

Eagle Township Planning Commission

October 5, 2023 – Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:00PM at the Eagle Township Hall.

Roll Call: Richard Jones (present), Eric Sutherland (present), Michelle Hoppes (absent), Robin Currie (present), John Iszler (present).

Citizens: Nick Keilen, Janine Dyer, Dan Feldpausch, Cori Feldpausch, Tyler McCastle, Craig Fountain, Lori Fountain, Laurie Briggs-Dudley, Dennis Strahle, David Vanderbroek, Patti Schafer, Nicole Selleck, Jeff Selleck, Dave Peters, Patricia Fuller, Darren Gray, Troy Stroud

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Agenda: Jones moves and Iszler seconds to move discussion of Clinton County Variance Request ZC-06-23 to New Business and add Watertown Township Master Plan Review notice to Correspondence. Voice vote - all in favor to adopt agenda as presented with addition above. Motion passes.

Approval of Minutes: Jones moves and Iszler seconds to approve minutes of September 7, 2023 planning commission meeting. Voice vote – all in favor to approve minutes as presented. Motion passes.

Correspondence: Eagle Township Access/Keys Acknowledgement Form, Eagle Township Compensation W9 Form, ITC Electrical Transmission Meeting Notice, Watertown Township Comprehensive Plan Review. It was noted that comments on the Watertown Township Comprehensive Plan would need to be submitted by November 20, 2023.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: None

Old Business

Discussion of Proposals for Assistance with Planning and Zoning: Currie has prepared a Request For Proposals (RFP) for assistance with Eagle Township Planning and Zoning. He will submit these RFPs to the relevant firms with a deadline of October 31, 2023.

Discussion on MTA training: Currie and Hoppes have registered for training. Sutherland and Iszler have yet to register but will do so soon.

New Business

Discussion of Clinton County Variance Request ZC-06-23: Clinton County zoning board of appeals has requested comment on ZC-06-23. Public comment: Briggs-Dudley clarified that the Clinton County Building Department denied a permit to construct a residence on the property (Parcel ID# 070-007-400-023-00) because the property size is less than the 10-acre minimum for A-2 zoning. Therefore, it goes to the zoning board of appeals. Schafer stated that Eagle Township has many non-conforming parcels. Keilen stated that he lives next door to the parcel and he opposes the variance. Keilen states that the owner should have done research because the rule 10-acre rule has been in place for a long time. Strahle stated that Keilen had offered to buy the parcel. Iszler stated that Assessor applies land splits. Motion by Currie to postpone comment on variance request ZC-06-23 until we can hear from the property owner. Second by Iszler. Roll-call vote to adopt motion: Iszler (Y), Jones (Y), Sutherland (Y), Currie (Y). Motion Passes. Currie will contact property owner to discuss and Planning Commission will hold special meeting, if necessary.

Discussion of Industrial Facilities Exemption & Tax Abatement: Currie stated that many townships have guidelines. Currie described some of the guidelines that other townships use. Iszler stated that the October deadline for applications is only for the current year and not for subsequent years.

Motion by Currie to request that the Eagle Township Board allow the Eagle Township Planning Commission to create a guideline for tax abatements and industrial facilities exemptions. Second by Iszler. Roll Call vote to adopt motion: Jones (Y), Sutherland (Y), Iszler (Y), Currie (Y). Motion Passes.

General Public Comment: Nicole Selleck stated that there a solar farm is being planned on Howe Rd. and she strongly opposes it. She stated that it would have a negative impact on surrounding properties and would decrease home values. She has concerns with chemicals being used for foliage control. Schafer state that there is a moratorium on solar farms for 12 months in Clinton County and there are no applications. Nothing in the works for an application. Dave Peters stated that an investment land corporation owns the property where the farm may be located. He says that it is not worth it to get more tax dollars and it would be an ecological disaster. Fountain stated that he lives near Selleck. He also has questions about the role of the Eagle Township Planning Commission. Currie explained the role of the planning commission. Briggs-Dudley stated that is why we want local control, but the township does not look at every land sale. Cori Feldpausch stated that it is up to the county at this point. Strahle stated that he is on the Solar/Wind Advisory Committee for Clinton County. He stated that the committee is advisory only. Gray stated that there are rumors about the Mega Site and Solar Farms and if we don't get ahead of it, this will overrun the township.

General Planning Commission Discussion: Currie stated that the Planning Commission is only advisory at this point and provided a recap of the role of the Planning Commission. He stated that the Planning Commission will do its due diligence, but the Township Board and County Controls. Iszler stated that the State of Michigan wants to take control of permitting for Solar and Wind farms and he believes we should keep local control. Jones described a 300,000 unit development that was stopped because of sewer issues.

Next meeting November 2, 2023 at 7PM.

Adjournment: Motion by Jones to adjourn. Second by Iszler. Voice vote – all approved. Motion passes. Adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric D. Sutherland, PE

Secretary