

**MINUTES SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 22, 2018**

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Terry Harris at 7:01 p.m. on Wednesday, August 22, 2018. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was recited.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Feirick, Bill Zuhl, Terry Harris, Debbie Brown, Dave Grabemeyer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jon Tidey, Jerry Donley

OTHERS PRESENT: Recording Secretary Lindsay Krohne

MOTION TO APPROVE MEETING AGENDA

Bill Zuhl motioned to approve the August 22, 2018 Agenda. Dave Grabemeyer seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bill Zuhl motioned to approve the July 25, 2018 Planning Commission minutes. Debbie Brown seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Terry Harris read an e-mail received from Douglas Small, asking if the Township knew of anyone who may be looking to lease their land for solar farms. Terry stated that he didn't believe they should be involved in giving out such information.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY'S REPORT

None.

BUILDING/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

None.

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION REGARDING "TINY HOMES"

Chairman Terry Harris provided the members with a document on tiny homes and stated they are becoming quite the issue. Terry stated that they are doing small home communities in down town Detroit for people with low income. Terry suggested they look into this issue after they finish with solar energy. Terry added that Jefferson Township is currently writing a tiny home ordinance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DISCUSSION REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF TOWNSHIP RENTAL ORDINANCE

Terry Harris questioned who would administer a rental ordinance. Debbie Brown stated that they can make it what they want, and have an applicant pay a fee for renting a home, with or without an inspection. Debbie stated that if the township needs it, it's a way to make money. Debbie also stated that in determining who is renting their home out, it would be an honesty basis.

Dave Grabemeyer asked what reason they would need to involve the township if they wanted to rent out their house.

Terry Harris stated that if they made it a police ordinance, the township only has about 6-8 part time officers.

Bill Zuhl stated that there has been no disturbing the peace complaints.

Terry Harris suggested they drop the issue and come back to it if it becomes an issue.

SOLAR ENERGY ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

Chairman Terry Harris stated that he typed up the ordinances duplicating Jefferson Township's with the addition of item "G" on the last page "Decommissioning of a system after useful life".

Debbie Brown suggested the "medium" and "large" both list "decommissioning". Members agreed.

Terry Harris stated that he believes it is a good ordinance, and asked if anyone had any additions.

Tim Feirick questioned #4: Medium SES Ground-Mounted Systems. He explained that #1 states that ground-mounted collection systems and associated equipment are prohibited in the front yard, and #2 states that they are permitted. Tim asked if those are the same things. Discussion followed. Planning Commission members agreed that #1, commercial and industrial should be prohibited and on #2, "industrial" should be removed, and agricultural should read not prohibited.

Debbie Brown made note of a correction in Section D #1, where the first sentence should read "Large SES are permitted" instead of "Large SES and permitted" and Letter E heading should read "Self-Contained SES" instead of "Self-Contained ESE".

Debbie questioned the 4 foot height limit in Section E #1. Discussion followed. Bill Zuhl suggested replacing it with "Self-contained solar energy systems shall not exceed the height of the zoning district" and all members agreed.

Tim Feirick referred to Section 2 on Page 1, where "Sus-section" should read "Sub-section".

Debbie Brown referred to #3 on page 1, where "10,00" should read "10,000" and "herby" in the first sentence should read "hereby".

Tim Feirick added that "is specified districts" should read "in specified districts" in the first sentence.

Debbie Brown referred back to D: Large Solar Energy Systems, #1 Heights. She stated that it seemed like medium could not exceed 6 foot and the small could not exceed 4 foot. Debbie asked if they wanted them all to read that it could not exceed the building code. Terry answered that he would have the same wording for all, reading that it could not exceed the overall height of that zoning district.

Discussion followed.

Bill Zuhl suggested sending the revised draft to the township attorney to review before the September meeting, where they could look at it one last time before making a motion to hold a public hearing on the Solar Energy Ordinance.

Discussion followed regarding the layout of the Wind Energy and Solar Energy ordinances and definitions. Bill Zuhl stated that they went with the codification so that everything on each subject would be all together in one place.

Discussion followed about the placement of the Solar Energy Ordinance in the Zoning Ordinance book. Terry Harris stated that it would be 155.300 because it would overlap with something else otherwise. Debbie Brown suggested keeping it before the ZBA section.

Debbie Brown summed up the seminar she recently attended, which went over solar energy. She explained farmland enrolled in farmland solar rights has to be removed from the program before being able to install a solar farm. Bill Zuhl added that they would have to pay the 7 years of back taxes as well. Discussion followed.

Debbie Brown gave the members copies of handouts that she received at the seminar.

Chairman Terry Harris stated that Midwest Energy is setting up solar panels on their property on M-62 and you can buy from them.

MOTION TO SEND SOLAR ENERGY DRAFT TO ATTORNEY FOR REVIEW

Bill Zuhl motioned to send the Solar Energy draft, with corrections, to the Township lawyer for review before the September meeting, where they will motion to hold a public hearing. Dave Grabemeyer seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

COMMISSION MEMBER DISCUSSION

Dave Grabemeyer brought up discussion on agritourism and turning barns into wedding reception venues. He stated that he is not for or against it, but wanted to get everyone's thoughts on it. He stated that if he lived next to one of these venues, he would not be happy with noise and traffic for three nights per week from April-October. He also stated that there is question on whether this is taking away from what agritourism is supposed to be. Terry Harris added that a lot of these barns are being built specifically as venues and were never used for anything else.

Terry Harris stated that he went through a teleconference on this subject, and there are many safety and logistics that go with it. Discussion followed regarding fire protection and access of fire trucks if there were a fire with 300 guests there.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATE

Terry Harris verified the next meeting date would be Wednesday, September 26, 2018.

ADJOURNMENT

Dave Grabemeyer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bill Zuhl seconded. Motion passed by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. by Chairman Terry Harris.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsay Krohne
Planning Commission Secretary

Jon Tidey, Secretary

To be approved at the September 26, 2018 Planning Commission meeting