



# Park Township

Ottawa County, Michigan

## **PARK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

Draft until approved at next meeting

**June 9, 2009**

Special Meeting

DRAFT COPY

Present: LeeAnne Jachim, Bill Cole, Ed de Vries, Nicki Arendshorst, Joseph Lampen, Dan Martin, attorney and Eric Davis, Zoning Administrator

Absent: Steve Schaftenaar, Jeff Ebihara (The Planning Commission was reduced by the township board to seven (7) members on May 14, 2009.)

Nicki Arendshorst, Chairperson, called the special meeting of the Park Township Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Jachim and supported by de Vries to approve the agenda as presented.

### **VOTE**

Motion carried: 5-0

### **MOTION**

A motion was made by Jachim and supported by Cole to approve the minutes for the April 21, 2009 regular meeting as presented.

### **VOTE**

Motion carried: 5-0

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Joel Welsh, 679 Bosma Ave., speaking concerning Item #1, asked should a fire erupt in a boat storage facility on a farm, would certain farm chemicals and fertilizers be highly incompatible with the fuels in the boats.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

Item #1 Ordinance Amendment – Section 4.03 – Storage Facilities Arendshorst gave a brief history. She stated that a subcommittee had met two different times on this subject and both times decided to not recommend an ordinance change to allow storage facilities. She stated that the township board has asked that an ordinance amendment be drafted and that a public hearing be held, so this meeting was called. She clarified that an ordinance had been drafted and the amendment would be in the general provisions (ordinance section 4.03.m). The public hearing was opened at 6:35 p.m.

Doug Dreyer, 2442 152<sup>nd</sup> Ave, stated that it had been his understanding that the ordinance would allow storage as a right and would not require a special use. He stated that he felt that he could have come for a special use or for a PUD months ago and didn't know that an ordinance change would delay his process. He stated that he felt that it would be quite challenging to obtain a special use. He stated that he felt that allowing storage facilities by right would save the township and residents a lot of time and expense. He asked if a special use for his property could be denied.

Arendshorst stated that it could.

Dreyer reiterated that he thought that storage should be allowed by right, especially in an AG zone. It does not change the character of the farm. No one even knows it's there unless the doors are left open.

Jachim stated that there have been issues in other storage facilities. The public hearing was closed at 6:50 p.m.

## MOTION

A motion was made by Jachim and supported by Cole to recommend the ordinance amendment to the township board with the following change:

1. Move this to section 6.02, allowing these facilities only in the AG zone.

Arendshorst asked if there should be something in the verbiage about signage, lighting, screening, fire risks, ingress, egress, etc.

Martin clarified that all storage facilities would have to meet the building code and the fire code. He stated that the Planning Commission (PC) could look at the safety, signage, etc. issues when hearing the special use.

Dreyer stated that almost every boat over 25 feet has a fire suppression system built into the boat. However, there is a requirement that the boat battery be disconnected during storage, so it is unclear whether the fire suppression system would work while the boats are in storage. He clarified that most of the boats are stored with full gas tanks to eliminate fumes.

Lampen stated that it doesn't make sense to allow this in a residential zone, but it might be useful in a commercial zone. He asked if a specific date (rather than a "rolling" five years) could be put into the ordinance so that no new buildings could be built just for this purpose.

A discussion ensued.

Cole asked if a special use approval would specify a specific building.

Martin clarified that conditions can be placed on a special use. He clarified that the purpose of this ordinance amendment is to prevent commercial-looking storage buildings in the township. Using existing farm buildings fits the rationale of doing this because it maintains the appearance of a farm.

Arendshorst asked Davis about signage.

Davis stated that in the AG zone a 32-square foot, permanent identifying sign is allowed. A business sign is also allowed.

Arendshorst stated that signage should be added into the standards.

Dreyer stated that he could almost guarantee that no one would build a building just for storage. There is not enough income to justify it. He did say that putting a date on it would be really restrictive. He suggested that perhaps the special use could require that the building was built for AG purposes when it was first built.

Arendshorst asked about the fairgrounds.

Davis stated that some of the board members were looking for an ordinance that would cover the fairgrounds. The fairground is zoned R-3, not AG. In addition, some farmers are not in AG zones and, of course, there are non-farmers in AG zones.

Arendshorst stated that perhaps it was time to bring the fairgrounds zoning into line with its use.

Davis reminded the PC that in planning, the township needs to be looking not only at the current use of a property, but at the best future use. AG would not necessarily be the most appropriate zone at the fairgrounds location.

There was a discussion on the fairgrounds, rezoning, special uses, PUD's, etc.

De Vries stated that if the amendment were put in section 4.03, under general provisions, an applicant would still have to come in for a special use. So, any facility could be regulated no matter where it was.

Davis stated that that was the intent of having it go through the special use process.

Arendshorst questioned if the applicant met the standards, would the PC have to authorize a special use.

Martin stated that the PC has some discretion, but generally speaking if the applicant meets the standards, then the special use should be approved.

Lampen asked if they could put a minimum lot size in the ordinance.

Davis stated that that was possible.

Jachim asked if they could put in some wording similar to “The property is being used as agricultural.”

Davis stated that that was also a possibility.

There was a discussion on whether to put this in the general provision or in AG section.

Arendshorst asked if there have been any complaints about storage in residential districts.

Davis stated that he was not aware of any.

Lampen asked about the owners own boats or his family members’ boats. A discussion ensued.

Jachim stated that some wording should be put in about “no sales”.

De Vries felt confident that the special use could control everything.

Jachim stated that she would be willing to withdraw her motion because she had not been aware of farms that were not in AG zones.

The motion was amended by Jachim and supported by DeVries to recommend approval of the ordinance amendment to the board with the following changes:

1. The ordinance will be in the general provisions in section 4.03.m
2. “No sales” will be added to the beginning paragraph
3. “No signage advertising the storage activities” will be added to the beginning paragraph.

VOTE

Motion: 5-0

## **Item #2 Officer Elections**

Arendshorst stated that she wanted to let the PC members know that the board has reduced the PC to seven members. In addition, Jeff Ebihara, board liaison, is moving out of state in August.

Arendshorst stated that she wanted to publicly thank Wincel and Magennis for their service to the township while serving on the Planning Commission.

MOTION

A motion was made by Jachim and supported by Cole to nominate Lampen as Vice-Chair.

**VOTE**

Motion carried: 5-0

MOTION

A motion was made by Cole and supported by De Vries to nominate Jachim as Secretary.

**VOTE**

Motion carried: 5-0

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Arendshorst stated that she received a document from Olive Twp on their Master Plan update in case anyone should want to review it and make comments.

Arendshorst stated that she is going to suggest to the board that new PC or ZBA members take one of the courses that the county holds for incoming members.

Brodie told the PC members about an online Citizen Planner course that is available.

. Brodie conveyed regards from Janet Magennis to the PC members.

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Jachim and supported by Lampen to adjourn at 7:25 p.m.

**VOTE**

Motion carried: 5-0

Meeting adjourned.

Sandy Brodie

Recording Secretary