Co-Chairman Kerby called the Paw Paw Township Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. on February 28, 2019 at the Township Hall.

PRESENT: Ivan Olsen, Kip Kerby, Fran Sanders, James Tapper, Phillip Arbanas, Bill Johnson, and Tom Palenick.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Rebecca Harvey (Planning Consultant) and Kelly Largent (Zoning Administrator).

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Kerby requested the agenda be amended to add Village of Paw Paw Street scape meetings under other.

Motion by Olsen, supported by Palenick to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January 28, 2019: Motion by Arbanas, supported by Olsen to approve the January 28, 2019 minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Solar Subcommittee.

The subcommittee met for the first time yesterday. The committee worked on identifying questions to be answered in order to develop text for the draft zoning ordinance. The committee has identified several resources to assist with this. Some of them are the MSU extension office, MSU webinars, and an upcoming MTA seminar.

Ms. Harvey commented the committee had lots of good conversation. They stated they recognize the Planning Commission’s support of individual solar panels and focused their attention on utility scale solar systems. The committee will focus on utility scale solar systems as a special
land use in the AGR and ARR zoning districts. Some of the topics of discussion for the subcommittee are the ordinance could direct development towards specific lands or let the market drive the development. Ms. Harvey stated utility scale solar systems should have some standards. The subcommittee has requested Ms. Harvey provide language to Mr. Sprague for his review and comment. The language will then be provided to the subcommittee.

The Chairman asked if there was a timeline for the language. Ms. Harvey stated that she will have text for the next meeting which is March 18th. The Chairman asked if the proposed text would be ready for the March Planning Commission meeting. Sanders stated she would like to attend a workshop the beginning of April before presenting text language to the Planning Commission. Sanders stated she has a concern about individual solar panels in the front yard. Ms. Harvey stated this could be done as a special land use for the location, lot coverage, and the height. Ms. Harvey will have draft text on March 18th for the subcommittee. She also stated that at this time the subcommittee could technically have a recommendation for the planning commission. But the committee could also wait until the seminar and then have a recommendation ready for the April planning commission meeting. Either avenue would be acceptable.

Zoning Map.

Ms. Harvey presented the changes to the map as an application of the new ordinance. Ms. Harvey pointed out the new zoning districts of village edge, neighborhood convenience commercial, and gateway PUD. Ms. Harvey directed the planning commission’s attention to the current general commercial zoning district which she has circled with a question mark by it. She stated the new ordinance does not contain a general commercial district. The planning commission discussed the following options: merging it into the NCC or HCI district, leaving the general commercial zoning district and add the language into the draft zoning ordinance, or insert the gateway PUD language for the west back into the draft zoning ordinance. Ms. Largent stated that this area was originally to be the gateway PUD west in the draft ordinance.

The Planning Commission discussed the types of businesses present in this area and the presence of single-family dwelling. The Planning Commission asked if language could be added to exempt single-family nonconforming buildings from the nonconforming language, since the dwellings in the current general commercial district would become nonconforming if this district remain. The Planning Commission also stated that other districts currently have the same issue and single-family residence owners are having difficulty with financing.

The Planning Commission asked Ms. Harvey what the process would be for the revisions to the zoning map. Ms. Harvey stated the zoning map would be updated and then the Planning Commission could schedule the Public Hearing for the draft zoning ordinance and map. She will need to know what changes need to be made to update the zoning map.

Palenick asked why not keep the general commercial since it is not reducing the number of districts by changing to the gateway PUD. Ms. Harvey suggested that she could rewrite the
current general commercial, insert the gateway PUD, or present both options to the Planning Commission.

Olsen stated that he believed that if they don’t need to change then don’t change it. The present zoning district is functional and there is no need to change.

The Chairman requested Ms. Harvey present both options at the next planning commission meeting. Ms. Harvey will rewrite the current general commercial district and then apply the rewrite and gateway PUD to the area after identifying businesses in the area and single-family dwellings to see which option fits this area the best.

Johnson inquired about extending the NCC zoning district on the South side of Red Arrow to the west to match the North side of the road. The Planning Commission discussed this and identified the types of businesses in this area.

Johnson also asked that the base map for 60th avenue on the east side of Lake Cora be updated.

The Chairman asked that the above changes be presented at the March meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:  None.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The Planning Commission discussed the Village of Paw Paw Street scape meetings to be held March 11th and 14th. The Street scape project is along Michigan between Gremps and LaGrave. The project is slated for 2021.

Next meeting is Mar 28th.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

Olsen stated excellent job to Kerby.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Olsen, supported by Tapper to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 PM. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Largent
Zoning Administrator