

Laketon Township Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes of June 9, 2010

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson John McDonnell called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynn Stel, Bob Schalow, Cindy Ackerman, Eric Anderson, John McDonnell & Mary Marcil

MEMBERS ABSENT: Cindy Zaagman

ALSO PRESENT: Supervisor Kim Arter, Zoning Administrator Dick Grenell, Township Planning Consultant Brenda Moore, 1 township resident

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Lynn Stel moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 12, 2010 as presented. Bob Schalow supported the motion. Motion carried by voice vote.

REPORTS, CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS:

- **Planning and Zoning News – May 2010 Issue** distributed for informational purposes only – no discussion.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Review of revised draft of proposed Wing Energy Ordinance** – John McDonnell made sure all PC members had copies of the two documents then turned the floor over to township planning consultant Brenda Moore to give a page by page summary of the Wind Energy Ordinance she is proposing. Brenda stated that she has taken the language from the “free-standing” Ordinance we had been considering and put it into a format that would better fit with the rest of the Laketon Township Zoning Ordinance. Brenda explained the three different texts in the proposed ordinance: italics indicate new additions to the existing language, the stricken text indicates existing language that is proposed for deletion and the straight text indicates existing language proposed to stay “as is” in the LT Zoning Ordinance. Cindy Ackerman asked for Brenda to explain the rationale behind the necessity for the incorporated format over the free-standing ordinance format which the PC had previously favored. Brenda explained that when presenting an Ordinance to the Township Board for adoption, it needed to be in a legal format and one that can easily be integrated into the existing ordinance. John McDonnell noted that Chapter 14: Shorelands Management Overlay District was a separate chapter with separate definitions. Brenda stated that the Shorelands Overlay Ordinance format was not recommended. She noted that the township attorney David Bossenbroek also preferred the reorganized, integrated format. Brenda assured us that the content and intent is still there, but the format is more compatible with what we currently have in place and the redundancy has been eliminated. She also stated that this was hers and Mr. Bossenbroek’s professional opinions but if we decided we wanted the Wind Energy Ordinance as a separate chapter, she would accommodate us. Brenda took the PC members through her proposed document. Discussion and changes to Brenda’s proposed document ensued. Dick Grenell noted that the ordinance will eventually need to be amended with new technology coming in the future. He also noted that if the ordinance is too restrictive on a particular property, the property owner has the option of taking the issue before the ZBA. All of the following PC recommended changes were carried over from the original WECS Draft ordinance except A (4) and A (12) - both of which eliminate the 200 foot monopole height limit. The PC members agreed 200’ would be too restrictive for a wind farm. There was much discussion about whether or not monopole towers collapse on themselves or tip over. It was decided to keep the fall zone/setback at 1.5 times the height to protect neighbors in the event of a tower failure. This is also the setback used in most ordinances including the MSU/Ottawa County Model Wind Energy Ordinance.
 1. Definitions: no major changes suggested
 2. Add Section 3.30 General provisions. Recommended changes by PC:
 - A. Strike
 - C. Change to 1.5 the height
 - E. 6. Change to 55 decibels
 3. Amend Section 17.05 Special Land Use. Recommended changes by PC:
 - A. 4. Strike “but under 200 feet”
 - A. 10. Strike “including guide wire anchors”

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- A. 10. Change to 1.5 foot for every 1 foot of system height.
- A. 12. Strike
- A. 14. Strike
- A. 18. A. Add: Do Not Enter

Brenda plans to make the PC's recommended changes and have a revised draft for the PC's review in July. Bob Schalow asked that Mr. Bossenbroek review the newly revised draft. Mary Marcil asked that Mr. Bossenbroek's review occur before the next PC meeting so that if Mr. Bossenbroek has objections, he can put them in writing and we can address those at the July meeting. The PC members thanked Brenda for her efforts and time.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Updated Zoning Ordinance books for Planning Commissioners** – Supervisor Kim Arter reminded the PC members to get our books into Veronica so she can add the recent changes in language we have made to the Zoning ordinance and we can all have the same books.

PROJECTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- **Joint Planning Commission** – John McDonnell noted that the Joint Planning Commission (JPC) has been getting good involvement from the participating townships. There is a lot of commonality of issues although the focus is on the Whitehall corridor as they prepare for the battery plant. WMSRD is planning to write the Recreation Plan which would make us eligible for grants.
- **Zoning Language to address light industrial use** – Eric Anderson suggested that we take action on this topic in the near future in light of the Witham Road machine shop request and others that may follow. Brenda responded that light industrial was by Special Land Use.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Township resident Cathy Berntson informed all present that the First Lutheran Church is hosting a Wind Energy Forum with Scandia Wind Co. and other community leaders on Tuesday, June 15th at 7pm.

Cathy Berntson asked about whether there was a plan in place to repair Fenner Rd now that the sewer/water project is complete. Supervisor Arter answered that the MCRC is 4 years behind on ditching. They plan to repair potholes after the brining and ditching is complete.

ADJOURN:

Bob Schalow moved to adjourn the meeting. Cindy Ackerman supported the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20 pm.