Paw Paw Township
Planning Commission
Minutes
September 26, 2017

Chairman Peat called the Paw Paw Township Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. on September 26, 2017 at the Township Hall.


Absent: None.

Also present: Rebecca Harvey, Marilynn and Kevin Murphy, Bert Gale (Zoning Administrator) and Kelly Largent (Zoning Administrator).

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Kerby, supported by Olsen to approve the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes:

August 24, 2017: Motion by Kerby, supported by Olsen to approve the August 24, 2017 minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.

Public Comment:

Marilynn and Kevin Murphy of 36343 CR 358, Paw Paw, MI addressed the Planning Commission regarding Medical Marihuana. They asked if the Planning Commission thought about medical marihuana. They stated that Lawton is a positive, Benton Harbor and Buccannon are drafting articles. These communities are looking at the positive economics and feel that this could put tax dollars back into the community. The Murphy’s said that maybe this could help Paw Paw grow. Ms. Murphy stated she would like to get licenses for a processing center and a grow facility. She is located between Lawton and Paw Paw on CR358. LARA is still trying to get the requirements set. The Murphy’s are looking for Paw Paw to be proactive. Ms. Murphy is no long doing the equestrian center and would like to move this forward. She has talked to suppliers about pre-fab buildings.
Peat stated that Paw Paw Township has always tried to promote growth. We have been following this topic. The advice that the Township has been given is that it is still very early and the laws are still being worked out. We are waiting until we completely understand. We are not for it or against it; we are neutral for it at this time. We want to watch and understand but we feel it’s too early.

Sanders asked how many people would you hire. Ms. Murphy stated may be 18 to 25 people. Ms. Murphy didn’t know if there was a list of persons interested in establishing a facility. Sanders stated no, there is not a list. Olsen stated that some areas are taking names (a list) for this. Sanders stated it’s illegal at this time to operate a dispensary. Ms. Murphy stated that all of the ones operating have to shut down as she understands it. The people operating should not get ahead of us.

Kerby asked what do you want to do. Ms. Murphy stated operate a growing facility and processing center.

Peat thanked the Murphy’s. And stated that we don’t see us taking any action until things are clear.

Sanders stated the agenda will be accessible.

Olsen asked Ms. Largent to repeat the information she had received at a recent seminar she had attended. Ms. Largent stated there are changes going on in Lansing regarding licensing. LARA won’t take applications until December 15 and won’t issue any licenses until January. Also, all dispensaries will have to shut down by Dec 15th. The last information we received is that LARA will create a list of eligible applicants and disseminate this to the jurisdictions that will allow facilities or have opted in. The jurisdiction will then issue the license. Ms. Largent stated that this is still changing and recommended the Murphy’s keep checking with LARA for the latest information.

Ms. Murphy stated they had made a copy of the Bangor Township Ordinance. Bangor Township is located by Bay City. She will leave it with the Planning Commission.

Olsen stated that other states around us are not doing anything so Michigan will be prime for this and this will create a trafficking problem.

Arbanas stated Colorado is finding out that its costing more than they are making.

Ms. Murphy stated she thinks their location is a good place and thanked the Planning Commission.

NEW BUSINESS:
Rebecca Harvey addressed the Planning Commission regarding the update to the Zoning Ordinance.

Olsen asked Ms. Harvey to explain the zoning district in the new Master Plan. Ms. Harvey explained how the new proposed Master Plan correlates with the zoning ordinance. She is taking the implementation, goals, and objectives in the proposed Master Plan and applying them to the zoning ordinance. Ms. Harvey stated the Mixed-Use edge (Village Fringe) is an example. The Master Plan states “here is what we want”. When you go to the zoning list in the Master Plan the Township doesn’t have a zoning district for this so we have to use the current zoning districts which are the MDR, HDR, and MFR. Ms. Harvey said so let’s create the new Mixed-use district in the zoning ordinance.

Johnson stated so changing the zoning ordinance to match the Master Plan and so changes will go both ways. Ms. Harvey explained that once the new zoning district(s) is/are established then the Master Plan can be amended. So, after this zoning ordinance update, the Planning Commission will then review the Master Plan Zoning Ordinance list and amend this list.

Ms. Harvey reminded the Planning Commission that the zoning ordinance update would be in 6 different segments and tonight the Planning Commission is receiving the first segment. Ms. Harvey stated that the segments are not necessarily going to be received in the order that is outlined on page 2 paragraph C. Tonight, the Planning Commission is receiving segment 6 according to the segment list in paragraph C. This segment consists of the general procedures for the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Administrative Organization, and Severability. Segment 6 contains Articles 11, 12, and 13. She started with this segment because she wanted the Planning Commission to see how it looked and the Township Board had expressed an interest in this segment also. Ms. Harvey noted that there is nothing missing from the old ordinance in this new segment it may be reworded or formatted differently.

Kerby asked why change: is it format or content. Ms. Harvey explained that it is rewording and adding items. Ms. Harvey proceeded to highlight the information in this segment. She noted the following items:

- Site Plan review requirements: a couple of items have been added.
- Procedures: modified to use standard terminology mainly.
- Review and Final Action: this is a new section but explains how it is done (spelled out) for the user.
- Procedure after Site Plan Approval: this section spells out what this process is and expiration timeframes for the user.
- Modification to Approved Plan: contains the zoning administrator review process.
- Required Information on Site Plan: this is divided into 5 sections in order to clarify each component.
- Section 11.03 Variances and Appeals: sets forth the ZBA responsibilities.
• ZBA Findings: these are identified on page 17.
• Section 11.04 Amendments: procedures for rezoning and Zoning Ordinance changes. The Township Board is involved with this.
• Section 11.05 Conditional Rezoning: This is a new section. The Planning Commission needs to look at this section. It can be removed if the Township decides not to do this.
• Section 11.07 Fees: Establishes fees and provides for the set-up for escrow accounts.
• Article 12 Administrative Organization: Ms. Harvey noted that under Township Board actions subsection E needs to be changed.

Ms. Harvey stated that next month the Planning Commission will be receiving segment 2 Zoning Districts.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ms. Largent discussed the monthly schedule for Planning Commission meetings. The Planning Commission will need to determine meeting dates for November and December since the normal meeting date falls on a holiday. She reported to the Planning Commission that the Township Board is moving their meeting from the 2nd Thursday and this date will be available for the Planning Commission and this would also resolve the issue in November and December meetings on a holiday. The Chairman requested this item be put on the October agenda.

The Chairman provided an update on Palisades Nuclear Power Plan. There was a decision last Friday to grant Consumers Energy request with the condition that the 180 million be reduced to 142 million and Consumers Energy will have to make up the difference. The shutdown date is Nov 18 of next year.

The Chairman thanked Vice Chairman Kerby for handling the meeting last month and thanked the members. The Chairman explained his absence.

Next meeting Oct 26.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT: None
ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Kerby, supported by Arbanas to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 PM. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Largent
Zoning Administrator