

VALLEY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY February 21, 2012

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

Roll Call:

Members present: Brandee Ellis, Harry Smith, Carol Browne, Fred Lewis, Tony Garofalo and Zoning Administrator, Paul Shamblin

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes: Harry Smith made a motion to approve the minutes supported by Fred Lewis. The January 24, 2012 Planning Commission minutes were approved as read.

Approval of Agenda: Chair Tony Garofalo explained that after checking with MTA, it was determined that due to a review of the Five Year Plan in 2009, it was not necessary to do another formal review until 2014. Therefore, he suggested that Review of the Five Year Plan be removed from the agenda. He also informed the commission that two other items had been brought to his attention. He requested that discussion of an Adult Entertainment ordinance and a request for a home business be added under New Business. Harry Smith made a motion to approve the Agenda supported by Fred Lewis. The February 21, 2012 Agenda was approved as amended.

Old Business:

A. Wireless Communication Structures and Facilities

A Public Hearing on the proposed changes and amendments to the Wireless Communication Structures and Facilities ordinance will be held on March 27, 2012 during the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. Clerk Ellis will submit this notification to the Allegan County News for the March 8th edition.

B. Camping Ordinance

According to the Zoning Administrator, Paul Shamblin, there have not been major problems in the township as a result of allowing camping on private land. There was a suggestion from the audience that the registration period should be clarified but the zoning officer stated that flexibility was advantageous to the residents. Further discussion resulted in a unanimous roll call vote to retain Camping Ordinance #242 as written.

New Business:

A. Solar Panel Ordinance

An outline of concerns was presented by the Chair based on a recent request from a resident to install solar panels on his property. Industrial use of solar panels may also increase as the cost of energy rises. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the residents to have an ordinance in place. Commission members stated that more information was needed concerning how residential and industrial applications differ.

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The Chair requested that members of the Commission read materials supplied by the Township attorney and be prepared to discuss this matter more fully at the March Commission meeting. The Chair also agreed to contact a local user and possibly a distributor to meet with the Commission.

B. Adult Entertainment Ordinance

Due to issues that have occurred in neighboring townships, our township attorney suggests that Valley Township should pursue having an ordinance in place to regulate these types of businesses. The township cannot exclude the businesses but can regulate how they conduct their business. Several examples of ordinances from other townships were distributed for review by the Commission.

Discussion of this topic will continue after the Solar Panel ordinance is completed.

C. Request for a Special Use Permit for a Home Business - Micro Brewery

An application requesting permission to establish a Micro Brewery that would produce and sell a barrel of beer per week was received by the Commission. Discussion of this request resulted in a suggestion that the party in question meet with the Commission to clarify parameters of the request and provide further information. Zoning Administrator, Paul Shamblin, will invite Mr. LaPonsie to the March Commission meeting for this purpose.

Zoning Administrator Report

The Administrator stated that issues surrounding blight at Round Lake have been cleared up since the last meeting.

Open Discussion on Non-Agenda items

Paul Shamblin, Zoning Administrator, reported on his efforts to install lighting around the periphery of the Township Hall to insure safety at all the exits. He is installing sensors in the front of the building as well as the side and the Handicapped entrance. He is doing this work on his own time and will contribute the labor for the installation. He also stated that the trim around the front door of the Hall needs to be replaced. He suggested using a man made material that would not deteriorate. He said he is contributing his time to complete this job if money for materials is approved. The Township is very grateful to Dr. Shamblin for his contributions to the maintenance and welfare of the Township building.

Adjournment

Brandee Ellis made a motion to adjourn supported by Fred Lewis. Meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol S. Browne, Secretary