

ALGOMA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
Tuesday, July 17, 2007

A meeting of the Algoma Township Commission was held on Tuesday, July 17, 2007, at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was held at the Algoma Township Hall located at 10531 Algoma Ave., Rockford, MI 49341.

Chairman Witham called the meeting to ORDER at 7:04 P.M. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PRESENT: Chairman Witham, Vice-Chairman Newberger, Secretary Poolman, Members Bigney, Ensley, Heminger, and Lecceadone.

Also Present: Supervisor Hoemke, Site Plan Review Committee Members Bates and Sjogren, Township Attorney Brown, and 0 citizens.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Minutes of the June 19, 2007, meeting** - Vice-Chairman Newberger motioned to APPROVE the minutes of the June 19, 2007, meeting as presented, seconded by Secretary Poolman. The motion PASSED.

**Acceptance of the Site Plan Review Committee Reports** - Vice-Chairman Newberger motioned to ACCEPT as part of the record the report for Site Plan #9706(R) as a MINOR CHANGE, seconded by Member Ensley. The motion PASSED.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Vice-Chairman Newberger motioned to APPROVE the agenda as presented, seconded by Secretary Poolman. The motion PASSED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments given.

CORRESPONDENCE SENT & RECEIVED:

**Building Inspector's Report** - The report was received and reviewed.

**Any Other Correspondence** - There was no other correspondence received.



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Site Review Committee Members Bates and Sjogren reported they have not heard from the applicant regarding the letter.

Member Lecceadone motioned Site Plan #0119, Shaffer Leasing, VOID due to the 1-Year Extension expired and the site plan has not been diligently pursued, seconded by Member Heminger. The motion PASSED unanimously.

Master Plan 5-Year Update:

Chairman Witham stated the sub-committee had decided that an intensive review of the Master Plan was not needed but instead they looked at what needed to be changed and added language for farm land preservation. He said the revisions would not require shifts of ordinances or policies.

Attorney Brown stated these supplements would be added to the current 2002 Master Plan and the two together would make up the revised 2007 Master Plan. He said they went through the current plan but did not change every last thing. There were items that needed to be corrected with passage of time but basically the current plan is still OK and sets forth the goals and objectives of the township. This is an update to that plan and it includes the farm land preservation needed for the township to be in the proper position so if farmers want to take advantage of this it would be in place for them to do that.

Chairman Witham stated they had to determine what farm land would be eligible.

Attorney Brown said they ended up deciding all that is in the R-A (Rural Agricultural) District would be eligible and when the Future Land Use Map is updated, in addition to labeling R-A, it would also include farm land preservation so the map would designate all that land potentially suitable.

Chairman Witham said that leaves it totally open for any existing farm in the township to be preserved and they would qualify.

Member Bigney said this would have to go beyond the township because he didn't think the township would have the funds to do preservation.

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Supervisor Hoemke stated farmers could raise their own grant monies and there are foundations out there to cover their quarter matches but if they can even be considered, they have to have certain things in the Master Plan and that is what this extra supplement does. He said Kendra Willis, the coordinator for PDRs with the County has reviewed it and there are only four in the County that have been approved. He said they followed Grattan Township's language somewhat.

Attorney Brown stated they updated factual materials and Building Permit information. They have made reference to the addition of Meijer in the commercial section. They included updated census information done this past year and show the increases. He stated if the same population rates continue, Algoma Township will have exceeded 10,000 by the next projection. He said traffic counts have been updated for various locations as listed in the 2002 plan. He said their main discussion was of farm land preservation and P.D.R. goals. They have added a section on natural and scenic features with a goal to adopt an overlay district with restrictions. He said they are revising the industrial districts with the thought being that so-called heavy industry is somewhat unlikely in the township because of what has happened with manufacturing in the State. The thought was to consider combining the two into a single district that would be light or somewhat moderate industry.

Member Lecceadone said they talked about allowing for some light assembling businesses in the Commercial district. He suggested number 6 could be number 2.

The idea was that warehousing, light assembly, and/or inventory could take place within the same building.

Attorney Brown pointed out on Page 12, that airport provisions were added because they had received materials from the manager of the Sparta Airport and voicing concerns with their airport approach. They asked the township to consider restricting tall structures within the approach to the airport and this language addresses those concerns.

Member Bigney stated the F.A.A. would be involved in that.

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Attorney Brown stated that the F.A.A. would not have authority to dictate the terms of zoning of the township. He said the sub-committee looked at the possibility of O.S.-P.U.D. in areas zoned R-2 or Moderate density. He said there is a Scenic overlay in place now marked but there are no specific conditions of development of that land. They also made some commercial changes. He said Pages 12 and 13 are more general goals and all the maps would also be updated.

Member Lecceadone motioned to set Public Hearing for the August 21, 2007, meeting, seconded by Vice-Chairman Newberger.

Discussion:

Member Heminger asked about discussing the O.S.-P.U.D. language and 2-acre minimums in the R-A District and why do citizens have to develop their land one way and developers get to do another. He said he was told in a previous meeting that this would be something to talk about during the Master Plan discussion.

After discussion, it was decided this was a separate issue than the Master Plan but they agreed to take up the discussion in the future.

Supervisor Hoemke stated he has received comments from individuals that would like to see the commercial expanded but after the sub-committee addressed this, they are not recommending it. He said this might come up at the Public Hearing and needs serious discussion. He said the township has to be comfortable that all has been considered and looked at before it is moved on.

Attorney Brown stated the Commission can look at Page 10 where there was discussion of these points.

Chairman Witham said the sub-committee considered the survey of the 2002 Master Plan and the wishes of the community to keep the township as much rural as possible.

The motion to set a public hearing PASSED unanimously.

**Ordinance Amendments** - There were none.

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**Representative's report -**

Township Board: Member Bigney was absent. Supervisor Hoemke reported they adopted the Impound Lot language as submitted. He said the Commission "does good work". He also reported that the Township Board now has final adoption of the Township Master Plan. This used to be a Planning Commission document giving them direction in planning with no approval from the Township Board but that has changed. He has had two or three requests for copies of the plan from neighboring communities.

Board of Appeals: Secretary Poolman reported there was no July meeting.

**Any Other On-Going Business -** There was no other On-Going Business.

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING: Tuesday, August 21, 2007 - 7:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

Member Bigney motioned to ADJOURN the meeting at 8:01 P.M. The meeting was ADJOURNED.

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Jack Poolman, Secretary

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Julie M. Sjogren, Recording Secretary