

**PAW PAW TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

Regular Meeting – August 20, 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, Chuck Felcyn, Chad Learned, Phillip Arbanas

ABSENT: Fran Sanders

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 Hover to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was supported by Learned.

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

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was offered by Root to approve the minutes from the meeting held on July 16, 2024, as presented. The motion was supported by Felcyn.

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

5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- None

6. BUSINESS

a. **Master Plan:** Discussion.

The Planning Commission began the conversation by discussing what type of housing would need to be addressed, for instance, attainable, affordable, or workforce housing. Learned mentioned that we should define “attainable” as it relates to housing and be specific regarding our goal. Felcyn asked about developers acquiring rental property and how that affects overall affordability and also brought up concerns from local farmers about the 10-acre lot size minimum in agricultural areas. Jirousek suggested that Felcyn may have some great contacts for the farming subcommittee.

Jirousek outlined several suggested changes to the community survey. The Planning Commission reviewed all the questions and made minor changes to ensure user friendliness.

b. **Zoning Ordinance Amendment:** Solar Regulations Discussion.

The Planning Commission discussed the proposed solar ordinance. Hover mentioned that concern with environmental contamination from panels was less than previously stated based on his further research into the matter. However, all felt that soil testing was important as part of a decommissioning plan. Hover also mentioned language from the Porter Township ordinance that states that structures and panels must be in good condition and working order at all times, and the group felt that there should be an abandonment provision that would also trigger decommissioning. It was also mentioned that the decommissioning plan should specifically state that the land should be restored to its original condition to ensure every system component is removed at the end of its functional life. The Planning Commission felt that there was no need to rush this effort and that a future draft should be reviewed before setting a public hearing.

c. **Code Enforcement:** International Property Maintenance Code.

Jirousek provided a draft of an ordinance to make local amendments to the International Property Maintenance Code. The Planning Commission felt that the focus should be on tall grass and weeds rather than all of the provisions of the referenced code. Jirousek stated that the Township could still enforce most other provisions of the International Property Maintenance Code at this time. Still, the Township could not enforce tall grass and weeds unless the code was amended locally. The Planning Commission felt that a noxious weed and uncontrolled plant growth ordinance might be a more straightforward approach to the immediate concern. Jirousek mentioned that he would provide the ordinances used in Keeler and Hartford townships for review.

7. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

8. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

- None

9. ADJOURNMENT

Learned made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 pm. The motion was supported by Felcyn.

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

Prepared by: David Jirousek, August 28, 2024

Approved: September 17, 2024