2019 at the Casco Township Hall, 4512 Meldrum Road.

Joseph F. Stevens, Secretary _____

Christine Ruemenapp, Recording Secretary _____