

**WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
OCTOBER 10, 2018**

Chairperson Mooradian called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Baiardi, Gorman, Opfermann, Mooradian, Kennard, Repasky.
Absent: Wallin.

Visitors: Dawson Moore, Dave White, Sue Matsko.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda: **Baiardi made a motion to approve the agenda as presented with the New Business being moved to before the Old Business. Gorman seconded the motion.**

Vote: All yes.

Public Comments: None.

Approve Minutes: **Baiardi made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of September 12, 2018 with corrections in italics on Page 2. Opfermann seconded the motion.**

Vote: All yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Online Citizen Planner Class, Chapter 1 Planning Commission Handbook: Mooradian explained that there are online Planner classes and he thought it might be something that Planning Commissioners may want to take. Opfermann took these classes three years ago and he thought it was beneficial and a good class to take. Kennard asked what the point was of any further education when the whole thing is a waste of time since the Township permitting is being done by the County. Chapter 1 from the Planning Commissioners Handbook was reviewed.

OLD BUSINESS

Zoning Amendments for Planner: A list has been compiled with the parts of the Zoning Ordinance that the Planning Commission would like to review for possible amendments. This list will be shared with the Planner, Denise Cline. The ordinances that will be reviewed will be:

1. Signs and Permitting.
2. Parking Requirements.
3. Storm Water Ideas.
4. Defining Accessory Structures.
5. Landscaping Plan Requirements.

Proposed: October 10, 2018
Approved: December 12, 2018

West Traverse Township
Regular Planning Commission Meeting
October 10, 2018

6. Breezeways and Common Walls.
7. Small Cell Towers.
8. Enforcement.

Mooradian brought up the subject of storm water and there was discussion regarding water problems in Franklin Park and on State Road. It was suggested that the Planning Commission consult with an engineer regarding the storm water regulations and what would be the appropriate type of wording for the Zoning Ordinance. Once that is established, anyone asking for a permit should have sealed, signed plans that show what is proposed to be built. Repasky gave examples of a 5 year storm, 10 year storm, etc. These calculations were discussed.

Baiardi said that there had been a suggestion that the Township exempt the signs for the Little Traverse Conservancy and allow them to continue to use the type of signs that they have always used. She did not like the idea of re-working the whole sign ordinance. Kennard said that he did not think that the Conservancy should be allowed to have a sign outside of the size limits in the Ordinance. He pointed out that the Conservancy can shrink the template for their signs. It was agreed that Joe Lavender's proposed exception for all non-profits was too broad.

Gorman said that the Planning Commissioners are not landscape architects and that they should not be dictating what goes into the landscaping on projects. Baiardi pointed out that having signed landscape plans for a Site Plan is a current requirement, but it has not been enforced in the past.

Baker Letter Discussion and Recommendations: John Baker, Township Trustee, had presented a letter to the Township Board suggesting that West Traverse Township may be better served under the County Planning and Zoning. The Planning Commission discussed the letter at the last meeting and they disagreed with Baker's opinion. Kennard stated that in order for the Township to do a better job, it requires better resources.

Mooradian stated that a permit was issued for an oversized accessory building on Hughston Road, which was permitted by the County as a residential accessory building attached by a breezeway to a main residence. He said that it is confusing because it is not known if it is a garage or an accessory building. There are different restrictions on each of those. It may be that there is confusion at the County level with people applying for permits and thinking that it would go under the County Ordinance. Kennard said "If you look at the resources that represent West Traverse Township and we say that we want to be consistent with that, and affirm the value that everyone perceives in West Traverse Township, that we are not being consistent as a local government to the same value and quality that the Township represents." Mooradian agreed with what Kennard said and stated that West Traverse Township is unique, with a great community and we should do better. Kennard stated that we need to be empowered to do better and also that we need support from the top. Repasky does not think that we do badly and that we are not deficient with any great deficit. Repasky would like to know how Baker came to the conclusion that the Township is deficient. Repasky said that everyone makes mistakes, but that doesn't mean there are deficiencies. Baiardi will take this conversation to the Board's meeting next week and ask Baker if he can be more specific as to what he means. Gorman

West Traverse Township
Regular Planning Commission
October 10, 2018

felt that the County is more reactive since they are in the office every day. On the other hand, if the work is done at the Township, everything is done in one spot with one person and that seems to be more efficient. There was discussion about how some decisions may pit one neighbor against the other from Planning Commission to an applicant. It was pointed out that if the written Zoning Ordinance is followed, then it should not be personal.

Zoning Administrator's Report: Dave White presented his written report.

Township Board Representative: No report.

Planning Commissioner Comments: Baiardi thinks that the Keller property on State Rd. needs to be looked at because it is becoming quite an operation. It has moved way beyond growing of some trees. There was discussion as to what activities are going on at that property and Zoning Administrator White was asked to look into it.

Opfermann wanted to know if the Township could send out pre-warning notices to the blight properties, that were not addressed at this time, to let them know that there is a possibility that they are not complying with the Ordinance and to give them a heads up. Mooradian stated that all of the blight properties will be addressed at some time, they are not forgotten.

Paul Opfermann has rendered his resignation from the Planning Commission at the end of his current term effective 12/31/18.

White needs to contact Joe Graham to get a copy of the MDARD State Inspection report.

There will be a Webinar on October 17 regarding Medical Marijuana.

Mooradian attended the September Emmet County Planning Commission, which had a presentation from LIAA. They are doing a coastal overlay and advocating for the public trust on the Great Lakes.

Public Comments: Dawson Moore had some comments regarding how the blight situation is handled by the Township. He wondered if it could be done in a less aggressive way.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be November 14, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Paul Opfermann, Secretary

Transcribed by:

Susan Matsko

Township Secretary

Proposed: October 10, 2018

Approved: December 12, 2018