

VALLEY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 2010

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

Roll Call:

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

Consultant: Paul Shamblin

Absent: Brandee Ellis (excused)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes: The August 24th, 2010 Planning Commission minutes were approved with one correction. "Planning Commission" should read "Township Board" on page 2, #8.

Approval of Agenda: The September 28, 2010 Planning Commission agenda was approved as presented.

Public Hearing on Behalf of the Wind Energy Ordinance

Harry Smith introduced a vertical wind turbine that looks as though it would be useful for private residences. This turbine is smaller than the ones used for industrial purposes. Tony Garofalo shared an article about Kalamazoo's recent turbine ordinance. According to this article, with the tall turbines flicker may be more of an issue than previously thought.

Comment from audience: It is necessary to know what hazards are contained in a turbine.

Response: Vetting the system and hazardous materials is part of the permit process.

Comment from audience: Is it necessary to have signage indicating what chemicals, etc. are contained in the turbine?

Response: The fire department has to know what chemicals are contained in any turbine.

Further discussion questioned the special use permit allowing residents to request building a turbine on only one acre. It was felt there are enough safeguards within the ordinance to cover these special circumstances. There was a suggestion that a specific protocol for dealing with complaints and problems be written into the ordinance perhaps including an arbitration mechanism. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided there were ample mechanisms in place through regular township channels for residents to bring complaints.

Wind Energy is a new and quickly developing form of energy. The Planning Commission will continue to monitor these developments and recommend updates to its ordinance accordingly.

Public Hearing Closed – Regular Planning Commission Meeting Continued

Old Business:

Wind Energy Ordinance

Harry Smith moved to approve the Wind Energy Ordinance as written. Carol Browne seconded. A motion was approved for a roll call vote. Smith, Garofalo, Browne in favor of the Wind Energy Ordinance. Dobbins opposed.

The ordinance will be sent to the Allegan County Planning Commission for review and to the Valley Township Board for approval. Clerk Ellis will post the ordinance in the paper if approved.

Camping Ordinance

The camping ordinance was approved by the Township Board and posted in the Allegan County News. It will be added to the Ordinance book kept by the township.

Zoning Administrator Report

Issues with the horse farm and the mushroom farm discussed earlier are ongoing. Issues with a property on Round Lake continue. The question was raised if there are sufficient ordinances to deal with this problem. The ZA felt ordinances was not the problem.

New Business

None

Open Discussion on non-agenda items

None

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol S. Browne, Secretary