



SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP

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3461 BLUE STAR HIGHWAY
P.O. BOX 100
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Planning Commission Minutes 08/24/20

The Saugatuck Township Planning Commission met August 24, 2020 via video Zoom conferencing. Wells checked in members and guests via ZOOM.

1) Call to Order at 7:02 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Israels.

2) Roll Call

Present: D. Ihle, B. Rowe, R. Israels, J. Helmrich, D. DeFranco, D. Shipley

Present at 7:30pm: E. Welk

Also present: L. Wells, Planning and Zoning Administrator

3) Approval of Agenda

Israels acknowledged former Chairperson Prietz for his outstanding leadership on the Planning Commission. Israels acknowledged former Commissioner Lozano for his service on the Planning Commission.

Israels welcomed new Planning Commissioners Shipley and DeFranco.

Wells reviewed the instructions for a Zoom Public Meeting and informed participants that the meeting is recorded.

A Motion was made by Rowe to conduct the meeting via video conference, ratify the procedures for public participation and meeting conduct as described in the Notice of Public Meeting, and to approve the agenda as written. Seconded by Ihle. The Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

4) Approval of PC Minutes: June 22, 2020

Corrections:

- Page 2: change “pone” to “phone” under speaker number 9 (Nathaniel Reed), Line 4.

A Motion was made by Rowe to approve the minutes of 06/22/20 as amended. Seconded by Ihle. The Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

5) Public Comment:

No Public Comments.

Israels noted that despite the challenges posed by holding public meetings over Zoom, the Planning Commission will make every effort to accurately represent the intent of each public speaker.



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6) New Business

A. Election of Officers

Wells reviewed the procedures for the election of new Commission officers, and explained the responsibilities of each position.

A Motion was made by Rowe to nominate Israels as Chairperson, Ihle as Vice Chairperson, and DeFranco as Secretary. Seconded by Helmrich. The Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

B. Discuss Master Plan 5-year review, discuss priorities

- i. **Wells' Memo:** Wells gave an overview of her May 13th, 2020 memo on file with the Township. Emphasizing the relationship between the Master Plan and Zoning, Wells recommended commissioners consider how present zoning ordinances support the vision of the Master Plan and/or how zoning ordinances can be amended to better align with its goals. Wells noted that Attainable Housing was a top concern among commissioners, and recommends a full audit on present zoning ordinances pertaining to housing. Shipley inquired about rules concerning communications between commissioners outside of public meetings, ex parte communication, and conflicts of interest. Wells addressed each respective topic. Rowe recommended that new commissioners, Shipley and DeFranco, take the Michigan Citizen Planner Program.
- ii. **Helmrich Memo:** Helmrich reviewed his Master Plan memo on file in the June 22nd, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Helmrich reminded commissioners that Michigan requires the Township Board and Planning Commission to meet once a year to discuss the Master Plan. Helmrich reported that the Board would prefer to organize an "in-person" meeting with the Planning Commission. In terms of priorities, Helmrich noted he would like to see (1) review of tree ordinance, (2) investigation into housing and residential issues, (3) encouragement of solar and/or renewable energy businesses, and (4) review of livestock ordinances pertaining to chickens.
- iii. **Ihle Memo:** Ihle reviewed his Master Plan memo on file with the Township. Ihle emphasized interest in working with the county to improve traffic safety along the Blue Star Highway (BSH). Israels suggested the commission consider research into roundabouts. Ihle would also like to research the creation of an entrance to the Saugatuck Dunes State Park from the Township.



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Commissioners discussed the priorities outlined in the above memos. Israels noted that while the topic of senior needs was not discussed in the above memos, that the Commission should identify senior needs as a priority and consider conducting a needs assessment for the senior community. Israels encouraged commissioners to formally organize their thoughts in preparation for discussions with the Board.

7) Old Business None

8) Public Comments

- 1) Laurie Goshorn: Thanked the Commission for their work in reviewing the Master Plan. Recommended that the Commission and/or the Tri-Community Recycling Committee consider developing a commercial composting facility that could process compostable items from local businesses. Thanked Israels for recommending that the Commission consider roundabouts. Also thanked Ihle for citing traffic safety concerns with the 135th/66th/BSH intersection. Goshorn emphasized the challenge of safely turning onto BSH at that intersection, and encouraged the Commission to research the development of a roundabout for that location.

9) Saugatuck Township Board Update from July 8 & August 12, 2020: Helmrich Submitted by PC Member and Township Treasurer, Jon Helmrich

- Township board conducted two remote meetings via Zoom on July 8 and August 12, 2020.
- On July 8, 2020, Public comment focused on (1) the Riverside Dr. resurfacing plans, (2) drainage issues at the new Bosgraaf warehouse development, and (3) the pending MI Supreme Court case involving the Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance.
- Board appointed Shipley and DeFranco to the Planning Commission
- Board appointed Michael O'Brien to the Zoning Board of Appeals as commissioner, and reappointed Richard Brady and Patrick Stewart as alternates.
- Board discussed well-head protection ordinance. Staff was advised to conduct further research and work with ZA Wells on potential ordinance.
- August 12, 2020 meeting began with two presentations. First presentation was from the Tri-Community Recycling Committee. Second presentation was given by a Gun Lake Tribe historian and a member of the Douglas History Center suggesting the Township form a



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commission to consider establishing a historic district along parts of the lakeshore and Kalamazoo River mouth.

- Public comment was focused on the Riverside Dr. resurfacing and widening project.
- Helmrich reported that summer tax payments that began on July 1st were running 21% higher in receipt rate than the previous year.
- Clerk Bigford and Helmrich provided an update on the financial investment strategy of the Township. Plan to present some initial steps and suggestions to the full Board at the September meeting.
- Cemetery service agreement with the City of Saugatuck was approved.
- Board heard from Manager Graham who did a summary of all contracts with the Township to identify all parties working for the Township. It is the first time that such a summary has been compiled.
- Board offered condolences to Trustee Aldrich for the loss of her husband Keith and recognized the loss of Township resident R.J. Peterson.
- Next meeting is Wed. September 9th, 2020 at 6:00pm (Zoom).

Wells added that Township Attorney Curcio has drafted a well-head protection ordinance that will be reviewed by Wells.

10) Adjourn

A **motion** was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 pm by Rowe. Seconded by Ihle. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Next P.C. meeting: TBD... 2020 07:00 p.m.



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Respectfully,

D. DeFranco, P.C. Sec.