

ALMENA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

December 2, 2013

Members present: Chairman Matt Moulds, Mark Roman, Carol Himes, Brian Rumsey and Steve Manning, Mark Kruizenga. Nina Consolatti (alternate) and McKenna & Associates representative, John Jackson, also in attendance.

Members absent: None

I CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Moulds.

II APPROVAL OF AGENDA – **Motion** by Nina Consolatti to approve the agenda as written, **second** by Mark Roman. **Motion approved 7-0.**

III CORRECTONS AND/OR APPROVAL OF November 4, 2013 PC MEETING MINUTES – **Motion** by Brian Rumsey to approve the minutes of November 4, 2013 as written, **second** by Steve Manning, **Motion approved 7-0.**

IV PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS – No public in attendance.

V TOWNSHIP BOARD LIASION REPORT – Mark Roman reported on the resignation of Ron Marvin from the Planning Commission. He also provided information on presentations being offered by the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission and the 5th Annual Two Rivers Coalition. The information was supplied via an email from the organizations. He discussed the results of the renegotiation with Texas Township on the shared services contract for zoning enforcement. The township will purchase an additional component for the BS & A software and in exchange, the township will take a larger share of the fees. Because of this, and a desire for a change in the structure of the Deputy Treasurer/Clerk position, a new employee will be hired as the Deputy Clerk and the current Jan Quearry will assume only the Deputy Treasurer position. The new Deputy Treasurer position will be trained on the new software component. The Deputy Clerk position will be responsible for doing minutes for the Planning Commission. Mark also reported that Mr. Santora is appealing the township's denial of his PC Rezoning/ZBA variance requests.

VI ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Upon Ron Marvin's resignation, the following change in officer positions occurred.

- Matt Moulds, as Vice-Chair will assume the Chair position.
- Brian Rumsey nominated Steve Manning as Vice-Chair. Seconded by Mark Kruizenga. **Nomination approved 7-0.**
- Mark Kruizenga nominated Carol Himes as Liaison to the ZBA. Seconded by Nina Consolatti. **Nomination approved 7-0.**

VII UNFINISHED BUSINESS –

1. **M-43 Commercial Overlay with a view towards future development.** Mark Roman suggested confirming Planning Commission members for the proposed joint subcommittee with the township board on this issue. Steve Manning and Mark Kruienga volunteered to be on the subcommittee. Discussion then turned to the document submitted by Chris Khorey on Tax Increment Financing districts. John Jackson from McKenna & Associates then provided a summary review of the document. Mr. Jackson stated that goals should be focused on small scale changes to provide incentives and get rid of obstacles. Carol Himes mentioned that the commission should be cautious with the assumption that the citizens of the township would want an increase in commercial development. Matt Moulds pointed out that the current discussion is not necessarily to increase existing commercial zoning but to promote existing opportunities. John Jackson discussed some of the similar discussions he has had with Oshtemo Township. The issue was tabled until the joint subcommittee returns with more direction.
2. **Storage Facilities.** The discussion began with a review of the ordinance amendment wording provided by Chris Khorey. There was a presentation by John Jackson with pictorial examples of storage facilities with different conditions on development in other communities. There was some discussion on the conditions. Mark Roman pointed to the difficulty in placing restrictions on specific business types in the ordinance referencing a similar argument by Brian Rumsey the month before. The consultant stated that some “character conditions” can be made through the special use process. ~~Carol Himes Steve Manning~~ discussed concerns on whether the public wanted an increase in commercial business. Carol pointed out the issues with the current zoning was that storage facilities had no area in the township zones for their use as they fell to an Industrial zone that did not exist. Mark Kruienga discussed the wording change as not an increase in commercial zoning but providing opportunities in existing commercial zoning for storage facilities. Mark Roman stated that the wording was what was determined as appropriate by the commission at the last meeting and this is not an increase in use intensity as the square footage restrictions still exist. Discussion was then moved to the PUD requirements portion of the amendments.
3. **Road Requirements for PUDs.** The commission began by discussing the escrow requirements. Steve Manning talked about the Road Commission members’ comments at the township board meeting. Essentially the county controls the money and determines when it is doled out to the contractor. The purpose of this change is to cover the township’s due diligence responsibilities. We cannot fix the mistakes of prior development. But it places positive wording in the ordinance demanding a set plan for development in the future. **Motion** by Steve Manning – A motion to set a public hearing at the next regularly scheduled planning commission meeting for amending the Zoning Ordinance for Almena Township to ensure proper road maintenance in PUDs and permit self-storage facilities by Special Use Permit in Commercial districts, including Section 1, Section 2, and Section 3 as written in the proposed zoning amendment document of November 25, 2013 by Chris Khorey, the township planning consultant. **Second** by Nina Consolatti. **Motion passed 7-0.**

VIII NEW BUSINESS – There was no new business.

IX ADJOURNMENT – **Motion** to adjourn by Carol Himes, **second** by Steve Manning. **Motion passed** 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Planning Commission – December 2, 2013

Minutes Approval Date: February 3, 2014

Mark Roman, PC Secretary
Almena Township Planning Commission

Attachment

Cc: PC (8)
Twp. Board (7)
ZBA (5)
Christopher Khorey
Bill Henderson
Attorney