

# Minutes

## Watersmeet Township Planning Commission

### Meeting of October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Meeting called to order by Vice Chairman Paul Kemppainen at 7:02 PM.

**Members Present:** Paul Kemppainen, Rich Henriksen, Roy D’Antonio, Greg Garlock, Dudley Pierce and Fred Reimer were in attendance. Bill Neumann and Dennis Snyder were excused. A quorum was present and business could be officially conducted.

**Members of the community present:** Frank Kuchevar-Township Supervisor and Dave Neumann-Township Zoning Administrator were present. Craig Hesse, Pat Walsh and Sherrie Zoars were in attendance as interested citizens.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

**Minutes of August 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting:** Discussion and a vote on these minutes were tabled last month because only three P-C members were present at both the August and September meetings. It became apparent that personnel changes on the P-C in the near future will make it even more difficult to find eligible voting members. A decision was made to approve the minutes tonight with votes from the three members present. A motion to approve the August minutes as presented was made by Roy D’Antonio with support from Paul Kemppainen. A roll call vote followed: Mr. D’Antonio =yes, Mr. Kemppainen =yes and Mr. Henriksen= yes. Motion carried: 3 Yea, 0 nay.

**Minutes of September 12<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting:** A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Dudley Pierce with support from Fred Reimer. As three members present at the September meeting, were also present at this meeting, a roll call vote followed: Mr. Pierce=yes, Mr. Reimer= yes and Mr. Henriksen= yes. Motion carried: 3 Yea, 0 nay.

**Zoning Administrator’s Report:** David Neumann presented a homeowner’s request for “Use by Special Approval” to rent a home at E19510 Clearwater Lake Road on a short term basis. In addition, a second request for “Use by Special Approval” to allow operation of a “Bed and Breakfast” within a home located at E19960 Thousand Island Lake Road was presented. The Clearwater Lake application is complete and will go to public hearing on November 14, 2012 at 6:30 PM. The Thousand Island Lake Bed & Breakfast request is substantially incomplete and will require more information from the applicant before the Planning Commission can proceed.

**Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):** Fred Reimer reported no ZBA activity.

**Chairman’s Report:** Mr. Bill Neumann was not present to make a report.

**Public Comments:** Craig Hesse asked why the State of Michigan recommendations for Wind Turbine tower setbacks were relaxed from “1-1/2 times total tower height including blade” to “equal or exceed total tower height including blade” in our proposed ordinance. Secretary Henriksen answered that

discussions at previous meetings, during the summer, indicated that using the state guidelines of 1-1/2 times would preclude consideration of an effective wind turbine installation on most standard L-1 lots currently in the Township. Wind turbines would be effectively limited to only larger R&F tracts as a result. The P-C members, present at the meetings that developed the language, felt that if the state guidelines were retained, our ordinance would effectively eliminate wind turbines from most individual property owner's list of "green energy" choices.

**Agenda Changes, Additions:** Dudley Pierce made a motion to close the agenda as presented with support from Fred Reimer. Voice vote: All in favor.

**Old Business:** The proposed 7.14B and 7.14C Wind Turbine Ordinance text was again discussed. The preceding Public Hearing on this topic was poorly attended and no guidance was given to the P-C as a result. It was finally decided to restore the state guidelines requiring minimum setback of 1-1/2 times tower height as it would be simple for the Township to defend in court, should the need arise. Therefore, Mr. Pierce made a motion to recommend adoption of the following language with support from Mr. Reimer.

**Section 7.14B Requirements for Domestic Wind Turbines**

- A. Setback of tower must equal or exceed 1-1/2 times the total height of the tower including the length of one rotor blade from all property lines, ordinary high water mark (if applicable) and overhead utilities.
- B. Wind turbines may only be considered for placement on parcels of land adequate to meet all setback requirements.
- C. Erection of any wind turbine tower shall require:
  - 1. A survey by U.S. Fish and Wildlife identifying any potential hazards to local or migratory birds and animals. This survey must be submitted to the Watersmeet Township Planning Commission with permit request.
  - 2. Tower must be equipped with an "anti-climbing device" for the first 10 feet measured vertically from the base of the tower.
  - 3. Area surrounding tower base to be covered with a ground cloth (weed barrier) and ¾ inch crushed stone extending for a 20 foot radius around the tower to discourage burrowing animals from interfering with the tower's primary grounding system.
  - 4. Applicant must submit a decommissioning plan for the eventual removal of tower.
  - 5. Not more than one (1) wind turbine shall be permitted on any one lot up to 5 acres. No more than two (2) wind turbines shall be allowed on any single parcel up to 40 acres.
  - 6. Commercial type wind turbines (exceeding 20kw capacity) shall only be permitted in the Recreation and Forest (R&F) zoning district. No commercial type turbines shall be permitted in an R&F Buffer Zone.

**Section 7.14C Requirements for Commercial Wind Turbines**

Commercial wind turbines exceeding 20kw capacity shall be regulated by the State of Michigan however they will be subject to Planning Commission approval as provided in sections 7.09, 7.11 and 7.12.

A roll call vote on the above was entertained with the following results obtained: Mr. Pierce=yes, Mr. Reimer=yes, and Mr. Henriksen=yes, Mr. D'Antonio=yes, Mr. Kemppainen=yes and Mr. Garlock=yes. Motion carried: 6 Yea, 0 nay. As a result of this vote, Section 7.14B and 7.14C is recommended for inclusion in the Watersmeet Township Zoning Ordinance.

**New Business:**

None.

**Other Business:**

None.

**Motion to adjourn** at 8:12PM by Greg Garlock and supported by Fred Reimer. Voice vote: All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Richard T. Henriksen* - Planning Commission Secretary

Approved: 11/14/2012