

**Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
Meeting held in person & via Zoom
Saugatuck Township Hall**

Call to Order: Chair Ihle called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Roll Call:

Present: Dave Ihle, Jackie Ground, Denise Webster, Ken Butler, Jon Helmrich, Gordon Stannis, Michael Wurth

Absent:

Also Present: Don Olendorf, Jodi Sybesma, Larry Sybesma, John Migas, Harry Adams, Gene Adamczyk, Norma Jean DeVelasco, Brent DeVelasco, Jon Vanderbeek, Kristi Allen, Joe Ruder, Joe Milauckas, Planning and Zoning Administrator Lynee Wells, Recording Secretary Morgan Arens, Building Official Cindy Osman.

Approval of Agenda

Ihle introduced the agenda.

A **Motion** was made by Butler to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Ground. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from the November 21, 2023 were discussed.

A **Motion** was made by Stannis to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2023 meeting as presented. Supported by Webster. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments:

Ihle opened the floor for Public Comment.

- Don Olendorf, representing the Lake Michigan Board Association, expressed gratitude to the Planning Commission for their dedicated work on the project. He commended their commitment, specifically addressing the issue of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
- Jon Vanderbeek conveyed appreciation for the efforts invested in the draft Zoning Ordinance. He found the proposed changes reasonable, highlighting the positive inclusion of new tree protection zones. Vanderbeek praised the Planning Commission for aligning with the community's desires.
- Johnny Walker, a developer, acknowledged Saugatuck Township's uniqueness and emphasized the importance of preserving nature and the community's character. He also voiced support for ADUs.
- Larry Sybesma expressed concern that the new draft Zoning Ordinance might impede growth. He mentioned frustration with communication gaps and perceived hastiness in the drafting process.
- Harry Adams thanked the Planning Commission for their dedication and time on the draft Zoning Ordinance. He inquired about updates on the property behind the Shell gas station at I-196 exit 41.
- Denise Shipley, having been involved in committees, disagreed with the notion that the draft Zoning Ordinance was rushed. She praised the tree protection section and the Planning Commission's approachability. Shipley advocated for allowing chickens.
- Dayle Harrison, a resident for over 50 years, requested a guide outlining the changes between the old Zoning Ordinance and the new draft Zoning Ordinance.

- Lynne Adamczyk expressed approval for the proposed changes in the new draft Zoning Ordinance but expressed reservations about certain allowances around I-196 exit 41, such as adult entertainment. She felt these did not align with the character of Saugatuck Township.
- John Castro thanked the Planning Commission's efforts and advocated for considering the allowance of ADUs and duplexes.

Ihle closed Public Comment.

New Business: None.

Old Business:

1. Discuss Draft Zoning Ordinance

Ihle commenced the discussion by expressing gratitude to the Planning Commission for their dedicated efforts in crafting the Zoning Ordinance, acknowledging the time they invested. He highlighted the recently conducted survey on the draft Zoning Ordinance and encouraged commissioners to take note of significant comments or topics raised.

Wurth emphasized the importance of distinguishing between "attainable" and "affordable." Butler concurred, emphasizing the need for a clear and definitive definition, especially given the rapid increase in the cost of living.

Ihle shared his key takeaway from the survey, noting concerns about Short Term Rentals and the community's desire for regulated Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

Ground inquired about the availability of the presentation for public viewing, which was confirmed.

Wurth suggested the need for a comprehensive guide along with the presentation.

Ground highlighted existing requirements for Short Term Rentals, with Wells elaborating on these requirements.

Helmrich proposed using the term "attainable" consistently in the draft Zoning Ordinance, aligning with its current usage.

Wells provided an overview of the survey and its comments.

Subsequently, the Commissioners conducted a thorough review of the Draft Zoning Ordinance, seeking clarification, explanations, and adjustments on various topics such as ADUs, boat houses, masonry design standards, docks, lot sizes concerning utilities, signs, specialty accommodations, townhouses, zone districts, water access, marinas, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), tables, and maps within the ordinance. The review also encompassed commercial property requirements, enforcement measures, flag poles, land divisions, manufactured homes, bed and breakfast establishments, and private roads.

Webster sought confirmation on the updates of all tables and the forthcoming revisions to the dark skies sections, with Wells confirming both.

Report

1. Township Board Update: Helmrich gave an update.
2. Staff Updates: None.
3. Commissioner Comments: None

Public Comments:

Ihle opened the floor for Public Comment.

- Joe Milauckas inquired about specific items outlined in his submitted written comments, addressing concerns related to noticing procedures, Zone R3 requirements, Zone R4 requirements, attainable housing, and non-conforming structures.

Public Comment closed.

Adjourn:

A **Motion** was made by Webster to adjourn at 8:30 PM. Supported by Butler. Motion carried unanimously.

Motions

1. A **Motion** was made by Butler to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Ground. Motion carried unanimously.
2. A **Motion** was made by Stannis to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2023 meeting as presented. Supported by Webster. Motion carried unanimously.
3. A **Motion** was made by Webster to adjourn at 8:30 PM. Supported by Butler. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully,
Morgan Arens, Recording Secretary