

VEVAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, May 9, 2018  
Vevay Township Hall – 7:00 p.m.

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MINUTES

**Members present:** Jack Cady, John Lazet, Chris Lewis, Pattie McNeilly, Jim Minster, Bruce Walker, and Al Winters.

**Members absent:** None.

**Other Persons present:** Supervisor Jesse Ramey and legal counsel David Revore.

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

**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 Minutes: Regular Meeting 4-4-2018**

No amendments were offered.

**MOTION Cady, seconded by Walker, to approve the April 4, 2018, Regular Meeting minutes as submitted.**

**CARRIED 7-0.**

**V. Brief Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**VI. Reports**

A. April 2018, AGS Building/Zoning Report

The written report indicated that there were three building/zoning permit actions, involving the construction of two pole barns, and work on an antenna. Violation letters have been sent to two residents, one for living in a travel trailer, and one for an unauthorized business.

B. Memo from Supervisor Ramey re: Chapter 3.27, Solar Energy Systems

Commissioners had received a packet of information on emerging solar energy technology, allowing panels to follow the sun and maximize generation of power. The new panel array is

designed to be 16 to 20 feet in height, whereas the Ordinance currently restricts panels to 15 feet in height. The issue of Commission flexibility with the greenbelt was also raised.

C. Violation Letter Sent to 1937 West Barnes Road

Commissioners received a copy of the letter hand delivered to Mr. Stephen Crippen informing him that the commercial storing, processing, and transporting of logs is not allowed on his parcel. He informed Mr. Ramey that he will be building a large pole barn and is looking to purchase land from the parcel currently being farmed. He has a plan to remove all of the logs. The Ingham County Road Department has informed him that the newly installed gravel driveway must be removed.

**VII. Pending Business**

A. Consider Amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 16, Special Land Use

COMMISSION – This item was tabled for the evening.

B. Solar Site Plan Requests

1. William Bush @ 1858 Tomlinson Road, Mason

Bob Randolph of Quality Solar was present on behalf of the Bushes. He had originally suggested to the Bushes dual axis tracking panels that follow the sun and substantially improve generation but will instead be installing static panels that will be less than 15 feet in height. He displayed multiple enlarged images of both tracking and static arrays, explained their functions and operability features, and the foundational and mechanical specifics of installation.

COMMISSION – in response to an extended conversation and many questions as to operations of solar arrays, both current and emerging technologies, and the current Zoning Ordinance requirements, recommended that Sec. 3.27 be considered for possible revisions as to: height of an array, greenbelt screening requirements, and mechanical screening.

The Zoning Ordinance requires that the application include:

- a scaled property line survey showing north arrow – Condition met.
- property dimensions, bearings, lot area, legal description, and parcel or lot number – All conditions met.
- the location and footprint of existing driveways, buildings and structures and distances of buildings and structures from lot lines – Conditions met.
- existing public and private right-of-ways and easements – Conditions met; public road noted.
- existing location of septic drain field and potable water well and other existing and proposed utility locations – Conditions met.
- structures on adjacent properties within 100 feet of a shared lot line – Condition met.
- Mechanical equipment, excluding solar panels, shall be screened from view from public streets and any property within a designated Agricultural or Residential District, by a masonry wall, evergreen vegetation or other screening measure of a similar effectiveness and structural integrity. – Not Applicable.

- Solar energy system equipment, excluding solar collection panels, are prohibited in a front yard and may be installed in a required side and rear yard setback but shall not be located within ten (10) feet of a lot line. – Condition met.
- Solar collection panels shall be placed such that concentrated solar radiation or solar glare shall not be directed onto nearby properties and public roads. The applicant shall submit documentation to verify compliance with this section. – A letter of compliance will be submitted to the Township.
- Solar collection panels shall not cause the district's maximum lot coverage standards to be exceeded. Where solar collection panels are to result in an increase of 8,000 square feet or more of impervious surface, the application shall include a drainage plan prepared by a registered civil engineer showing how storm water runoff will be managed so as not to encourage erosion or additional drainage upon adjacent properties, and the flooding of drainage courses serving the property including roadside ditches. – Condition met
- If detergents are to be used to clean solar panels, details on the type of detergent, frequency and quantity of use, and storm water quality protection measures shall be provided. Any necessary permits from outside agencies for off-site discharge shall be provided. – Not applicable.

