

MINUTES OF THE SPARTA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting of November 10, 2020, 7 PM
Sparta Civic Center, 75 N. Union St., Sparta MI
& Virtual Via Zoom Media

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

Also Present: Township Supervisor Dale Bergman; Associate Planner Lindsay R. Mohr, MPA, of Fresh Coast Planning; Attorney Clifford H. Bloom of Bloom Sluggett, P.C. (via phone and Zoom); IT Host Ken Shangle; and Recording Secretary Toni Potes

I. / II. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman Hartman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Additions or Corrections to Agenda: None.

IV. Minutes of September 22, 2020, Regular Meeting: Motion by Momber, second by VanderWerff, to approve the Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Public Comment: The public may participate in the meeting through Zoom access by computer using the link <https://zoom.us/j/3220076269?pwd=YTJpeERmZzhObm9JcG9jb2Z5aU1JZz09>, Meeting ID: 322 007 6269, Passcode: OT4RgN: No public comment.

VI. Business Items

A. New Business

1. Public Hearing for Elite Apple Company LLC at 2755 10 Mile Road NW, Parcel #41-05-33-400-049. Amendment request to existing site plan and special use to install a stabilization lagoon system to improve wastewater handling for both the sanitary sewer and the apple wash water at the facility

Representing the petitioner, Rob Steffens gave some background on the situation. The septic was not sealed properly, among other issues like pumping ground water. A lagoon system was suggested. It wasn't Elite's choice; they are being mandated to install a lagoon system. The deadline has been pushed back three times. Steffens explained the lagoon installation process, benefits and issues being corrected.

Public Hearing opened at 7:08 PM

Cole Armbruster of 2577 10 Mile Road lives next door. His was concerned that since the work started in July, it did so without approval. Steffens was told by the DEQ/Health Department that this is how it will be done. But Armbruster was concerned that the cart was put before the horse without Township approval. It is

disheartening to him as a homeowner next door. He questioned why the meeting today; it's already on its way. Attorney Bloom stated the applicant proceeded at his own risk; if approved, then it was a good choice. But if not, they will go back to square one. Armbruster questioned the Township's guidelines as to location of the lagoon to residents: there are no Township guidelines. The State guidelines are followed. Armbruster read State guidelines, saying a lagoon is to be one-quarter mile away with a minimum of 800 feet. His yard is approximately 400 feet, and the Thome's, who could not be present tonight, are even closer. Attorney Bloom stated it is the State's decision. Armbruster read from the ordinance book. He is concerned about the smell and home market values. There may potentially be more sound, light and smell violations.

Commissioner Humphreys, of 2465 10 Mile Road, recused himself in order to comment. He has a farm next door. He objects to some of Mr. Armbruster's comments. He is happy to see the system go in to take care of the wastewater sewage. It is better for the neighbors. He is concerned with the current set up. He's happy and confident that this is a better way.

There apparently are three issues outstanding on this site, including overnight parking. They should be completed.

Public Hearing closed at 7:30 PM

Associate Planner Mohr reviewed with the Commissioners her Memorandum of November 3, 2020. It is recommended that if the Planning Commission approves the proposed amendment request, the Township engineer and Township fire department be satisfied with the proposed plans. It appears that the Special Use Standards and Site Plan Standards have been met. Motion by Momber, second by Anderson, to approve the amendment request to the existing site plan and special use to install a stabilization lagoon system conditional upon the Township engineer and fire department's approval of the plan dated October 8, 2020, the conditions of the Township planner and engineer have been met, compliance with all State requirements, compliance with all previous conditions required, and screening to be evaluated one year after completion. Roll call vote: Doyle, yea; Driscoll, yea; VanderWerff, yea; Momber, yea; Anderson, yea; Hartman, yea. Motion carried 6 to 0, with Humphreys abstaining. The Planning Commission will request a copy of the final plan from the State, as well as their requirements.

B. Old Business: None.

VII. Public Comment: None.

VIII. Adjournment: Motion by Driscoll, second by Anderson, to adjourn at 8:24 PM. Motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Sparta Township Planning Commission will be Tuesday, December 8, 2020, at 7 PM if needed.

Respectfully submitted,
—Toni Potes, Recording Secretary