

**Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, March 19, 2024 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

Absent: Michael Wurth

Also Present: David Swan, John Newland, Elliott Sturn, Kathy Sturm, Scott Wierenga, Planning and Zoning Administrator Lynee Wells, Recording Secretary Morgan Arens.

**Approval of Agenda**

Ihle introduced the agenda. Webster asked that Commission Comments be added as item “D” under Communications.

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

**Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes from the February 20, 2024 were discussed and corrections made.

A **Motion** was made by Butler to approve the minutes from the February 20, 2024 meeting as amended. Supported by Webster. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comments:**

Ihle opened the floor for Public Comment.

- David Swan addressed the Planning Commission regarding the special approval use for the NorthShore marina project, urging them to revoke their SAU permit.

Ihle closed Public Comment.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

1. Blue Star Partners, LLC request for one year extension on their approved site plan and special approval use for Blue Star Brewery per the Township’s Zoning Ordinance, Section 40.818 (c). Original approval granted on March 21, 2023, and extension to March 21, 2025 is requested. Planning and Zoning Administrator Lynee Wells introduced the agenda item and provided an overview of the project in relation to the request. Ihle recused himself due to a conflict of interest. Butler inquired if the request fell within a year of their approval date, which Wells confirmed. A **Motion** by Butler to approve Blue Star Partners, LLC request for one year extension on their approved site plan and special approval use for Blue Star Brewery per the Township’s Zoning Ordinance, Section 40.818 (c). Original approval granted on March 21, 2023, and extension to March 21, 2025. Supported by Webster.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Ground, Webster, Butler, Helmrich, Stannis

**No:**

Discussion: Webster asked about changes to the site plan and Wells stated that nothing official has been submitted yet.

Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

2. John Hesse requests a one year extension on their approved special land use and site plan for a campground use per the Township's Zoning Ordinance, Section 40.818 (c). Original approval granted on February 21, 2023, and extension to February 21, 2025 is requested.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Lynee Wells introduced the agenda item and provided an overview of the project's request. Butler inquired about the Planning Commission's authority to grant an extension, given that the request was made beyond the one-year timeframe. Wells confirmed that such an extension was permissible. Ihle inquired about the timeline for acquiring sewer capacity, to which Wells couldn't provide a definitive answer but acknowledged ongoing discussions within the Township. Butler then proposed a 6-month extension, prompting further discussion among the commissioners regarding timelines.

A **Motion** by Webster to approve John Hesse's requests for a one-year extension on their approved special land use and site plan for a campground use per the Township's Zoning Ordinance, Section 40.818 (c). Original approval granted on February 21, 2023, and extension to February 21, 2025.

Supported by Stannis.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Yes: Ihle, Ground, Webster, Helmrich, Stannis

No: Butler

Discussion: None

Motion carried 5-1 via roll call vote.

3. Discuss Lessons Learned from Zoning Amendment Process

Planning and Zoning Administrator Lynee Wells initiated a discussion to reflect on the experiences and insights gained during the Zoning Amendment Process. The Planning Commission shared their perspectives:

- Acknowledged the challenging nature of the process but highlighted the importance of unity and perseverance.
- Appreciated the assistance provided by the consultant throughout the process.
- Noted the complexity of reorganizing the document and expressed a desire for more community involvement.
- Emphasized the need for improved communication from the Township.
- Suggested enhancements for future open house events to ensure better engagement and understanding.
- Recognized the inevitability of not being able to please everyone but emphasized the significance of catering to the majority.
- Advocated for the display of a large zoning map in the Township office or Board Room for reference.
- Praised the inclusion of diagrams throughout the Zoning Ordinance.
- Proposed the idea of conducting an annual review/update of the Zoning Ordinance for ongoing improvement.

**Communications**

- A. Correspondence: acknowledged by the Planning Commission, on file
- B. Township Board Report: Helmrich gave an update.
- C. Staff Updates: Wells gave an update.
- D. Commission Comments: Webster reminded the Commissioners that terms for certain members are expiring this June.  
Butler congratulated David and Lynee on their work on the Zoning Ordinance.  
Commissioners discussed the marina letters and how to go about them.

**Public Comments:**

Ihle opened the floor for Public Comment.

- John Newland, co-owner of Roan & Black, spoke on the no parking signs being proposed and spoke on their parking relationship with Penny Royal.
- Elliott Sturm said he likes the idea of a big map in the Board Room and praised prior public comment from David Swan. He spoke on the Township potentially buying Pine Trail Camp.
- Scott Wierenga spoke in support of the Township purchasing Pine Trail Camp.

Ihle closed Public Comment.

**Adjourn:**

A **Motion** was made by Butler to adjourn at 7:15 PM. Supported by Webster. Motion carried unanimously.

### Motions

1. A **Motion** was made by Butler to approve the agenda as amended. Supported by Webster. Motion carried unanimously.
2. A **Motion** was made by Butler to approve the minutes from the February 20, 2024 meeting as amended. Supported by Webster. Motion carried unanimously.
3. A **Motion** by Butler to approve Blue Star Partners, LLC request for one year extension on their approved site plan and special approval use for Blue Star Brewery per the Township's Zoning Ordinance, Section 40.818 (c). Original approval granted on March 21, 2023, and extension to March 21, 2025. Supported by Webster.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Ground, Webster, Butler, Helmrich, Stannis

**No:**

Discussion: Webster asked about changes to the site plan and Wells stated that nothing official has been submitted yet.

Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

4. A **Motion** by Webster to approve John Hesse's requests for a one-year extension on their approved special land use and site plan for a campground use per the Township's Zoning Ordinance, Section 40.818 (c). Original approval granted on February 21, 2023, and extension to February 21, 2025. Supported by Stannis.

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Yes:** Ihle, Ground, Webster, Helmrich, Stannis

**No:** Butler

Discussion: None

Motion carried 5-1 via roll call vote.

5. A **Motion** was made by Butler to adjourn at 7:15 PM. Supported by Webster. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully,

*Morgan Arens, Recording Secretary*