

White Oak Township Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 28, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. In attendance were Aaron Graf, John Kemler, David Mullins, Missy Noll, Megan Willis-Redfern, Tom Brimhall, Leela Vernon, Leslie Dickinson from Foster, Swift and Chris Khorey from McKenna.

Also in attendance were citizens, Joe Walker, Duane Walker, Frank Xerri, Carolyn Tucker, Ralph Tucker, Bob and Judy McManaman, Tim O'Brien, Rusty Bloom, Teresa Bloom, Ann Clery, DaNeal Behrens, Scott Coleman, Deanna Varesi, Paula Warren, Stacey Craig, Morgan Vareso, Tina Walker, Richard Morrison, Lyndsy Morlock, Shelley Schaub, Michael Bayaru, Kari Bayard, Paul Hedemale, Debbie Feeney, and Pat Feeney.

Introduction of the Board: Introductions were made of the Board and consultant and attorney.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by John Kemler that the minutes from the May 17, 2021, meeting be approved; Aaron Graf seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Comment:

Paula Warren indicated that on Risch Road (between Howell Road and Columbia Road) people are throwing garbage out, including furniture and other big items. Aaron indicated that this issue would be brought to the Board.

Judy McManaman expressed her concern with the 500-foot maximum height for the wind turbines. She is concerned that if they are placed in other areas other than the industrial zone, this is way too high.

No other public comments were expressed.

Public Hearing on Moratorium:

Aaron Graf made a motion to bring the Public Hearing in session; John Kemler seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Leslie Dickinson explained the Moratorium and indicated that this stayed the Wind and Solar Ordinances for at least eighteen (18) months (maybe less) while the Planning Commission worked on the Master Plan.

Public Comments on Moratorium:

Tim O'Brien asked what happens if the Planning Commission gets the Master Plan done way before this – how will the citizens know – what kind of notice will they be given?

Chris Khorey explained that when a draft of the Master Plan is finished by the Planning Commission, it goes to the Board to approve for distribution. After distribution, there is a 63-day waiting period. Then there is a Public Hearing conducted through the Planning Commission and then it goes to the Board for final approval. If the Board does not approve, then they send it back to the Planning Commission with their comments/concerns.

Lyndsy Morlock asked where the industrial zone was located. Aaron Graf indicated that it is north of where Embridge is located.

Tim O'Brien asked what the minimum time this could take. Leslie Dickinson indicated that there is at a minimum three-month notice – so it is not a quick project.

DaNeal Behrens asked how it is distributed and how the citizens know when the Planning Commission meetings are going to be held? It was indicated that the meetings are put on the board at the main office, can be found in the prior month's Minutes and for the Public Hearings they are published in the Lansing State Journal. It was decided to put the meeting dates on the answering machine so people could just call in and find out.

John Kemler made a motion to close the public comments on the Moratorium; Megan Willis-Redfern seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Leslie Dickinson indicated that Leela should reach out to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission to see if they review township zoning ordinance amendments before the Planning Commission sends it to the Board. Leela indicated she would reach out to them tomorrow (June 29th).

Aaron Graf made a motion to recommend adoption of the Moratorium Ordinance to the Township Board; Megan Willis-Redfern seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Master Plan Discussions:

Chris Khorey passed out two options of the maps of the industrial zoned property. Option one showed a quarter-mile overlay and Option two showed a half-mile overlay. The current industrial zoned property would not be able to expand without the property owner requesting a zone change to the Planning Commission and the approval of the Planning Commission to submit it to the Board.

Aaron Graf indicated that we currently do not have a spot zoning-that we could put in the Master Plan that the property needs to stay contiguous. Discussion took place on which option would be the better option to be defensible.

If a property owner requested their property to be rezoned, letters would need to be sent to everyone within 300 feet and there would be a timetable to appeal/disagree.

Wind Ordinance and Solar Ordinance:

These drafts, with the recommended changes from Foster, Swift are now up on the website. Foster, Swift does recommend that we have an engineer review of any special land use applications once the ordinances are adopted.

Other Planning Commission Business:

It was asked that the Noise Ordinance draft be reviewed, and everyone prepare their comments/changes. This was tabled for the time being.

Next Meeting:

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 30, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjournment:

John Kemler made a motion to adjourn; Aaron Graf seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Missy Noll
Planning Commission Chair