

EUREKA CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 19, 2009

Chairman Duane Putnam called the August 19, 2009 regular meeting of the Eureka Charter Township Planning Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. Roll call found Putnam and Commissioners Michael Blanding, Shawn Decker, Lee Gilman, Candace Larkin, Rodney Roy and Joyce Sage present. Thomas Faussett, Township Planning Advisor, and Laura Shears, Township Supervisor, were present as well as three audience members.

Minutes of the July 15, 2009 regular meeting were reviewed. Motion by Decker, supported by Gilman, to approve the minutes as submitted, motion carried.

There were no public comments during the time set aside for comments on non-agenda items.

At 7:05 p.m., Putnam opened a Public Hearing to receive input on amending Section 3.8 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow accessory buildings on vacant parcels prior to construction of a principal residence on the parcel. Putnam pointed out that the proposed change includes four stipulations: 1) Permits for the principal residence would have been issued; 2) The foundation for the residence would have been completed; 3) A site plan showing the location of the residence on the parcel would be filed with the Zoning Administrator; and 4) the residence would have to be completed within two years from the permit issuance date. Gene and Holly Noble, 612 W. Liberty Street in Belding, asked for clarification of the change and how this would benefit property owners. Putnam pointed out that until now, accessory buildings were not allowed on vacant property unless the property contained a bona fide farming operation. He said this would allow people to purchase and store building materials in preparation for home construction. Dennis Craycraft, 11696 S. Youngman Road, explained that he would like to give a portion of his property to the Nobles, Holly Noble being his daughter, but since the parcel already has an accessory building on it he hasn't been able to split that portion. Putnam and Faussett agreed that the new language would alleviate this problem. Mrs. Noble, as a future resident of the township, asked to go on record as being in favor of the proposed change. The Public Hearing was closed at 7:30 p.m.

Commissioners discussed the proposed Zoning Ordinance change. Blanding felt that it was too limited; since banks will often require construction within eight months, this won't help many people. He did agree, however, that any change in this direction is an improvement. Faussett reminded the Planning Commission that he would have to institute a civil infraction for anyone who doesn't begin home construction in the allotted time. Shears said that the county's building permits are only good for one year, but Faussett said they would extend the time if progress were being made. Motion by Gilman to recommend to the Township Board that Section 3-8, Subsection B of the Zoning Ordinance be amended to add #5 to allow accessory buildings on vacant property with the four stipulations,

supported by Roy. (After further discussion, Gilman called the question and this was agreed.) Motion carried 6-1.

The subcommittee assigned to draft an Alternative Energy Ordinance has not met; a meeting was set for Thursday, September 10, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Hall. Gilman, Larkin, Putnam and Roy are serving on the subcommittee.

The Commission continued its discussion of the Waterfront District. Faussett said the Assessor Linda Miller has suggested that all bodies of water should be named and recommends that wetlands not be considered bodies of water. Faussett suggested that the Waterfront Residential District (WR) be eliminated and that waterfront designations should be applied in all zoning districts. He distributed a draft of Waterfront Property Standards that would be incorporated into Chapter 3, General Standards, in the Zoning Ordinance as Section 3.27. Faussett will talk to Mark Eidelson of LandPlan, Inc. to ask that this change be incorporated into the revised Master Plan.

Commissioners reviewed the first complete draft of the updated Master Plan. Some needed corrections were pointed out and some questions arose as a result of April 25th and July 29th letters from Eidelson. Faussett will communicate with Eidelson to make the needed corrections and get answers to the questions. During the course of this discussion it was suggested that three references in Chapter 5 of the new Master Plan would be useful clarifications in the Definitions section (Chapter 2) of the Zoning Ordinance. Motion by Blanding, supported by Decker to hold a Public Hearing at the September 16, 2009 regular meeting on adding the following to Chapter 2:

Section 2.16 DEFINITIONS - P

PLATTED SUBDIVISION - Residential development comprised entirely (or nearly entirely) of privately owned lots.

Section 2.18 DEFINITIONS - S

SITE CONDOMINIUMS - Residential developments comprised of privately owned or rented building envelopes where there are no traditional lot lines and substantial portions of the subdivision are commonly owned.

SPECIAL LAND USES - Uses that are generally accepted as reasonable compatible with the primary uses and structures within a district.

Motion carried.

Faussett showed Commissioners the updated maps he has received from the county. Some corrections still need to be made. The Zoning Map will have to be changed if pending WR changes are made in the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Faussett will continue to work with the county on accuracy of the maps.

Committee reports were given as follows:

- Annexation Committee - Faussett reported that Wal-Mart's attorneys petitioned the Boundary Commission to have the annexation finalized and the petition was denied. The annexation can be adopted by Resolution of both Boards.
- Township Board - Roy reported that the Board received a \$30,000 unanticipated payment from the City of Greenville. Shaner Nurseries was hired at \$2,900 for the township hall landscaping project. The Board approved sending Shears and Clerk Linda Ruwersma to a legislative conference in Washington, DC in September. Budget line item adjustments have been made to various accounts. Two ordinances, Lot Line Adjustments and Liquor Licenses, were both numbered #78. One will become #78-A and the other #78-B to avoid confusion. Wal-Mart has petitioned the County Drain Commissioner to removed their outlots from the township drain assessment roll.
- Roads Committee - Blanding reported that KBH Builders is requesting Johnson Road to be paved. KBH will soon make its final installment payment on that project.
- Zoning Board of Appeals - No report.

Items for discussion at the September 16, 2009 meeting:

- Public Hearing on amending Sections 2.16 and 2.18 (Definitions).
- Further discussion of elimination of the WR District.
- Report on alternative energy/wind generation ordinance from the subcommittee.
- Finalizing the revised Master Plan.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Candace W. Larkin,
Planning Commission Secretary