

Laketon Township Planning Commission
November 10, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes – APPROVED 12/14/2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Bob Marine called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

ROLL CALL:

- Present: Dave Mieras, Eric Anderson, Suzanne Hayes, Paul Hoppa and Bob Marine.
- Absent: DJ Hilson and June Earhart with notice.
- Also present: Zoning Administrator Heidi Tice, Recording Secretary Veronica West, Township Supervisor Kim Arter, Consultant/Attorney Ron Bultje and a few local citizens.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Paul Hoppa moved to approve the agenda as presented. Dave Mieras supported the motion and the motion carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Eric Anderson moved to approve the regular monthly meeting minutes as presented. Paul Hoppa supported the motion. The motion carried by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: NONE

CORRESPONDENCE:

- **Recognition of the Marine Corps Birthday:** ZA H. Tice recognized the 247th Marine Corp Birthday is today 11/10/2022.
- **Zoning Permits Report (October 2022):** Summary report of numbers of different permits issued covering the month of October. ZA H. Tice did note that permits are starting to slow and work on many that were issued earlier in the year is being finished.
- **Solar Ordinance:** ZA H. Tice informed the members there currently is no solar ordinance in Laketon Township and the State building code does not cover solar and solar is starting to come into relevance. Members agreed it would be a good idea to gather some sample solar ordinances and begin to review them after the first of the year.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Mixed Use District - Witham Rd Corridor:** ZA H. Tice noted she had provided the draft mixed-use language to all members who acknowledged that had all looked at it. She suggested that perhaps the R3 residential language would be more appropriate than the R4 residential language as the R4 language would still leave some of these properties in a legal, non-conforming situation. She also noted that with the R3 residential planned unit residential developments and site condo developments would still be an option. Bob Marine commented he thought the goal was to keep the commercial uses, but address the existing residential uses and make it so they can improve and maintain their existing homes, not to encourage larger development. Eric Anderson suggested a couple of parcels that may need to be added to the list of suggested parcels to incorporate into the proposed mixed-use district; 1195 Witham Dr and an undeveloped parcel that has an expired PUD that is adjacent to the east boundary of the Sherwood Forest subdivision. ZA H. Tice noted the expired PUD has reverted to the original R3 zoning and the map just needs correcting. She added she didn't feel these should be included as it wouldn't be appropriate to have the commercial uses on this property immediately adjacent to the subdivision. There was additional discussion regarding whether to use the R3 residential language or the R4 residential language. ZA H. Tice read aloud from the zoning ordinance comparing and contrasting the R3 and R4 districts. Eric Anderson commented he would like more time to compare these two residential districts. Consultant/Attorney Ron Bultje commented that he can add in the R3 language with redlines in the existing R4 language so it can be seen the exact differences. He added he can have it ready for the public hearing and then after gathering the comments from the public at the public hearing, the PC can decide which version they wish to recommend to the Township Board. There was consensus to have Mr. Butler proceed with his suggestion. ZA H. Tice commented that she sees the differences being using R3 fixes it for the current residents and using the R4 fixes it for potential future residents and encourages more intense development.
- **Public Hearing:** After brief discussion of holding the public hearing within the regular December planning commission meeting, Dave Mieras moved to schedule a public hearing for the purpose of

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gathering public comment on the proposed mixed-use district along the Witham Rd corridor at 6:10 pm on Wednesday December 14, 2022 within the regular monthly planning commission meeting. Eric Anderson supported the motion. Roll call Vote – Voting in favor of the motion: Dave Mieras, Paul Hoppa, Eric Anderson, Suzanne Hayes and Bob Marine. Voting in opposition of the motion: None. Motion Carried. There was also brief discussion of the publication requirements; noting the following - 15 days minimum prior to the public hearing date, notices are not required to individual property owners as there are more than 11 contiguous parcels proposed to be rezoned and having the draft language available in the office.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Request funds from Twp Board to pay consultant fees:** ZA H. Tice informed the Board that she was not aware there weren't any funds earmarked for the planning commission budget for legal fees. Legal fees are within the general fund budget and the PC must request those funds from the Township Board. She suggested requesting up to \$2,000 for the payment of consultant fees for the mixed-use zoning district language currently being drafted. Paul Hoppa moved to request up to \$2,000.00 from the township board for the payment of consultant fees to draft language for a mixed-use zoning district. Dave Mieras supported the motion. Roll Call vote – Voting in favor of the motion: Paul Hoppa, Suzanne Hayes, Dave Mieras, Eric Anderson and Bob Marine. Voting against the motion: None. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- One gentleman who declined to give his name and address stated he could not see or hear which parcels are subject to change and what changes are being proposed. ZA H. Tice showed him the map and which parcels along Witham Rd are being considered for rezoning to this proposed mixed-use district incorporating some commercial and some residential uses.

BOARD REPORTS:

- **Board of Trustees:** Eric Anderson reported the Board will be voting on the 100-foot major street setback changes at their next meeting on Thursday 11/17/2022.
- **Zoning Board of Appeals** – NONE/No activity to report.

ADJOURNMENT:

- Eric Anderson moved to adjourn. Dave Mieras supported the motion. The motion carried and the adjournment occurred at 6:43 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Veronica West
Recording Secretary