#### Ground-Mounted Systems

- a. Ground mounted solar collection panels shall comply with the standards for accessory structures for the district in which the panels are to be located except that in no case shall the panels exceed fifteen (15) feet in height in a designated Agricultural or Residential District. – Conditions met, pursuant to Sec. 3.09.
- b. In the case of a ground mounted solar panel(s) located on a lot that is adjacent to a lot in a designated Agricultural or Residential District, a minimum twenty (20) foot wide greenbelt shall be established between the panel(s) and all lot lines. On any side of the panels, the greenbelt shall be of a length equal to the length of the panel(s) plus an additional twenty (20) feet at each end of the panels so as to screen the panel(s) when viewed from an angle. The greenbelt shall be planted with one (1) evergreen tree per twenty (20) linear feet of greenbelt and such trees shall be spaced no less than fifteen (15) feet and no greater than twenty-five (25) feet apart. In addition, three (3) shrubs shall be located between the spaced evergreen trees. Shrubs shall be a minimum height of three (3) feet at the time of their planting. Trees shall be a minimum height equal to seventy-five percent (75%) of the height of the panel(s). Required greenbelts need not be in the immediate area of the panels that the plantings are intended to screen if the planting locations provide for the intended screening effect. No tree shall be located within five (5) feet of a lot line. All plants material shall be maintained in a healthy condition to provide the necessary screening. – See below.

A greenbelt shall not be required along any side of ground-mounted panels where such side is a minimum distance of 150' from the lot line to which it generally faces. In addition, the Planning Commission may permit a maximum fifty percent (50%) reduction in the number and size of shrub and tree plantings where the adjacent property is vacant and not likely to be developed within the next five (5) years based on nearby development trends during the preceding five (5) years, where natural features are present that serve to assist in the screening of the panel(s) such as existing topographic or vegetative conditions, where existing structures will assist in the screening of the panel(s), and/or where other conditions may be present that make typical screening requirements ineffective or otherwise unnecessary. – Condition met.

**MOTION Cady, seconded by Winters, that as the conditions of Sec. 3.27 are met, the application is approved when the Township receives a letter verifying that glare is not an issue.**

**CARRIED 7-0.**

2. James Voss @ 3456 Tomlinson Road, Mason

Commission – reviewed the application:

The Zoning Ordinance requires that the application include:

- a scaled property line survey showing north arrow – Condition met.
- property dimensions, bearings, lot area, legal description, and parcel or lot number – All conditions met.
- the location and footprint of existing driveways, buildings and structures and distances of buildings and structures from lot lines – Conditions met.
- existing public and private right-of-ways and easements – Conditions met; public road noted.
- existing location of septic drain field and potable water well and other existing and proposed utility locations – Conditions met.
- structures on adjacent properties within 100 feet of a shared lot line – Condition met.
- Mechanical equipment, excluding solar panels, shall be screened from view from public streets and any property within a designated Agricultural or Residential District, by a masonry wall, evergreen vegetation or other screening measure of a similar effectiveness and structural integrity. – Not Applicable.
- Solar energy system equipment, excluding solar collection panels, are prohibited in a front yard and may be installed in a required side and rear yard setback but shall not be located within ten (10) feet of a lot line. – Condition met.
- Solar collection panels shall be placed such that concentrated solar radiation or solar glare shall not be directed onto nearby properties and public roads. The applicant shall submit documentation to verify compliance with this section. – Condition met.
- Solar collection panels shall not cause the district’s maximum lot coverage standards to be exceeded. Where solar collection panels are to result in an increase of 8,000 square feet or more of impervious surface, the application shall include a drainage plan prepared by a registered civil engineer showing how storm water runoff will be managed so as not to encourage erosion or additional drainage upon adjacent properties, and the flooding of drainage courses serving the property including roadside ditches. – Condition met
- If detergents are to be used to clean solar panels, details on the type of detergent, frequency and quantity of use, and storm water quality protection measures shall be provided. Any necessary permits from outside agencies for off-site discharge shall be provided. – Not applicable.

Ground-Mounted Systems

- c. Ground mounted solar collection panels shall comply with the standards for accessory structures for the district in which the panels are to be located except that in no case shall the panels exceed fifteen (15) feet in height in a designated Agricultural or Residential District. – Conditions met, pursuant to Sec. 3.09.

- d. In the case of a ground mounted solar panel(s) located on a lot that is adjacent to a lot in a designated Agricultural or Residential District, a minimum twenty (20) foot wide greenbelt shall be established between the panel(s) and all lot lines. On any side of the panels, the greenbelt shall be of a length equal to the length of the panel(s) plus an additional twenty (20) feet at each end of the panels so as to screen the panel(s) when viewed from an angle. The greenbelt shall be planted with one (1) evergreen tree per twenty (20) linear feet of greenbelt and such trees shall be spaced no less than fifteen (15) feet and no greater than twenty-five (25) feet apart. In addition, three (3) shrubs shall be located between the spaced evergreen trees. Shrubs shall be a minimum height of three (3) feet at the time of their planting. Trees shall be a minimum height equal to seventy-five percent (75%) of the height of the panel(s). Required greenbelts need not be in the immediate area of the panels that the plantings are intended to screen if the planting locations provide for the intended screening effect. No tree shall be located within five (5) feet of a lot line. All plants material shall be maintained in a healthy condition to provide the necessary screening. – See below.

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**MOTION Cady, seconded Lewis, that as the conditions of Sec. 3.27 are met, the application is approved when the Township receives a letter verifying that glare is not an issue. CARRIED 7-0.**

#### **VIII. Any Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

#### **IX. Additional Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **X. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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John Lazet, Secretary