

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MONITOR
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 2, 2010

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

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Members present: C. Hoyle, B. Campbell, D. Darland, F. D. Rochow, E. Arnold, J. Bellor
Members absent: J. Frank
Also present: R. Sheppard, Planning Attorney, Zeb Acuff, Planner

Motion by Campbell seconded by Hoyle to adopt the agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

Motion by Hoyle seconded by Campbell to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2010 regular meeting as presented.

Motion carried.

Public Comment

Public input opened at 7:03 p.m.

Matt Richard of 3106 Summerhill Lane was concerned about the Fence Ordinance and asked how it was presented to the Planning Commission by the Board and what the procedure is for moving forward. His concern as a resident of Willow Creek subdivision is the material of the safety fence that has been put up behind them and the safety and aesthetics of it. He would like to see the ordinances of other townships reviewed and used to update the Monitor ordinance.

Rick Witkop of 2762 E. Fisher Rd. would like the Planning Commission to change Sec. 3.21 concerning Keeping of Pets and Livestock. He would like to see laying hens considered as pets instead of poultry and limited in numbers, upkeep and confinement. This would allow backyard chickens to fertilize his organic garden and produce eggs which are safer to eat.

Public comment closed at 7:08 p.m.

Items for Consideration

Grueber Trust Land Division

Sheppard and Acuff responded to written questions from the Grueber family, but we have not received any amended plan from the applicant. The petitioner will need to decide how to carve up the property to get into compliance with any land division and retain their AG status.

Motion by Darland supported by Rochow to table the Grueber Trust Land Division until next month. Motion carried.

Wildfire Cross-Access Easement

Section 3.47 which became effective last September provides for shared access drives and indicates that the Planning Commission may reduce the width of the easement if utilities are not required or for other

demonstrable reasons that a 66' wide easement is not necessary. Sheppard noted that this isn't a hardship situation requiring a variance, but rather a Planning situation to determine that the easement area would not need to be reserved for a public road right-of-way in the future; that it would not need to be reserved for drainage ditches or drain sewers and sanitary sewers, water, gas, etc in the future.

Sheppard stated that he and Richard Austin, Township Attorney, agreed that, while the easement needs to be 66 feet wide, only 28 feet of that easement needs to be paved as driveway.

Arnold noted that the site plan has already been approved pending a signed cross-access agreement with Meijer.

Sheppard agreed that a change would require re-submittal of a site plan with written reasoning for why the 66-foot easement would not be necessary. There is no guarantee that what has already been approved would be approved again.

Keith Kosik of TSSF Architects explained how this happened. Meijer is asking for about a 6-foot reduction. Since Wildfire got its approval, Meijer has done an about-face on their original agreement. Kosik will go back to Meijer seeking the 66-foot easement.

Fence Ordinance

Bellor read the Board communication requesting the Planning Commission to review the Sec. 3.09.11 on Fences which is actually Sec. 3.13.

Arnold reviewed the discussion that was held at the Board meeting from which this was referred. The residents present at that meeting felt that our fence ordinance was weak. Arnold would like to see what is in the subdivision covenants regarding fences.

Sheppard said that the Township approves subdivision covenants to make sure that the storm water detention and drainage system has easements for Township access and repairs and a cost-recovery system that we can charge the association for repairs.

Darland thinks that we need to have different fencing restrictions for different zones.

Acuff will come back with some comparisons of other fence ordinances for the Planning Commission to discuss at the next meeting.

Linda Neprud of 3112 Summerhill Lane thinks that the snow fence is a safety issue. Her complaint is about the orange snow fence that runs 1000' from 2 Mile Rd. to the middle of their subdivision on the property adjacent to the subdivision. The neighbor put it up to keep people from walking on her property. She doesn't feel that safety fence is a fence. She feels that Monitor needs a lot of improvement in their zoning. She doesn't feel that it is fair to those people who invested a lot of money in their homes to have to deal with this kind of fence. She wants the grass cut on vacant lots more than once a year. She feels that people should be required to get a permit to put up a fence.

Bellor said that with the reduction of federal revenue sharing money, and a lack of personnel, there is not enough time in the day to do all of those things. He's sympathetic to what she has to say, but it isn't going to happen.

2009 Annual Planning Report to the Township Board from McKenna
Acuff presented the 2009 Annual Planning Report.

Motion by Darland, supported by Arnold to approve the 2009 Planning Commission Report to the Township Board as presented by Acuff. Motion carried.

Swearing-in of Carole Hoyle and Bob Campbell

Arnold swore in Carole Hoyle and Robert “Bob” Campbell for another 3-year term and they signed the oath book.

Agenda Format

No comment.

Communications

Motion by Darland supported by Campbell to accept Communications. Motion carried.

Public Input

Rick Witkop of 2762 E. Fisher Rd. As a gardener, he is quite concerned about his food and that is why he gardens. He really thinks it is important to have this ordinance 3.21 changed. He asked for procedure. He doesn't want to break the law and, therefore, does not have the hens already. He would contemplate keeping three to four hens.

Sheppard read Sec. 3.21 of the ordinance regarding livestock and poultry. This section has not been changed since the 1970s.

Acuff said that it is a new trend to allow urban farming—having a couple of laying hens, keeping bees, etc. We might want to look at some of these areas involving food security issues in residential areas.

Motion by Darland to refer Sec. 3.21 to the Township Board for consideration. Seconded by Hoyle. Motion carried.

Motion by Darland supported by Arnold to adjourn.

Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Darland
Secretary

DD/jw