



Minutes

THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

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

March 22, 2017 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: Dave Sommers, Steve Yockey, Pat Lynch and Doug Bird. Also present was Dan Sika, Director of Community Development and Connie Watt, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer and one interested party.

Absent: Jennifer Curry, and Ruth McDonald.

1. *Call to Order and Roll Call*

2. *Pledge of Allegiance.*

3. *Approval of Agenda:*

It was moved by Sommers, seconded by Yockey to approve the Agenda for the March 22, 2017 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

4. *Approval of Minutes:*

It was moved by Lynch, seconded by Bird to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2017 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*

A.-Business/Organization of the Year 2017

Iamurri explained that each year the Planning Commission recognizes a Business/Organization of the Year based on the criteria sheet located in their packets. He added that it was previously decided that this year the Planning Commission would begin recognizing a “small” (twenty employees or less) business as well as a “large” business based on the criteria. Schools and organizations were also considered for the award. It was decided by the members that schools would be considered as “large” businesses while the remaining churches and organizations listed would be considered as “small” businesses. A winner in each category will be determined by the scores given by the Planning Commission. The second place scores in each category will be recognized as an Honorable Mention. Score sheets are due back to Connie by the April 19th meeting for tallying. Once the winners are determined, a date and time for the presentation will then be selected.

B-Gratiot Road Uniform Setbacks-Discussion Only.

Sika explained that the Planning Commission had been given aerial views as well as right-of-way maps for Gratiot Road. He reviewed the first section of Gratiot Road with the members explaining the differences in the road right-of-way from in some cases parcel to parcel. He stated that this makes it difficult for such things as signage along Gratiot Road when now it is required to be ten feet (10') out of the road right-of-way and this varies so much along Gratiot Road that there is no uniformity to where signs are currently placed. The thought is to create a more standard setback for example from the curbline. He added that at this time it is difficult for anyone putting in new signage because we have to refer them to MDOT since the right-of-ways vary so much to determine that ten foot mark. In some cases the business has to get a survey to determine the right-of-way which is costly. The members were in agreement that this requires some further investigation into what options could be used and from what point the setback would be determined. Sika stated that over the next few months the options would be looked into and presented to the Planning Commission at a later date.

C-Zoning Map With the Addition of MHP Zoning District.

Sika said that the map presented to the Planning Commission was created to show the three (3) mobile home parks in Thomas Township listed under the MHP Zoning District. Currently this is not the case and discussion of this with the Planning Commission members had taken place to insure these areas were in the proper zoning district. Sika added that he has had discussion with two out of three of the mobile home park owners who were in favor of this change. He has not been able to discuss this with Edgewood Village, which was recently purchased, but will continue to try to make contact with them. As it stands at this time these parks are non-conforming because they are not in the correct zoning district. It was decided that it is necessary

to move ahead on the proper zoning and a Public Hearing on this will be scheduled in upcoming months.

10. *Old Business*

A. Medical Marijuana Articles/Class Information

Iamurri said that information had been presented to the Planning Commission over the past few months concerning Medical Marijuana. This month there were some articles outlining the pros and cons of the new law for their review. He questioned Watt as to the class that was held on March 8th that she attended. Watt stated that it was very informative and well done. Sika explained that some of the information presented in the class was in the packets given to the Planning Commission. A discussion took place regarding the recommendation for a Resolution to disallow Medical Marijuana facilities in the Township. Sika noted that it was the opinion of MSU Extension and the attorney who led the class that a Resolution was necessary if the Township did not want these facilities. He added that this was not the case with the MTA (Michigan Township Association) and their stand on this was to “do nothing” at this time if these facilities were not being allowed in the community. Iamurri added that it was his understanding that if you did not want the facilities in your township and you did not have an ordinance allowing them, then you were to do nothing. He did not feel that a resolution would be necessary. Sommers added that in the articles presented this month there was one that was written by the MTA and that was the statement they made in the article, “do nothing”. It was decided that at this time the Planning Commission would like to continue to get informative articles and related information regarding Medical Marijuana and Medical Marijuana Facilities but they felt that due to changes that will probably take place over time with the law they would continue to wait and see and “do nothing” since the Township does not have an ordinance allowing these facilities.

11. *Receive and File All Correspondence*

A.-Planning & Zoning News-January 2017

12. *Adjournment*

Motion by Sommers seconded by Lynch to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. ***The next regular meeting date is April 19, 2017.***

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