

Minutes of the Sparta Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting of September 22, 2020
Sparta Civic Center, 75 N. Union St., Sparta, MI

Present: Chairperson Terry Hartman, Commissioners Linda Anderson (via Zoom), Don Doyle, Tim Driscoll, Ken Humphreys, Mark VanderWerff, and Chad Momber

Also Present: Township Supervisor Bergman, Clerk Marcy Savage, Associate Planner Emma M. Posillico, AICP, of Fresh Coast Planning, Attorney Cliff Bloom of Bloom Sluggett, P.C., IT Host Ken Shangle and Recording Secretary Jan Redding

- I./II. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance: Chairperson Hartman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- III. Additions or Corrections to Agenda: Don Doyle apologized for meetings missed; Supervisor Bergman updated the Commissioners regarding creation of a subcommittee to review the proposal on the Hidden Prairie development. He also stated that Clerk Marcy Savage had resigned from the Planning Commission, and was replaced by Chad Momber on a temporary basis.
- IV. Minutes of July 14, 2020 Regular Meeting: motion by Doyle to approve minutes as presented. Second by Humphreys, motion carries.
Minutes of August 11, 2020 Regular Meeting: motion by Humphreys to approve minutes as presented. Second by Doyle, motion carries.
- V. Public Comment: None
- VI. Business Items
- A. Hidden Prairie Development:
- Attorney Bloom presented two opinion letters he had written for the Township Board. One was that the Township Board could remand to the Planning Commission authority to review the current proposal and make a recommendation regarding approval. The second was that no conflict of interest was found for Supervisor Bergman with the proposed development. A resolution to recommend approval or denial of the site plan for the development, as amended, was also presented, along with an ordinance amendment to rezone part of the property.
- Planner Posillico presented the changes proposed by the subcommittee.
- Mr. Bitely presented the changes made to the proposed development.
- Doyle commented that he feels the agreement is a good compromise.
- Driscoll commented that the proposal is not ideal, but is better than the original proposal.
- Public Comment: Five residents presented concerns regarding density of homes, water quality and run off, loss of rural character and community feel, and traffic safety. Mr. Bitely stated that what is being requested is only what is allowed by the current ordinance.
- Motion by Doyle to recommend the Township Board adopt the resolution for approval of the Hidden Prairie development, as amended. Second by Momber. Roll call votes- Anderson-no, Humphreys-no, Doyle-yes, Hartman-yes, VanderWerff-yes, Driscoll-yes, Momber-yes. Motion carries.

Motion by Doyle to recommend the Township Board adopt the ordinance amendment for rezoning, as presented. Second by Humphreys. Motion carries with unanimous roll call vote. Both items will be presented to the Township Board at their meeting on October 8, 2020.

B. Planning Commission By-laws

Motion by Doyle to approve the by-laws as presented. Second by Humphreys. Roll call votes: Doyle=yes, VanderWerff=no, Driscoll=no, Momber=no, Anderson=no, Humphreys=yes, Hartman=no.

There was discussion of Section 4C regarding the standard for passing a motion which requires a majority of the Planning Commission members instead of a majority of the quorum present.

Motion by VanderWerff to approve the by-laws with an amendment to Section 4C to read:

“A majority of the quorum present of the Planning Commission is required to pass a motion or adopt a resolution.”

Second by Driscoll. Motion carries with unanimous roll call vote.

Public Comment-

Mr. Bitely thanked the Planning Commission for their work on the Hidden Prairie development.

VII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:45

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Redding, Recording Secretary