

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES – 3/22/23**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Williamstown Township Planning Commission convened at 7:00pm at the Township Hall, 4990 Zimmer Road, Williamston, MI. Chair Eidt called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

**PRESENT:** Chair Eidt, Commissioners Stanford, Weston, Giese, Flore, Poth, Brinker and Trustee Creagh.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Tocarchick. Quorum established.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Planning Consultant Chris Doozan of McKenna and Jim Howard, Planning Assistant.

Chair Eidt led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion by Brinker, second by Flore to approve the minutes of January 25, 2023.**

**Motion approved 8-0.**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Eidt stated he would entertain a motion to amend the agenda by moving New Business- 3416 Corwin Rd. up after Public Comment.

**Motion by Weston, second by Stanford to amend the agenda as suggested.**

**Motion approved 8 – 0.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None. Closed public comment at 7:06pm.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- *Site Plan Review and Special Use Permit for 3416 Corwin Rd. / NCIA Trucking*

Chris D. briefly reviewed his two memos, mentioning the outside storage and that the use fell under the umbrella of “other similar uses.” The property is zoned I-1.

Responding to the question about whether a revised site plan could be ready for the May meeting, architect Bill Arens indicated yes, depending on whether the area would need to be paved, which would involve an engineer due to topography and drainage. He also asked if there was a benefit to paving as it would involve approximately 130,000 sq. ft. Discussion ensued about impervious surface and % of lot coverage. Nader Chawish, property owner explained that they own approximately 10 – 15 refrigerated trucks and do hauling for Tyson Foods, that the trucks are newer and they keep any idling to a minimum. They have approximately 4-5 employees.

It was suggested that they make a list of all variances needed.

**Motion by Weston, seconded by Brinker to set a public hearing for the project at the May meeting.**

**Motion approved 8 – 0.**

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

- *Medical Marijuana as a Home Occupation (section 2.06)*

Chair Eidt opened the public hearing.

Chris D. reviewed his memo. This would be a new Section F.

Discussion:

-should Section 8.02.MM be deleted?

-regarding odors, is the term mitigate correct or should it be eliminate?

-Suggestion to use the term “fugitive odors” (Chris D to finalize)

-how to measure

No public comments.

**Motion by Giese, seconded by Weston to close the public hearing.**

**Motion Approved 8-0.**

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- *Medical Marijuana as a Home Occupation*

**Motion by Brinker, seconded by Weston to deliberate tonight.**

**Motion approved 8 – 0.**

Brief discussion.

**Motion by Stanford, seconded by Brinker to recommend to the Township Board that the amendment, as presented in McKenna's January 26, 2023 draft with revisions and deletion of Section 8.02.MM, be adopted.**

**Motion approved 8 – 0.**

○ *Wind Energy Systems*

Chris D reviewed his letter. Revisions include removal of on-site systems at end of their useful life, set back for utility scale has been changed to 1.1 times the height, zero shadow flicker, maintenance of access roads and allowing on-site systems in the R-1 and OS-1 Districts on lots of 1 acre or larger.

Discussion:

- consistency with Master Plan
- climate change implications
- sending notices beyond 500 feet
- wind vs solar: impacts on farming or viewshed
- (Commissioner Stanford provided a handout on the main transmission line in the township)
- Use of setbacks to determine height
- Environmental impacts
- what land is actually available in Williamstown Township
- sound requirements
- decommissioning and review
- use of wildlife impact studies that are peer reviewed

○ *Solar energy Systems*

Chris D reviewed his memo and draft. The types involved include accessory systems (roof and ground mounted), small-scale principal and large-scale principal systems.

Discussion about the use of an overlay district with the main power line across the middle of the township as a center line, then establishing a ½ mile distance both north and south, basically between Sherwood and Germany Roads. From there areas of concern can be eliminated such as wetlands or prime farmlands.

Solid rationale needs to be utilized.

The solarize meting from the previous night was mentioned.

Discussion:

- Maintaining rural character

- Being allowed in front yards
- Requiring native plants for screening

Public comments:

Roz Peacock, Germany Road appreciates the PC's efforts and wants to keep the state from deciding our future.

Jon Smalley, 1009 Cherry Valle said he is not in favor of either type of system.

Trustee Creagh mentioned some issues at the state level such as preempting local control, having a regional siting mechanism similar to landfills and working with townships to establish objective criteria for transparent, predictable outcomes.

Chris D will revise the drafts for the May meeting.

### **PLANNING AND BOARD REPORTS AND REVIEW**

**Township Board Report:** Trustee Creagh reported the board approved the meeting dates for the year; approved the police millage; passed the budget; and discussed the Nuisance Ordinance and the Road Policy.

Chair Eidt mentioned that any questions between meetings should be directed to the planning assistant, and to be careful with e-mails to avoid any deliberation or opinions that might conflict with the Open Meetings Act.

Regarding the CIP Commissioner Stanford mentioned he needed to get in touch with the supervisor.

Howard mentioned the Solarize Williamstown program had 60 participants; that he had some of the handouts from the Ingham county MTA wind and solar program; and that today was World Water Day.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

None

### **CITIZEN COMMENT**

None

### **REVIEW**

Chair Eidt reviewed the PC's actions from the meeting:

- Approved the minutes of January 25, 2023;
- Held a public hearing on Medical Marijuana as a Home Occupation and recommended approval by the township board;

- Scheduled a public hearing in May for the site plan and special use permit for NCIA trucking at 3416 Corwin Road;
- Finished the initial review of the draft solar and wind energy amendments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Commissioner Weston (et.al.), second by Commissioner Flore (et.al.) to adjourn.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 pm.

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Jim Howard  
Recording Secretary

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Secretary Giese