

VALLEY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY JUNE 22, 2010

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call:

Members present: Harry Smith, Chairperson Tony Garofalo, Brandee Ellis, Melodie Dobbins, Carol Browne

Consultant: Paul Shamblin

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes: The May 25, 2010 Planning Commission minutes were approved as read.

Approval of Agenda: The June 22, 2010 Planning Commission agenda was approved as presented.

Public Hearing on Behalf of the Camping Ordinance

It was pointed out that the camping ordinance was in place for the safety of campers in Valley Township and carried no fines for compliance. Most people would comply if it was explained properly. It was suggested that people have ample opportunity to be informed about the camping ordinance. Suggestions were posting the regulations in a conspicuous place at the township hall, handing out the regulations when camping permits were obtained and posting the regulations on the website. It was suggested that a lighted sign be purchased for the front of the township hall that would call attention to various issues of importance to residents including new ordinances.

Public Hearing Closed – Regular Planning Commission Meeting Continued

Old Business:

Camping Ordinance

The camping ordinance will be submitted to the Allegan County Planning Commission for comment and advice before being submitted to the Valley Township Board for approval. The Allegan County Planning Commission meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 1:30 pm.

Hawkers, Peddlers and Transient Merchants Ordinance

This ordinance was drafted by the Valley Township Board as a stand alone ordinance and does not require action by the Planning Commission. It will be returned to the Board for action.

Review of Valley Township Master Plan

It was stated that the site plan within the Master Plan needed to be more comprehensive and to more clearly explain how to develop an appropriate site plan. Further discussion determined there is ample explanation in the permit applications and zoning ordinances at the township, county and state levels. Furthermore, there is help available from the zoning administrator when people have questions. A note should be added to permits that help is available upon request.

The resolution of the Planning Commission is that while the Master Plan is not a static document, it is a well thought out plan and should not be changed for minor concerns. The Plan is used to offer perspective and guidance. It is discussed on a monthly basis whenever requests come before the Commission. If it becomes apparent that a major change or adjustment is needed, it will be addressed at that time. The next major review will be in five years.

Public Statement: An Allegan County Planning Board member stated that the Valley Township Plan was very readable and written by township officials with the best interests of Valley Township residents in mind. It was not just written by an outside consultant to meet a requirement. He congratulated the Commission on writing a plan “with heart.” He also suggested flowcharts have been used successfully by some townships to clarify steps in the preparation of documents and to explain processes.

Open Discussion on non-agenda items

A new ordinance, “the right to farm act” has been passed. Information about it is forthcoming.

There is a training for Plan Commission members on July 13th in Battle Creek from 5 – 9 pm. Harry Smith, Carol Browne, Paul Shamblin and Tony Garofalo will attend.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol S. Browne, Secretary