

EUREKA CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
April 15, 2009

Chairman Duane Putnam called the April 15, 2009 regular meeting of the Eureka Charter Township Planning Commission to order at 7:03 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, was also present. There were seven audience members in attendance.

Minutes of the March 18, 2009 regular meeting were reviewed. Motion by Gilman, supported by Blanding, to approve the minutes as submitted, motion carried.

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

At 7:06 p.m., Putnam opened a Public Hearing to receive comments on issuing a Special Land Use Permit to the Greenville Family Worship Center operating at 6540 S. Greenville Road. Putnam explained that the church is using a building in a General Commercial Zoning District and that requires application for a Special Land Use Permit. Faussett said that the county Building Department performed a code review of the property and issued an occupancy permit for the front portion of the building only; the capacity limit is 49 people. Pastor Terry VanDonkelaar gave the Commission a copy of a letter from G-Tech Cars, located next the building being used by the church, giving permission for the church to use their lot for overflow parking. In addition, VanDonkelaar said that the back of his building is accessible through G-Tech's access drive. VanDonkelaar also provided conceptual drawings of the layout of the church when it is using the whole building. He said that church members intend to clean up the back of the property so it can be used for church picnics and other activities. It would be possible to make an entrance to the back of the property at the truck well on the side of the building; this would require the drain field to be moved. If the church grows and needs to utilize the back of the building, VanDonkelaar said that another bathroom and sprinkling and heating systems would have to be installed. He said that the barrels back of the building have been removed. Faussett said that one parking space would be required for each three people (or 16 for the current capacity). He said there are currently 10-12 parking spaces. Randy Beard, 435 S. Burgess Lake Road, asked if the church had purchased the building and what would be the tax consequences. VanDonkelaar said they had bought the building, so there are no taxes levied. Beard expressed concern about losing tax base in commercial areas. Jeff Smith, owner of Jorgie's and the BP gas station, 6403 S. Greenville Road, said that he needs a liquor license for the new Jorgie's store and understood that he could not obtain the license if within 500 feet of a church. Faussett and Putnam both stated that they understood that if the church had no objections to the liquor license, this would not be a problem. VanDonkelaar stated that the church had no objection to the liquor license being issued. Putnam closed the Public Hearing at 7:21 p.m.

Commissioners discussed the request for a Special Land Use Permit. Blanding felt that the church needs to fill in the truck well and provide its own parking facilities and should submit a letter stating that they do not object to Jorgie's liquor license. VanDonkelaar said that he also owns a tool and die shop in Muskegon; as a businessman, he would like to retain the truck well as a selling point in case the church grows and they move to another building. Decker questioned the church being able to make the large capital investment necessary for such a small congregation. Motion by Gilman to issue a Special Land Use Permit to Greenville Family Worship Center contingent upon the following: 1) Receipt of a letter from the church stating they do not have an objection to Jorgie's application for a liquor license; 2) Clarification from the Liquor Commission that the church's location will not affect Jorgie's ability to obtain the license; and 3) A requirement that the site must be brought up to code when occupancy reaches more than 49 people. Supported by Roy, motion carried. Faussett will contact Liquor Control regarding the liquor license and will send a letter with his findings to Jorgie's with a copy to the church.

Faussett said that he and Assessor Linda Miller met with the county Equalization Director regarding inventory maps for the township, as requested by Mark Eidelson for inclusion in the Master Plan. The Township Board approved a \$1,100 software purchase for Faussett and he has requested sets of four maps (zoning, road map, wetlands and current use) from the county for \$15 each. The maps will be 18" x 24" and the zoning map will be color-coded. Faussett demonstrated some of the software capabilities.

Putnam suggested that the Planning Commission must begin formulating an ordinance addressing wind generation and alternative energy. Faussett said he has had calls about wind generators and has cited the height and setback requirements in the Zoning Ordinance (35 feet in height, 10 feet from lot lines). No sound limits have been set by the township. Other issues to be reviewed would be setbacks and decommissioning. Two documents, a model ordinance from Ottawa County and a PowerPoint presentation on Planning and Zoning for Alternative Energy, were reviewed. Putnam asked Commissioners to read both documents in full and to be ready to discuss this topic at the May meeting.

Putnam and Decker gave a synopsis of a Lakes and Streams seminar they attended that was presented by the MSU Extension. Decker said one important thing he got from the meeting was the necessity for a vegetation buffer between a body of water and a land use to keep the water clean. Putnam said that reforestation for runoff control is important as are retention ponds and holding basins. He said that Eureka Township has been careful to require these features when approving building projects. An attorney presenting at the seminar said that the township could regulate anything that could create a conflict including length of docks, flotation devices, etc.

Commissioners reviewed drafts of Chapters 3 (Future Land Use Strategy) and 4 (Public Services Strategy) of the updated Master Plan as submitted by Mark Eidelson of LandPlan,

Inc. Suggested corrections were made and Faussett will forward them to Eidelson. Commissioners discussed the sharing of public utilities without annexation; about 15 properties in the township have city sewer service and 30 properties at Baldwin Lake have city water service.

Faussett reported that Sackett Potato Storage off Wise Road and North M-91 is adding an addition to their building; it was not necessary for them to come before the Planning Commission since a Special Land Use permit was already approved for the storage facility.

Committee reports were given as follows:

- Annexation Committee - No report.
- Township Board - Roy reported that the Township Board removed Chapter 18 (Home-Based Businesses) from the Zoning Ordinance and will make it a separate regulatory ordinance. The Board will hold a Public Hearing in May to get comment on removing permit and fee requirements from the HBB ordinance. The Board adopted a policy for rental of the township hall and a policy stating that people serving on committees will not be paid for their time; mileage more than 30 miles from the township will be paid. Other policies are being reviewed. Some 2009 road contracts were signed and more are coming.
- Building Committee - Roy said that Dan Kent is to be finished with all work on the township hall by May 15, 2009.
- Drain Committee - No report.
- Roads Committee - Blanding will be meeting with Supervisor Shears and Mark Christensen of the Montcalm County Road Commission to review paving contracts.
- Zoning Board of Appeals - No report.

Items for discussion at the May 20, 2009 meeting:

- Discussion of an alternative energy/wind generation ordinance.
- Chapter 5 of the revised Master Plan if received from Mark Eidelson
- Discussion about allowing accessory buildings on vacant land.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Candace W. Larkin,
Planning Commission Secretary