

MINUTES OF THE SPARTA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
Tuesday, November 14th 2017, 7 PM  
Sparta Township Hall, Sparta, Michigan

Present: Sparta Township Clerk Marcy Savage; Commissioners Linda Anderson, Tim Driscoll, Don Doyle, Terry Hartman (Chairman)  
Also present: Township Attorney Sub Jeff Sluggett, Sub Recording Secretary Bethany Riordan, and Sparta Township Supervisor & Zoning Administrator Dale Bergman  
Absent: Scott Bultman and Mark Vanderwerf

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7 PM by Chairman Terry Hartman.

II. Additions or Corrections to Agenda: None

III. Minutes of September 12, 2017: Added corrections to complete roll call vote. Motion by Doyle, seconded by Anderson to approve the Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Public Comment: None

V. Business Items

A. Medical Marijuana Ordinance - Jeff Sluggett informed the planning commission board about the new medical marijuana ordinance. About a year ago the state adopted a new licensing act expanding on the individuals who can be involved in the medical marijuana business and will be able to track those individuals and their licenses by early December. As of now, a caregiver with five patients can grow 72 plants (12 plants per patient). The new expansion would allow for a class A grower to have up to 500 plants, a class B grower to have up to 1,000 plants, and a class C grower to have up to 1,500 plants. Our community can opt in or out of this ordinance, but Sluggett suggests regardless of decision, it may be best to express this in the zoning ordinance of whether or not we will allow these facilities.

Doyle inquired about tax revenue from marijuana dispensaries. Sluggett clarified there is a 3% tax at every center per sale and the state distributes 3% amongst all communities in the state that are licensed. Hartman asked about the township's responsibilities and Sluggett confirmed that the state decides who to issue licenses to and does the background checks. The township decides if and what they will allow for their own ordinance. They may decide to require fencing or security systems if they were to pass the ordinance. Regardless, the township is only responsible for their own ordinance. The zoning administrator and sheriff's deputy enforce the rules decided upon in the ordinance. Sluggett suggests waiting on adopting the ordinance until we know all of the state's decisions/stance on the matter. Regardless if we pass the ordinance now or wait, the ordinance can be amended down the road if we wish to change anything.

Savage recommended passing the ordinance on to the township board because of amount of time and money spent on learning about the ordinance.

Motion made by Savage to recommend the marijuana ordinance to the township board.  
Seconded by Doyle. Motion carried.

B. Micro-Breweries/Distilleries – Dale Flannery was present for the meeting to ask for an amendment to our liquor ordinance to include micro-distilleries and micro-breweries in an AG1 district. Flannery informed the planning commission about state laws allowing no more than 60,000 barrels of beer to be produced a year. Flannery feels this amendment would be good for his business to have more to offer customers and to increase profits. Sluggett made suggestion to call and ask Tim Johnson to send a few sample ordinances to Dale Bergman to review regarding the issue. The planning commission is not opposed to micro-breweries/distilleries, but does want the township board to discuss putting a cap on the amount produced so it doesn't become too large of a brewery.

Sample special use permits will be received and reviewed prior to a tentative January 2018 planning commission meeting. Consensus of the board to look into allowing micro-breweries/distilleries.

VI. Adjournment: Motion by Doyle, seconded by Driscoll, to adjourn at 7:56 PM. Motion carried. The next meeting of the Sparta Township Planning Commission will be scheduled at a future date.

Respectfully submitted,  
—Bethany Riordan  
Substitute Recording Secretary