



Minutes

THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Thomas Township Public Safety Building, 8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609

June 15, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Rod Iamurri called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in addition to Mr. Iamurri were: Ruth McDonald, Patrick Lynch, Dave Sommers, Steve Yockey, Diane Lamountain and Dale Halm Also present was Dan Sika, Director of Community Development, Connie Watt, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer, Rob Eggers of Spicer Group and one interested party.

1. *Call to Order and Roll Call*

2. *Pledge of Allegiance.*

3. *Approval of Agenda:*

It was moved by McDonald, seconded by Halm to approve the Agenda for the June 15, 2016 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

4. *Approval of Minutes:*

It was moved by Sommers, seconded by McDonald to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2016 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

5. *Communications – Petitions – Citizens Comments – None.*

6. *Presentations-None*

7. *Hearings-None*

8. *Sign Board of Appeals-None*

9. *New Business-None*

10. *Old Business*

A. *Wind Energy Ordinance (Questions & Answers)*

Sika stated that at the last meeting there had been a few questions regarding wind energy that would now be addressed by Rob Eggers. But before that is done Sika requested the Planning Commission take a look at the “Wind Inclusion Zone” map that was created based on the vote taken at the last meeting. It was noted by Eggers that a couple of small R-1 areas within the section determined for the wind inclusion were marked as part of it. This matter will be addressed with Dan Hoffman to correct. Sika mentioned that the public hearing for text amendment for the Wind Energy Ordinance would mostly likely take place in July.

Mr. Eggers addressed the following questions:

1. How can a wind tower be removed if the company stops using it?

Mr. Eggers said every community addresses this issue. He said in the Ordinance they create a “decommissioning” clause. He added that if in thirty (30) years wind energy would be obsolete Thomas Township would not want the expense of removing these turbines. What is recommended is before a building permit is issued the company building the turbine would have to put a bond or financial instrument in place that fulfills the cost to take the turbine down. Most townships meet every three to five years to review the bond value and insure it would still cover the cost of removal. He said he recommends a period of twelve months of being inoperable where you could enact the removal of the turbine.

2. Can we get a demo deposit at the time of construction?

Eggers stated in essence this is what you are getting when the bond is required. It is then put into an account and ready to use for removal.

3. What would the process be to have it taken down in this situation?

Eggers said that if the period of inactivity of the turbine is set at six or twelve months after that time the Township would contact the company about removal and if they did not act on it then the Township would use the bond and hire a contractor and have it removed at the expense of the company who originally put up the bond.

B. Master Plan Updates Continues

Rob Eggers of Spicer Group offered a recap of what has been covered so far since the start of the Master Plan Update. He said back in the fall the demographics of the Township were discussed and he then presented the benchmark information. From there community input was received via the survey that was available. From that point the old goals and objectives were reviewed and have been rewritten. He distributed a copy of the revised goals to the members and asked that they double check them. He stated that at the July meeting it will then be time to do a review of the full draft of the updated Master Plan. He added that the Future Land Use map with any updates would also be available for their review. Sika suggested inviting the Thomas Township Board to the meeting so they too could begin reviewing the final draft. Eggers felt that was a good idea and they should be present.

11. Receive and File All Correspondence-Planning & Zoning News-May 2016

12 Adjournment

Motion by Sommers seconded by McDonald to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. ***The next regular meeting date is July 20, 2016.***

Respectfully submitted by Connie Watt, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer