**MORTON TOWNSHIP**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING – October 19, 2022**

Call to Order at 5:29 P.M. by Jeff Cross

Pledge of Allegiance by all

Members Present: Jeff Cross, Jeff Ratledge, Larry Lenon, Travis Kizer, Karen McKenzie

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Cory Zandstra - Zoning Administrator, Jill Charron - Recording Secretary

List of Public present: Eric Smith

Approval of Minutes from September 21 2022, Regular Meeting

**Motion** **by:** Travis Kizer

To approve the September 21, 2022 Regular Meeting minutes as corrected: delete “senior center” and replace with “apartments”

**2nd by:** Larry Lenon

Vote: 4 ayes 0 Nays 0 Absent 1 Abstain Moton Carried

**New Business:**

1. New Roles within Planning Commission

Chairman:

**Motion by**: Jeff Ratledge **2nd by:** Travis Kizer

To elect Jeff Cross to Chairman of the Planning Commission.

Vote: 4 ayes 0 Nays 0 Absent 1 Abstain Moton Carried

Vice-Chairman:

**Motion by:** Jeff Cross **2nd by:** Jeff Ratledge

To elect Larry Lenon to Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission.

Vote: 4 ayes 0 Nays 0 Absent 1 Abstain Moton Carried

1. Welcome to Karen McKenzie
2. Language in Section 6.3 Subsection 2 – when is class B site plan needed?  
   Suggested additional statement:  
   *“In instances where substantially identical structures with substantially identical intended uses are to be constructed on already developed properties where class B site plans have previously been provided and approved, need not come before the Planning Commission but can be approved by the Zoning Ordinance Administrator provided all Morton Township requirements have been met.”*

Discussion points:  
1. The word “identical” could be problematic.

2. Are we unintentionally grandfathering in any previous structures?

**Motion by:** Larry Lenon  
To table discussion until future public hearing date where multiple ordinance changes can be addressed altogether.  
**2nd by:** Jeff Ratledge   
All in favor. Motion Carried.

**Old Business:**

1. Roadside Stands: traffic/parking issues

Suggested additional statement:

*“The intent and purpose is to protect and further the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Morton Township, Mecosta County, Michigan. Roadside stand means a temporary, seasonal, or year-round structure (not considered real property) operated for the purpose of selling produce grown or produced on the same premises by the proprietor of the roadside stand or the proprietor’s immediate family. Other roadside stands are permitted in agricultural districts or commercial properties and their use shall not make the parcel into a commercial district. A roadside stand, associated structure(s), signage, and required off-street parking must be located and set back in such a manner so as not to create a traffic hazard and not to encroach upon or interfere with the roadway right-of-way, Non-conforming roadside stands are not permitted.”*

Discussion points:  
 1. Page 49 of Zoning Ordinance: Off Street Parking Requirements – it does not list roadside stands.

2. If we wanted to address the parking issue we could say, “as determined by the township official.” It is somewhat arbitrary, but it is sufficient to alleviate parking on the roadway or right of way.

3. Would this effect any of the current vendors? i.e. Smackies Ribs, Snyder’s,etc.

**Motion by:** Travis Kizer  
To table discussion until future public hearing date where multiple ordinance changes can be addressed altogether.  
**2nd by:** Jeff Ratledge   
All in favor. Motion Carried.

1. Update Master Plan

We have the new census data that would make it opportune to update the Master plan.

Potential Procedural Route (in no order):

1. Identify which items pertain to census data.
2. Hold a public hearing before forming a draft.
3. See if there is a company that will help us.
4. Reach out to Mecosta Township to see their procedures.
5. Need current copies of master plan.

**Citizen Remarks:**

Eric Smith suggested for the roadside stand parking issue: take the sq footage of the stand and have so many parking spaces per that.

Eric Smith asked to meet with someone about permaculture issues. He is a permaculturalist. He has put together designs for home sites to be ecologically functioning and energy efficient.

Jeff Cross encouraged Eric to take part in any public hearing we have to update the Master Plan to discuss permaculture.

Jeff Ratledge suggested to speak with our Clerk to setup a meeting or informational class.

**Reports:**

Building Department (Cory Zandstra)

1. The old Denslow’s Market is gone.  
   Blue Lake Tavern is demoed.   
   Served 2nd ticket on Carriage Lane; next month I will go with Law enforcement.
2. Everything around BLT commercial-wise is sold. No more commercial land available.
3. Killkenny – she was going hard for 4 days and now she will not return calls.
4. The new gas station at the former Denslow’s market location will begin new construction and should be starting within about a month.
5. Pizza Vibes – intention is to get with lenders to get financing to continue renovating.

Board of Trustees (Jeff Ratledge)

1. Special land use permits get reviewed by PC and approved by the board.
2. Looking for more 40 / 60 / 80 acre parcels to purchase. We have 2 potential parcels we are looking at.
3. There are online classes that we can attend, especially for new members. We do have money in the budget for education opportunities.
4. Morton Township needs communication from village.

**Correspondence:** None

**Adjourn Regular Meeting:**

**Motion** by: Travis Kizer

To Adjourn regular meeting

2nd by: Karen McKenzie

Vote: 5 Ayes 0 Nays 0 Absent Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned 7:16 P.M.