

MINUTES of JULY 22, 2014 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

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

Roll Call: Members present: Harry Smith, Tony Garofalo, Fred Lewis, Carol Browne and Ron Remington. Paul Shamblin, Zoning Officer was absent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes: Harry Smith made a motion supported by Ron Remington to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting. Motion passed.

Approval of the Agenda: Fred Lewis made a motion supported by Harry Smith to approve the Agenda of the July 22, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting. Motion passed.

Old Business:

A. Public Hearing on Composting Ordinance

Chair Garofalo moved to open the Public Hearing on the Composting Ordinance supported by Fred Lewis. Motion Passed.

Chair Garofalo read an email from residents Jim and Rebecca Fairchild raising questions about rezoning a property close to them for use as a composting business. There were no objections to having the ordinance approved, however.

Secretary Browne asked if there were any other definitions that needed to be added. There was also discussion of wording on page two concerning the word "rutting."

With no further questions from the audience or discussion among planning commission members, Chair Garofalo closed the discussion.

Fred Lewis made a motion to approve the Composting Ordinance supported by Harry Smith. Chair Garofalo called for a roll call vote. The roll call resulted in a unanimous vote (5 yes votes) to recommend the ordinance to the Valley Township Board. Motion Passed. Chair Garofalo will notify the Clerk.

Harry Smith supported by Carol Browne made a motion to close the public hearing on the Composting Ordinance. Motion Passed.

B. Public Hearing on Request to Rezone Parcel 30-22-007-007-00 from Rural Residential to Agricultural

Carol Browne made a motion supported by Fred Lewis to open the Public Hearing on the rezoning request. Motion Passed.

Chair Garofalo introduced the request from the owner of the property by making available maps of the property in question and the surrounding parcels. An audience member, Mr. Veldhoff, who owns property adjacent to the parcel stated that his property had been zoned agricultural but was changed to rural residential without his knowledge. He had asked to have it changed back to agricultural. He had no objection to the change in zoning of Mr. Busscher's property and did not object to its use as a composting facility.

Mr. Morgan stated that he was very aware of the importance of taking care of the maintenance of his composting facility and was proud of his business. He plans to put up a sign informing the public about the business.

Secretary Browne asked if there were trees or some other buffer between the parcel and the Fairchild's property. Chair Garofalo stated there are trees and scrub between the two plus large tracts of DNR land. Mr. Morgan also pointed out that being southeast, the Fairchild's would not be likely to experience odor or noise from his facility should there be any.

After further discussion, Chair Garofalo asked if there were any other questions or comments. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve or disapprove the request for rezoning parcel 30-22-007-007-00.

Fred Lewis supported by Ron Remington made a motion to change the zoning of parcel 30-22-007-007-00 from rural residential to agricultural. Chair Garofalo asked for a roll call vote. Smith: yes; Garofalo: no; Remington: yes; Browne: yes; Lewis, yes. The final vote to approve a change in zoning of the 40 acre site from Rural Residential to Agricultural was 4 yes and 1 no. Motion passed. Chair Garofalo will forward the recommendation to the Valley Township Board.

Harry Smith supported by Fred Lewis made a motion to close the Public Hearing on rezoning of parcel 30-22-007-007-00. Motion Passed.

New Business:

None

Zoning Administrator Report:

None

Open Discussion of Non-Agenda Items:

Trustee Smith would like to see the Township approach the Legislature concerning the DNR's ability to continue to purchase land in Valley Township without it first being offered to the general public. The DNR does not pay property taxes on the land so every time they purchase a parcel, it falls off the tax rolls. This is a topic that needs more exploration in the near future.

Chair Garofalo reminded members that anyone attending the MTA meeting on July 31 at Western Michigan University should meet at the township at 3 pm if they want to ride together.

Adjournment:

Harry Smith made a motion supported Tony Garofalo to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Carol S. Browne, Secretary