

ALMENA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

July 7, 2014

Members present: Chairman Ron Marvin, Brian Rumsey, Mark Roman, Matt Moulds, Steve Manning, Carol Himes, and Greg Babik

Members absent: Nina Consolatti (Alternate)

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Ron Marvin.
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - Additions to Agenda (c and d) under New Business and delete Public Hearing. **Motion** by Steve Manning to approve agenda with corrections, **Second** by Carol Himes. **Motion Approved 6-0.**
- III. CORRECTONS AND/OR APPROVAL OF May 12, 2014 PC MEETING MINUTES**
Amend Members Present Chris Khorey from Attorney to Professional Planner and correct typo in Section VI, **Motion** by Brian Rumsey, **Second** by Ron Marvin, **Motion approved 6-0.**
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS** – No public in attendance.
- V. TOWNSHIP BOARD LIAISON REPORT**
 - a. Township Board Liaison Report**

Mark Roman reported on the Ducks Unlimited federal grant for the Almena Woods as being less than expected. The Township Board voted not to accept the grant. The forestry contract from Mark Janke, a certified state forester, was accepted at \$40,000 with confidence the project will be managed and done in the best possible way for conservation. A copy of the contract is available at the township for review.

Forms, tickets, and citations are being updated for blight enforcement to make violations easier to enforce and for court if necessary.

Mark Roman discussed the difficulties of getting information on the website. The updates were performed and the new version does not work well with Internet Explorer. Mark will take a more active role with the website. An email list development would be helpful to share information throughout the township.

Mark shared the estimate from the road commission to repair 7 miles of 30th street would be over \$1,000,000 and will continue to rise. The road budget for the year of \$270,000 is used for maintenance, mowing, and dust control. Projects will have to be prioritized and a millage or special assessment may be needed.
 - b. M-43 Overlay Committee Report**

The M-43 Overlay Committee was created to look at the development of business and promote new business on the M-43 corridor. The vacant position created by the resignation of Mark Kruienza will need to be filled. The committee will review outdated forms for site plans and recommend changes in ordinances to make the paperwork more user-friendly for current businesses and developers.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Welcome to new Planning Commission member Greg Babik and introduction of the Planning Commission members.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Section 17:30: Outdoor Kennels for Dogs in all Zoning Districts (Possible reduction in minimum required acreage).

A variance was requested by an applicant that resides on 2.1 acres. Part B. of Section 17.30 requires at least 5 acres. The variance was denied due to the 60% reduction in property size, not unique enough, and a precedent may be set. Mark will research experts from the field to get recommendations on kennel requirements and definitions with the main purpose of preventing puppy mills in Almena Township.

b. Kennel Definition: Amendment to definition to include a time for litters

Discussed recommendations to change the definition of a kennel to discourage puppy mills but still be inclusive for show dog breeding. More research will be needed to keep the definition both inclusive and exclusive.

c. Initial Discussion of Complete Street Concept

Carol shared her training on the Complete Street Concept seminar by MSU for planning commission members. The complete street concept consists of roadways planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate and safe access to all legal users. Using the concept could mean access to federal dollars. Ron shared that the Subdivision Handbook has open space and bike paths are included. The Board received a review of Complete Streets from Larry Hummel of the Road Commission which stated a 20% increase in added cost will be recognized using the concept

d. Appoint new member to M-43 Commercial Overlay Committee

Carol Himes will accept the vacant position on the committee which will consist of 2 Township Board members and 2 Planning Commission members. The addition of a volunteer business owner as an advisor was recommended. The committee needs to define goals, elect officers, and develop a comprehensive plan. Mark will reiterate concerns to the Board.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Motion to adjourn by Brian Rumsey, Second by Carol Himes. Motion passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Minutes Approval Date: Approved August 11, 2014

Lia Will
Almena Township Deputy Clerk

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