

VEVAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 5, 2014
Vevay Township Hall – 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members present: Jack Cady, Roger Cargill, John Lazet, Ilene Thayer, and Bruce Walker.

Member absent: Stacy Byers.

Other Persons present: Supervisor Gary Howe, consultant Mark Eidelson.

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Thayer.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The audience joined the Commission in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Set/Amend Agenda

The agenda was accepted as presented.

IV. Approval of 2-5-14 Regular and 2-26-14 Special Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2014 regular meeting minutes – Amend: (1) page 2, 4th bullet point from the bottom, after the second “district” by striking “is” and inserting “may be”; (2) page 3, second open circle bullet point from the top, after “public” by striking “hearings” and inserting “input”; (3) page 3, fifth open circle bullet point from the top, after “achieve” by striking “those” and inserting “the associated”; (4) page 3, under “Chair Thayer”, the third bullet point, after “reference” by striking “use”; and (5) page 3, under “Chair Thayer”, the sixth bullet point, after “recommended” by striking “floor-based” and inserting “form-based”.

February 26, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes – No changes were made.

MOTION Walker, seconded by Cady, to approve the February 5, 2014 regular meeting minutes as amended; and to approve the February 26, 2014 special meeting minutes as amended.

CARRIED

V. Brief Public Comment

Greg Shaw – asked if the news article quote by Mark Eidelson about roof shingle signs was accurate, and if a differentiation to allow such signs could be made by district? Mr. Eidelson – noted that freedom of speech and freedom of expression issues have a level of constitutional protection unlike many other issues, and advised the Commission to ask legal counsel.

VI. Reports

A. February 2014 AGS Building/Zoning Report

The written report indicated that there were two building/zoning permit applications, for a bathroom re-model and for a sign. The sign will not be illuminated, will be attached to the building, and will be in conformance with the current Ordinance. There was one authorization to enforce, for an accessory building in a front yard. The building was under 200 square feet, and has already been dismantled, with a new building being constructed in conformity with the Ordinance.

B. SLU Check-off Sheets

1. SLU permit #41 – Tower Assets Newco IX, LLC – 2146 Plains Road – Cell Tower
The operations are active and the annual fee has been paid. There have been no complaints and no change in operations.
2. SLU permit #42 –Roseanne Fry – 2350 Rolfe Road - Dance Studio
The operations are active, and the annual fee has been paid. There have been no complaints and no change in operations.
3. SLU permit #82.02(81.01/82) – Richard Lyon – Ives Road - Gravel Mining
The operations are active, and the annual fee has been paid. The operators have been responsive to neighbor’s concerns with dust and truck traffic.
4. SLU permit #83 – Jeffory Broughton – 2474 Rolfe/Hull Road - Radio Repair
The operations are active, and the annual fee has been paid. There have been no complaints and no change in operations.

To preserve his right to vote on the SLU permit renewals when they are considered by the Township Board, Comm. Walker recused himself from voting on the following motion:

MOTION Cady, seconded by Cargill, to recommend to the Township Board renewal of SLU permits #41, #42, #82.02, and #83.

CARRIED

VII. Pending Business

1. Cellular Tower facilities

This item was tabled for the evening.

2. Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPs)

This item was tabled for the evening.

3. Solar Energy Systems

This item was tabled for the evening.

4. Sign Regulations – (dated 1-27-14 and enclosure 2-28-14)

Mr. Eidelson – had prepared a memorandum dated February 28, 2014, which addressed the various concerns raised at the previous special meeting on February 26. The memo contains:

- In Sec. 20.02, a proposed definition for “Projecting sign” and a re-worked definition for “wall sign”, which the Commission accepted;
- Options for Sec. 20.03 (A)(3)(d), which the Commission opted to delete;
- In Sec. 20.03(B)(2), proposed language to address the design and overall finish of a sign with 2 opposing sign faces, which the Commission accepted;
- In sec. 20.03(D)(1)(a), proposed language to address sign size when the sign faces are more than 18 inches apart, which the Commission amended by striking “parallel to one another and” and inserting “and at any point” then also incorporating this language change into the first sentence as well, and then accepted;
- In Table 20-1 Special Provisions, delete (1)(A) on “wall signs”;
- In Table 20-1 Special Provisions, in (3)(a)(1), an increase in the allowable percentage of a sign that can be an EMC from 40% to 60%, and increasing the allowable EMC sign area to 18 square feet, which the Commission accepted;
- COMMISSION – discussed portable signs and various potential uses. It was proposed that Mr. Eidelson, in Sec. 20.03 (E), “prohibited signs”, add language to address temporary portable signs as allowed under Section 20.04.
- In Table 20-1 Special Provisions, in (1)(C), second line, strike “total”;
- In Table 20-1 Special Provisions, in (2) (B) (2) (b) (1), re-word to “An internally illuminated sign...”

COMMISSION – discussed the use of EMCs along the US-127 corridor; and how the “rural character of the Township” might apply in different areas of the Township. It’s anticipated that the next draft will be one for approval for a public hearing.

5. Lot Width Ordinance (dated 2-26-14)

Mr. Eidelson – had prepared a memorandum dated February 26, 2014, addressing this issue, especially for flag lots and ensuring the same usage throughout the Ordinance. COMMISSION – traditionally, a flag lot does not have the required minimum frontage, and from which the parcel then widens out. The current Ordinance for “Lot, flag” only states that the parcel lacks the required frontage, not that it also widens out behind other parcels with frontage. Also not addressed is how setbacks for flag lots are to be measured. The dimension ratio of no greater than 4 to 1 stems from state law, although exceptions are allowed if the parcel is greater than 10 acres unless the local Ordinance prohibits it, and the ratio doesn’t apply under state law to a remaining mother parcel unless the local Ordinance prohibits it. Mr. Eidelson – most communities apply the 4 to 1 ratio across the board.

Mr. Eidelson – where the lot width is measured is not currently addressed in the Ordinance. He offered three options. After discussion, the Commission opted for language that requires the measurements to be at the road and at the required front yard setback.

Mr. Eidelson – proposed wording changes to clarify street access and frontage measurements of lots, which the Commission accepted. He also had language for lot width exceptions to allow for when the frontage is curved. There’s a national movement towards more connectivity with parcels and neighborhoods for numerous reasons. This proposal was also accepted.

VIII. Any Other Business

By consensus, the Commission scheduled a public hearing on April 9 during the regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed Ordinance amendments addressing signs, and lot frontage and width.

The Commission scheduled a special meeting for April 22 at 6:00 pm to continue work on Ordinance amendments.

Chair Thayer – is now receiving copies of the Michigan Planner. The latest issue discussed the process used by Pittsfield Township, near Ann Arbor, in reviewing their Master Plan. “Form-based design” appears to be the trend for “place-making” efforts.

IX. Additional Public Comment

Greg Shaw – his barn used to have the lettering “Oklahoma” from a theater production, and a picture from the movie, and was informed that pictures/lettering such as this might be considered as art. He wondered if this is the case, but the Commission had no answer for him.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

John Lazet, Secretary