

Alaiedon Township Planning Commission

Regular Quarterly Meeting

Monday, June 7, 2021

The Alaiedon Township Planning Commission met Monday June 7, 2021 at the Alaiedon Township Hall to hold its regular quarterly meeting and public hearing.

Chairperson Matt Oesterle called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Roll call was taken. Present were Matt Oesterle Laurie Koelling, Barb Kranz, Beth Smith, Bill Schneider, Jason Buher and Kim Hafley. Also in attendance was township attorney Tom Hitch.

Beth Smith made a motion to approve the meeting agenda, Laurie Koelling seconded. Motion passed.

Beth Smith made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the April 5, 2021 Workshop Meeting. Laurie Koelling seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

1. Consider and receive public comment on the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate Commercial Solar Energy Systems into the B-1, G-0, OW, I-1 and I-2 zoning with a special land use permit.

Gretchen Hill, 535 Lamb Road, Mason MI asked for a summary of what the Planning Commission had considered. Beth Smith provided an overview. Ms. Hill shared that she had a strong interest in the topic, saw the ad in the newspaper and was attending because she cared about this topic. She expressed her opinion that it was very important to protect farmland and to keep it in plant-based production versus energy production.

Beth Smith made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees that it approve the amendment to Zoning Ordinance to incorporate Commercial Solar Energy Systems into the B-1, G-0, OW, I-1 and I-2 zoning with a special land use permit. Laurie Koelling seconded. Motion passed.

2. Consider and receive public comment on the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to change permitted principal uses in Industrial Districts adding plant based agricultural commodities and allowing the processing and manufacturing with plant based agricultural commodities. Beth Smith reported that the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees made changes the Planning Commission recommended at its April 5 meeting.

Beth Smith made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees that it approve the amendment to Zoning Ordinance to change permitted principal uses in Industrial Districts by adding plant based agricultural commodities and allowing the processing and manufacturing with plant base agricultural commodities. Laurie Koelling seconded. Motion passed.

3. Receive Residential Solar Energy Zoning Ordinance from Attorney Hitch. The Planning Commission concluded this amendment is ready for review by the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees and then for a public hearing to be scheduled.
4. Receive Event Barns Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment presented by Attorney Hitch.
 - a. In Event Barn definition, change “privation” to “private”
 - b. In Event Barn definition after private functions add “unrelated to primary agricultural purpose such as weddings or graduation parties”
 - c. In Table 3-2, Add footnote to Item 9 to add reference to Event Barn Licensing Ordinance
 - d. Section 3.10.a Change 15 acres to 10 acres
 - e. Section 3.10.b-e can be deleted as they are covered in the Event Barn Licensing Ordinance

The Planning Commission concluded that this amendment is ready for review by the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees and then for a public hearing to be scheduled.

5. Receive Events Barn Licensing Ordinance presented by Attorney Hitch
 - a. The benefits to a Licensing Ordinance are that it can regulate and it gives the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees more flexibility.
 - b. Licensing Ordinance will be handled by the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees.
 - c. All operations issues, i.e., hours of operations etc goes into Event Barn Licensing Ordinance.
 - d. In Event Barn Licensing Ordinance:
 - i. Add to Section 5.4.c The licensee can hold no more than 10 events in one calendar year.
 - ii. Add to Section 5.9
 1. Exterior lighting to be used in association with events shall comply with Section 9.4 except in no case shall such lighting, whether proposed or existing, exceed fifteen (15) feet in height about the ground below.
 2. Special Landscaping and/or screening measures intended to mitigate negative impacts of outdoor areas on adjacent lots and along adjacent public road corridors, including temporary restroom facility areas, parking areas, eating areas, entertainment areas and other places where attendees may gather.
 - e. Length of license will be three (3) years.
 - f. This ordinance will be enforced as any other ordinance.
 - g. The Township will need to develop an application form which outlines information required for consideration. The application process will include a public hearing by the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees.
 - h. If a property is sold, the license will need to be transferred to new owner
6. Receive Commercial Wind Energy Information presented by Attorney Hitch’
 - a. In regards to the existing Special Use Permit in the township, Attorney Hitch noted that the SUP has a clause that the SUP can be referred back to the Planning Commission for reconsideration.

- b. It was noted no substantial construction has occurred and that the property has been sold.
- c. Beth Smith noted that the Alaiedon Township Board of Trustees is interested in conducting joint workshop sessions where wind energy experts deliver informational sessions. Planning Commission members are to provide Beth Smith with names and contact information for wind energy experts who may be available to present.
- d. Attorney Hitch noted generally when it comes to ordinance regulations, the closer you stay to typical regulations the better off the township will be and minimize risk.
- e. Presentations from experts will take place prior to the Planning Commission working on amending the existing Wind Energy Ordinance.
- f. Kim Hafley will research PA116 and how it relates to wind energy farms
- g. Beth Smith confirmed the township has a 9-month moratorium on wind energy SUP applications.
- h. Planning Commission members noted there are No wind Turbine signs on Meridian Road.
- i. Chairman Oesterle suggested implementing a renewable energy zone. Attorney Hitch noted an overlay ordinance may be an option to pursue this.

Public Comment:

There was no additional public comment

Follow up:

- Matt Oesterle will send Wind Energy ordinances to Planning Commission members
- Planning Commission members to send names of possible wind energy experts to Beth Smith
- Matt Oesterle will communicate with Virginia Coffman to set up Public Hearing and Workshop meeting dates.
 - Planning Commission is ready to conduct public hearings for:
 - Vanderwey Special Use Permit
 - Event Barn Zoning Ordinance Amendment
 - Residential Solar Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Bill Schneider made a motion to adjourn. Barb Kranz seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Hafley, Secretary