

WRIGHT TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 18, 2019-7:30 P.M.
1565 Jackson St., Marne

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Dausman with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Prayer. Commission members present: Rich Dausman, Gary Karr, Steve Van Timmeren, Steve Gray. Commission member Dan Vandyke was absent. Also present were Township Planner Brian Werschem and Clerk Maureen Carmody as Recording Secretary.
2. No parking in the reserved fire spaces was announced.
3. There were no additions to the agenda.
4. A motion was made by Van Timmeren and supported by Gray to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2019 Planning Commission meeting as written. Motion carried. At the request of Bonnie Thoms, the Planning Commission members approved a correction in the spelling of her last name in the October 21, 2019 minutes from Khums to Thoms.
5. There were several members of the public in attendance who offered comments regarding various concerns, including confusion pertaining to the application for a special use permit, the length of the October 21, 2019 Planning Commission meeting, and the conduct of Planning Commissioners at that meeting. Bonnie Thoms presented a letter to the Planning Commission which is included in the record. Members of the public who commented were as follows:
Jeanne Green, 16453 16th Ave. Marne
Betty Brown, 18059 8th Ave. Conklin
Bonnie Thoms, 16365 16th Ave. Marne
Matt Green, 16453 16th Ave. Marne
Rita Carmody, 16217 16th Ave. Marne
6. Review of additional site plan landscaping requirements for ITC-Meyer substation, parcel number 70-06-22-400-010. Nora Balgoyen, Anthony Longoria and Marc Sherman presented information regarding the updated landscaping plan required by the Planning Commission at the October 21, 2019 meeting. There will be approximately 125 balsam fir and white spruce trees planted in offset rows to provide additional buffering around the substation. This will be nearly quadruple the number of trees indicated on the original site plan. The planting height will be approximately 6'-8' and the mature height will be 60'-65'. Dausman questioned whether the trees would be disease resistant, and the applicants responded that both tree species are native to Michigan and naturally resilient to native pests. They also stated that the contractors planting the trees would be responsible for them the first year, and ITC would be responsible for them thereafter. Dausman also inquired why there were two gaps in the plantings, and was informed that the gaps were necessary for clearance under two lines exiting and entering the substation. There will be berms installed in the gaps to provide screening. Van Timmeren inquired how wide the buffer on either side of the lines would be in these gaps in the landscaping, and the applicants responded that there would be an 80' buffer on either side of the 138kv lines and a 100' buffer on either side of the 348kv lines. The applicants also stated that in the event of tree death, replacement trees would not be the same height as the surrounding mature trees. There was also discussion regarding the construction timeline of the project, and the applicants stated that construction would likely begin in late 2020 or beginning of 2021 and finish in 2021. Some site preparation may begin earlier in 2020. A motion was made by Karr to approve the planting additions to the existing site plan. After discussion, the motion failed due to a lack of support. A motion was made by Van Timmeren and supported by Karr to approve the landscaping modifications that were submitted for the site plan, with a condition added by Gray, that upon discovery of diseased, dead or damaged trees, replacements shall be planted immediately. Motion carried.
7. Under Commission Member Concerns, Gray stated that more attention should be paid to the wording of applications. Werschem answered that while there may have been confusion regarding how the applicant filled out the application for a special use permit, what portion of the application was subject to a special use permit,

and what portion was not, was clearly outlined in the memorandum provided to the Planning Commission by Werschem. Dausman inquired about the status of the site plan that had been approved for the previous Baptist church building, as he noticed that although the owners had a site plan approved for apartments, the building apparently is being used for other purposes. Karr stated that the applicants had abandoned that project and are currently using the building for storage and second-hand sales. Werschem stated that this is a permitted use in the village zoning district, and as they have not modified the exterior of the building or the property, they do not need to submit another site plan. A concern was brought up regarding the commercial Ryder trucks in the parking lot associated with the building. Karr will bring it to the Township Supervisor's attention to verify whether this is a permitted use in the village zoning district, and whether it would require a special use permit. Dausman also reported on small changes in Tallmadge Township's recently updated Master Plan.

8. Under Wright Township Board Communications, Karr stated that the Wright Township Board was impressed with the Planning Commission's diligence, and some board members expressed sorrow regarding the loss of AG land for the construction of a substation.
9. A motion was made by Gray and supported by Van Timmeren to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Maureen Carmody
Recording Secretary