**MORTON TOWNSHIP**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING – December 14, 2022**

Call to Order at 5:31 P.M. by Jeff Cross

Pledge of Allegiance by all

Members Present: Jeff Cross, Jeff Ratledge, Karen McKenzie

Others Present: Cory Zandstra – Building/Zoning Official, Jill Charron - Recording Secretary, Gary Moore - Intern

List of Public Present: Patrick Carr, Kim Carr, Sandy Brogan, Jeff Snyder, David Lewis

Approval of Minutes from November 16, 2022, Regular Meeting, as written.

Motion by: Karen McKenzie

2nd by: Jeff Ratledge

Vote: 3 ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstain Motion Carried

**New Business:**

1. Class B Site Plan Definition

**Open Public Hearing: 5:32 p.m.**

Public Comments:

Mr. Lewis voiced concern about changing the wording for Site B Class Plans. He discussed how the Planning Commission is to provide oversight of the Zoning Administrator and to make sure he /she is not unduly influenced. The new wording is conflicting by saying “substantially identical” and once the wording is changed, it is changed forever.

**Close Public Hearing: 5:45 p.m.**

Discussion:

1. This is a living document and can be revised as needed.
2. We are to trust that the Zoning Administrator is to review and make sure everything meets requirements.
3. Property owners are having to pay for public hearings, etc. to build an exact same building that has already been approved by the Planning Commission.
4. The “substantially identical” would refer to something like changing the color of the building or putting a difference door on.
5. The purpose is to streamline and make the process more efficient for the township.

Motion to recommend to the Morton Township Board of Trustees to approve/deny the Class B Site Plan as presented: “*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.”*

Motion by Jeff Ratledge, 2nd by Karen McKenzie

Vote: 3 ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstain Motion Carried

1. Roadside Stand Definition

**Open Public Hearing: 5:57 p.m.**

Public Comments:

Mr. Carr thanked the Planning Commission for their efforts to continue to provide residents with produce stands and is hopeful that the deliberation allows his family to continue to operate in Morton Township.

Mr. Snyder showed concern for his stand on Buchanan, noting that there have been no accidents.

[6:05 p.m. – 6:10 p.m. short recess to validate information about the property across the street from where Mr. Snyder was operating to determine if it would conform with the new Roadside Stand requirements. Property was confirmed Agricultural, and if Mr. Snyder could provide adequate parking, that spot would be OK.]

**Close Public Hearing: 6:14 p.m.**

Discussion:

1. If the ordinance remains unchanged, Mr. Snyder would still be in violation where the current stand is.

Motion to recommend to the Morton Township Board of Trustees to approve/deny the Roadside Stand Definition as presented: “*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.”*

Motion by Karen McKenzie, 2nd by Jeff Ratledge

Vote: 3 ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstain Motion Carried

1. Addition of Roadside Stand Parking

**Open Public Hearing: 6:15 p.m.**

Public Comments: None

**Close Public Hearing: 6:16 p.m.**

Discussion:

1. There is an off-street section in the ordinance, and every commercial business has parking requirements, except Roadside Stands.
2. There would be a minimum of 3 parking spaces for a roadside stand and that would increase with the size if the building, just like everything else in that section.

Motion to recommend to the Morton Township Board of Trustees to approve/deny the Roadside Stand Parking Addition as presented: “*One parking space required per every 150 square foot of floor space and outdoor sales space with a minimum of 3 parking spaces.”*

Motion by Karen McKenzie, 2nd by Jeff Ratledge

Vote: 3 ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstain Motion Carried

**Old Business:**

1. Master Plan Update:
2. Jeff Cross spoke with Jason Ball from the Rowe Group about updating the Master Plan. Jason recommended a complete review of the plan since it was originally written in 2004. Review would be $3,000 - $4,000 and a comprehensive review would be around $12,000. His consulting firm would be available to start in the spring of 2023.
3. Morton Township needs to finish sourcing bids before a decision can be made.
4. Next meeting – address how we would like to proceed with the Master Plan.

**Citizen Remarks:** None

**Reports:**

Building Department (Cory Zandstra):

1. Carriage Lane: Sent 3rd citation. Local sheriff was in attendance for the second time. Requested a formal hearing to get that property cleaned up.
2. 9020 11 Mile: Foundation is in or the new gas station store. Waiting on site plans to start construction. I issued a foundation permit only. Owner wanted different contractors to do each trade / piece of the building.

Board of Trustees (Jeff Ratledge):

1. Still in negotiating stage on any properties we want to obtain.
2. There is someone possibly interested in the property to the south of The Recycling Center. The parcel has a large dip in it and was always assumed that it would just be a water retention parcel. Industrial Park is full aside from this one lot.
3. Fence at the Township Hall is almost completed. Gazebo is moved to park.

**Correspondence:** None

**Adjourn Regular Meeting:**

Motion by: Jeff Ratledge

2nd by: Karen McKenzie

Vote: 3 Ayes 0 Nays Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned 6:39 P.M.