

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES – 3/27/2024**

CALL TO ORDER

The Williamstown Township Planning Commission convened at 7:03pm at the Township Hall, 4990 Zimmer Road, Williamston, MI. Chair Eidt called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

PRESENT: Chair Eidt, Vice-Chair Stanford, Secretary Brinker, Commissioners Giese, Tocarchick, Flore and Trustee Creagh.

ABSENT: Commissioners Weston, Poth (Arrived at 7:15PM). Quorum established.

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Consultant Chris Doozan of McKenna and Sean Haskin, Acting Planning Assistant.

Chair Eidt led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Stanford, second by Creagh to amend the agenda to include a moment of silence on behalf of Jim Howard, Planning Assistant who unexpectedly passed away.

Motion approved 7 - 0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Flore, second by Creagh to approve the minutes of 1/24/2024. Tocarchick abstained from the vote due to being absent from the meeting.

Motion approved 6 - 0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roz Peacock (1353 Germany Rd.) questioned the commission pertaining to the wind and solar ordinance. Chair Eidt explained that further information will be presented by Chris Doozan, during unfinished business.

Jim Halm (4966 Meridian Rd.) had questions pertaining to Accessory Dwelling Units.

Closed public comment at 7:11 PM

PUBLIC HEARING – Regulations to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units

Motion by Stanford, second by Brinker to open the public hearing.

Motion approved 7 – 0.

Chris Doozan presented the 1/26/2024 Accessory Dwelling Unit revisions and supplemental letter with the explanation for changes.

Discussion ensued based on what counts towards the square footage, and if the minimum square footage should be reduced to allow the trend towards “micro/tiny houses”. Occupancy requirements and possible deed restrictions were questioned as well.

Commissioner Poth arrived at 7:15 PM.

Jim Halm (Member of the Public) questioned the need for Accessory Dwelling Units, tax implications and building requirements. Although, he did state he does like the idea of the ADU’s.

Roz Peacock (Member of the public) questioned the intent of the rentals, how the ADU’s fit in with the township. She did state that she is neutral on the ordinance amendment.

Further discussion was made pertaining to appraising/tax issues with ADU’s, need for affordable housing/aging in place, not intended for “short-term rental” use. Amendment to the revisions to allow a reduced minimum size of 300 square feet was supported by the commission.

Motion by Tocarchick, second by Flore to close the public hearing.

Motion approved 8 – 0.

Motion by Brinker, second by Stanford to recommend approval of the Accessory Dwelling Unit Revisions with an amendment to the size requirement, allowing a unit to be a minimum of 300 square feet of usable space by the Township Board.

Motion approved 8 - 0

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

◇ *Resume review of Wind and Solar Energy Systems*

Creagh discussed information gathered from a public meeting with Michigan Public Service Commission. There are a lot of unanswered questions pertaining to the regulation, and how it will be navigated in the future. He gave an explanation for timelines of approval/denial, where complaints would go and suggested that the Board move forward with the 50 megawatt limit.

Discussion was held pertaining to the size of structures, nomenclature, petition to stop wind/solar, location of structures.

Chris Doozan stated that some revisions would be needed to the ordinances in order to match the State of Michigan’s definitions, nameplate capacity, compliance with NFPA and battery storage requirements.

Further discussion was continued regarding being consistent with the state statute, decommissioning equipment, and community relations.

Motion by Giese, second by Flore to set a public hearing for Wind and Solar Regulations, with amendments, for the May 22, 2024 meeting.

Motion approved 8 – 0.

◇ *Master Plan – Review Opinion Survey*

Chris Doozan reviewed the master plan survey.

Discussion was held with the following questions/comments:

- Survey timeframe.
- Survey per household, per person, etc.
- Method to deliver survey – paper, online, etc.
- Review of questions/changes needed.

Chair Eidt proposed making any revisions to the survey, and providing the information to Chris Doozan no later than 4/5/2024.

Motion by Stanford, second by Brinker to provide revisions of the Master Plan survey to Chris Doozan by 4/5/2024.

Motion approved 8 – 0.

◇ *Adoption of Meeting Dates*

Discussion to change the November 27th, 2024 meeting to November 14th, 2024 for the regular Planning Commission meeting and set December 4th, 2024 as the workshop meeting.

Motion by Creagh, second by Poth to adopt the 2024-2025 Planning Commission meeting schedule.

Motion Approved 8 – 0.

◇ *Parking Standards for multiple family residences*

Chris Doozan presented revisions to the parking standards for multiple family residences, as review of the ordinance found that section to be out of date and excessive.

Brief discussion held.

Motion by Creagh, second by Poth to set a public hearing for the parking standard revisions for the May 22, 2024 meeting.

Motion Approved 8 – 0.

NEW BUSINESS

◇ *2024 CIP Planning*

Brief discussion held regarding review process, proper representation and committee members. Further discussion will continue.

No action taken.

PLANNING AND BOARD REPORTS AND REVIEW

Township Board Report: Creagh provided a board synopsis. Discussion is going on surrounding the street light conversion by DTE, positives/negatives to replacing all at once versus one at a time (as needed).

Commissioner Tocarchick stated that she prefers to receive the board packet as individual attachments rather than one merged document.

Commissioner Stanford asked the Planning Assistant if reporting trends/violations/etc. to the Planning Commission would be helpful.

Haskin stated that reporting information to the Planning Commission could be beneficial.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Roz Peacock provided an informational handout regarding wind turbine health threats. She also questioned CREO, and requested transparency throughout the process.

REVIEW

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

- Approved the minutes of 1/24/2024.
- Held a public hearing for the ADU Revisions and recommended approval by the Township Board;
- Resumed review of the wind and solar amendments and set a public hearing for the 5/22/2024 meeting;

- Set a public hearing on Parking Requirements for multiple family residences for the 5/22/2024 meeting;
- Adopted the meeting/workshop schedule.
- Make any revisions and submit to Chris D. by 4/5/2024

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Brinker, second by Commissioner Poth to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.

Sean Haskin
Recording Secretary

Secretary Brinker