

**PAW PAW TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting – June 18, 2024**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairman Kerby called the Paw Paw Township Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Kip Kerby, Phil Hover, Mark Root, Phillip Arbanas, Fran Sanders, Chad Learned

**ABSENT:** Chuck Felcyn

**ALSO PRESENT:** David Jirousek of Horizon Community Planning

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

A motion was offered by Root to approve the agenda with the addition of a Board update. The motion was supported by Hover.

- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0)
- Aye: Chairman Kerby, Root, Hover, Arbanas, Sanders, Learned
- Nay: none
- Abstain: none

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was offered by Learned to approve the minutes from the meeting held on May 21, 2024, as presented. The motion was supported by Arbanas.

- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0)
- Aye: Chairman Kerby, Root, Hover, Arbanas, Sanders, Learned
- Nay: none
- Abstain: none

## 5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- None

## 6. BUSINESS

### a. Annual Reviews: Marihuana businesses

Deputy Supervisor Mark Root summarized the annual report for several marihuana businesses. There were no significant complaints or concerns, and issues were resolved as they arose.

### b. Master Plan: Review/discussion.

Jirousek provided a general overview of his thoughts and comments concerning the existing master plan, and several recommendations from that report were outlined. Jirousek mentioned that the Township has secured funds through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's Housing Readiness Incentive Grant Program for activities related to increasing housing supply and affordability.

The report suggested strategies for public involvement, such as open house events, community surveys, stakeholder interviews, and roundtable discussions. It highlighted the importance of mapping, including existing land use, natural resources, elevation/floodplains, and prime farmland. The report also emphasized the need for balance between preservation and development, particularly in relation to farmland and rural character preservation. It suggested refining existing visions and strategies, simplifying the plan, and including reasonable and attainable goals and implementation actions.

The report also discussed various chapters of the Master Plan, including the overview, community snapshot, planning framework, planning principles, and future land use. It provided recommendations for each chapter, such as refining planning values and strategies and reassessing and designating future land use categories. The report concluded by suggesting that each section should be tied more directly to action steps or policy and that goals and planning principles should be itemized at the end of each topic-area chapter.

The group felt that there should be at least four subcommittees, including environmental, farming, housing, and utilities. The group felt that Felcyn may be the best to lead the farming group and Chad Learned volunteered to chair the environmental group. The utilities group would be a group of Village and Township officials, rather than the general public.

The group felt that the survey time frame should be moved forward to the summer months, which could occur prior to in-person public involvement opportunities. Near-term action items included the following:

1. Prepare a draft survey for Planning Commission review in July
2. Establish a website for the project
3. Establish committees with chairperson leadership, and assess what other options there would be to invite other interested parties that we may not know about
4. Prepare a final budget and scope

**c. Zoning Ordinance Amendments.** Sign Regulations.

Jirousek generally explained the proposal to revise and clarify requirements for freestanding and wall signs, including, but not limited to, the maximum number, maximum height, maximum size, minimum setbacks, and illumination. The Planning Commission was supportive of the report's recommendations and asked that the public hearing be set for July 16<sup>th</sup>.

**d. Zoning Ordinance Amendments:** Solar Regulations Discussion.

Jirousek recommended that the Planning Commission use a template for solar regulations that was developed by several experts in the state of Michigan. He mentioned that certain requirements may not be applicable, and certain requirements may be carried over from the existing ordinance. There was also discussion about baseline soil testing as a prerequisite to construction so that soil restoration could be included as part of the overall decommissioning plan if impacts were to be found by decommissioning soil testing. The decommissioning plan and inflation protections for the performance guarantee amount remained important considerations to the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission asked Jirousek to prepare a draft ordinance for review based on the template and other best practices concerning decommissioning.

**7. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

**8. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION**

Sanders mentioned Michigan Township Association training opportunities, and the group generally discussed the value of being a part of the organization. The overall consensus was that being a member of MTA was positive based on the resources and advocacy efforts of the organization.

The Planning Commission also discussed the blight ordinance and whether or not it addressed tall grass and lawn conditions. Jirousek suggested the adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) in applying tall grass provisions to platted developments and site condos. The Planning Commission was interested in seeing how tall grass and weeds can be regulated in this manner through the IPMC.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Root made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm. The motion was supported by Learned.

- Chairman Kerby called for the vote, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0)
- Aye: Chairman Kerby, Root, Hover, Arbanas, Sanders, Learned
- Nay: none
- Abstain: none

Prepared by: David Jirousek, June 24, 2024

Approved: July 16, 2024