

2

ESCANABA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION AUGUST 3, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

HELD AT THE ESCANABA TOWNSHIP HALL 4618 COUNTY 416 20TH RD GLADSTONE MI 49837

15 PARTICIPANTS

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Dean VanLoon at 7:33 pm followed by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance

Verbal Roll Call: Present Theresa Norton, Larry Klope, Theresa Chenier, Renee Richer, Norm Fleury Dean VanLoon.
Absent. Greg Faust, Excused.

Note: Planning Commission meeting that was scheduled for July 19, 2021 was cancelled by order of Chairperson, VanLoon in respect for the funeral of Dale Richer. Renee Richer's father and longtime prominent and respected resident of Flat Rock.

A motion to approve and accept the July 6, 2021 meeting minutes as written was made by Theresa Chenier. Second by Norm F. Verbal vote: TheresaN YES TheresaC YES ReneeR YES NormF YES DeanV YES. Larry Klope abstained since he was not present at the July 6, 2021 meeting. Motion passed.

Agenda addition made by Chairperson, VanLoon to add under New Business: A proposed roof line change to the Rod&Gun Club

No public Comment pertaining to the Agenda.

A motion to approve and accept the Agenda with addition was made by Theresa N. Second by Renee Richer. Verbal Vote: TheresaN YES TheresaC YES Renee Richer YES NormF YES LarryK YES DeanV YES. Motion to approve agenda passed.

Zoning Administrator's Report and Blight Update: Six building permits were presented for review. The Law office of Swift-Foster has the continued blight concern of LaBumbard property under review.

Theresa Chenier, Board Liaison gave monthly report of items the Board discussed: Larry Klope was appointed to the Planning Commission and he accepted. Approved ~~donation~~ ^{contract} to the Gladstone Library, which is a service to all Escanaba Township residents. Bob Barron commented he will be moving forward with utility solar in the township. Lake Bluff property purchase still being discussed. UPSET is requesting a ~~donation~~ ^{contract}. There will be research into how other townships are donating. FEMA flood stages were discussed. The Board is looking into a new sound system for the hall. Lock was changed on the office door. Changing the office door out to a security metal door may be in the future. New red fire number signs are in process. Fred Knauf repaired the township tractor. The flashing caution light was repaired. There will be an MTA seminar at the Island Casino in Harris, MI on Mon Sept 13 and Tues Sept 14, 2021. Atty Terry Burkhart will be a speaker. If any Planning Commission members would like to attend, please contact Kim or Pat. There is a registration form to complete in the hand- out provided, if you are interested.

Dottie LaJoie with CUPPAD joined our meeting once again to continue discussions pertaining to the Future Land Use Map the Planning Commission is in the midst of completing. The Future Land Use Map is a required document for the township to have with consideration how it is addressed using the Master Plan. She is looking for notes & thoughts from members and she will help compile the information. Dean said we will categorize the zoning districts for the Future Land Use Maps by combining all residential, all industrial, all agriculture and all commercial into those categories. What would the expansion needs be? What is important to the residents?. If Solar is something for our future, questions to answer could be: Where, What problems it can create, Will the land stay in AG? What benefits are there to the township?

ReneeR: An option to consider is looking into smaller scale value added businesses and how they are a benefit. Such as, smaller farms with other activities and private land camping. The population is stagnant in our area but people are looking for smaller scale farmland to purchase. The township has great strengths with fantastic natural resources that can be taken advantage of and still maintain the integrity of the area.

TheresaN added we are a prime Ag tourism area for apple orchards, wineries, farm activities, etc. She feels broadband internet would be a very valuable added asset to the area. She spoke with City of Gladstone Water Superintendent regarding city sewer and water in the township. Our Master Plan states there is none but the eastern end of the township does have some properties partaking in the city utilities.

There is 6000 miles of fiber optic for fast speed internet currently being installed in the area using the Rural Opportunity Fund to connect homes in the U.P. Completion is expected within the next 3 years. This is a benefit for developing home based businesses giving people the ability to move to the rural areas.

LarryK stated that properties east of the Escanaba River have more options because of soil base. The center section could be difficult because of the bedrock. The township also has a large volume of wetlands and agriculture lands that needs to be taken into consideration for the Future Land Use Map. He would like to see a map showing gravel pits, quarries, forest locations to review if there may be resources we haven't developed.

TheresaC said 56% of the township is forest/natural resources. Other future developments to consider also are town hall, utility infrastructure and more commercial lands.

Dean addressed the members that he would like to concentrate and focus on completing a Future Land Use Map together with the Master Plan as the guide and input from residents.

Dottie Lajoie said she attended the Delta County Planning Commission meeting tonight and from what she gathered they are considering 4 different development sizes of in their solar ordinance. Possibly to go along ATC lines 3 miles out and stopping at Federal Forest lands. They are taking action Sept 15, 2021. September 18, 2021 for Public review and October 4, 2021 for a Public Hearing. After that it is 45 days before it can be adopted.

The Rod and Gun Club presented a detailed drawing of a new cosmetic/modified roof design that will extend out further on the south side. This should help to also keep sound contained. *The Board approval of design as drawn was passed.* Adopting a Fence Ordinance was discussed. The members reviewed copies of other township's fence ordinances to review as examples to discuss on how to lay out what is important to our township. He asked members to make notes to discuss at the next meeting on August 16, 2021. Breaking it into 3 sections residential, agriculture, and commercial. NormF stated he is not sure if we need a fence ordinance and it could be hard to enforce.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Fred Minor stated he has turned in zoning complaint forms previously and has not received any response yet.

Motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. was made by Larry K. Second by ReneeR. Verbal vote: TheresaN YES LarryK YES TheresaC YES ReneeR YES NormF YES DeanV YES. Motion passed to adjourn.

The next meeting of the Escanaba Planning Commission is scheduled for August 16, 2021 7:30 p.m. at the Escanaba Township Hall 4618 County 416 20th Rd Gladstone, MI 49837.

If you need any assistance to attend a Planning Commission meeting please contact

Cathy Cullton at cathyculliton@gmail.com 906-280-6182.

Minutes prepared by Cathy Culliton, Recording Secretary

Approved w/ changes Aug 16, 2021