

ISABELLA COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION

January 12, 2012

A Regular Meeting of the Isabella County Planning Commission was held on January 12, 2012 in Room 225 of the Isabella County Building, 200 North Main Street, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: William Dailey, Bob Thompson, Cheryl Jindeel, Gordon Gilchrist, Evelyn Kent, Jerry Neyer, Christine Alwood (7:02 pm)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joel Welty, Kelly Bean

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Mike Zalewski, Zoning Administrator  
Brandy Harger, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Thompson at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the Commission.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Thompson stated that a Deerfield Township farmland agreement needs to be added to the agenda.

A motion was made by Ms. Kent, supported by Mr. Neyer, to approve the agenda as amended.

Yes: Dailey, Thompson, Jindeel, Gilchrist, Kent, Neyer.

No: None.

Motion carried.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A motion was made by Mr. Dailey, supported by Ms. Alwood, to keep the current slate of officers: Bob Thompson for Chairperson, Jerry Neyer for Vice-Chairperson, and Christine Alwood for Secretary.

By a unanimous vote, Mr. Thompson was declared the Chairperson, Mr. Neyer was declared the Vice-Chairperson, and Ms. Alwood was declared the Secretary.

Mr. Thompson stated that the board should maintain the time and date for the regular meetings as is, on the second Thursday of the Month at 7:00 p.m. in room 225 of the Isabella County Building.

It was the consensus of the board that they would maintain the current meeting schedule.

Mr. Thompson appointed Mr. Gilchrist to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Ms. Alwood to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the December 8, 2011 regular meeting were circulated to the Commission prior to the meeting for their review.

Ms. Alwood stated that in the Parks and Recreation report, it should be clarified to say that the opening day for parks reservations was on Friday, January 6, 2012. Also the Board of Commission report should state Tuesday, January 10, 2012.

A motion was made by Mr. Dailey, supported by Mr. Gilchrist to approve the minutes as amended.

Yes: Dailey, Thompson, Jindeel, Gilchrist, Kent, Neyer, Alwood.

No: None.

Motion carried.

### LIAISON REPORTS

Zoning Board of Appeals – Mr. Gilchrist stated that there were no cases last month, but the board met to go over their annual report.

Parks & Recreation – Ms. Alwood stated that camp reservations are still being taken. There was no meeting this month because the Parks and Recreation Department was preparing for opening day of camping reservations.

Board of Commissioners – Mr. Dailey stated that there was no Zoning Ad Hoc Committee meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> because not everyone was available, but they will be trying to meet on January 24, 2012. Mr. George Green was elected Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners at the first meeting in January. At that meeting it was intended that the Zoning Amendments brought forward would be approved, but the board wanted more clarification from staff, who were unable to attend the meeting. The Board of Commissioners will bring these forward again at their next meeting.

### TOWNSHIP CONCERNS

Jackie Curtis, Denver Township, none heard.

John Graham, Gilmore Township, none heard.

Bob Neeland, Isabella Township, none heard.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

### NOTTAWA TOWNSHIP FARMLAND AGREEMENT

Mr. Zalewski stated that the request is for a 73 acre parcel located in Section 4 of Nottawa Township owned by Dave Schumacher. The property is zoned Ag-1 and is designated as Agricultural Conservation in the Master Plan. There are also several properties in the area in the PA 116 program. The application appears to be complete and staff has no concerns with the request.

It was the consensus of the board that they had no concerns with the applications and a recommendation

of approval of the agreements should be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners.

#### ROLLAND TOWNSHIP FARMLAND AGREEMENT

Mr. Zalewski stated that the request is for a 10 acre parcel in Section 2 of Rolland Township owned by Bernard Flint. The property is zoned Ag-3 and is designated as Rural Agricultural Residential in the Master Plan. There are no other parcels in the Section in the PA 116 program. The application appears to be complete. However based on the information on the original application, the property does not meet the eligibility requirements for enrollment into the program. For a parcel greater than 5 acres but less than 40 acres, the land must produce a gross annual income in excess of \$200 per tillable acres. According to the application the gross income per acre is \$37.50. He further explained that Mr. Flint has submitted an updated application to the Clerk's office and that application states that he earns \$200.00 per acre. Staff has talked with the applicant and the State regarding the eligibility requirements. It appears that Mr. Flint originally put the amount that is earned from leasing the land as opposed to the amount the land produces from agricultural activity.

It was the consensus of the board that they have no concerns with the application and a recommendation of approval of the agreement should be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners.

#### DEERFIELD TOWNSHIP FARMLAND AGREEMENT

Mr. Zalewski stated that the request is for a 76 acre parcel located in Section 11 of Deerfield Township owned by James Schumacher and Randall Yuncker. The Township has the property zoned Agricultural Preservation and is designated as Ag in their Master Plan. There are also several properties in the area in the PA 116 program. The application appears to be complete and staff has no concerns with the request.

Mr. Thompson stated that the property looks like it is being bought on a land contract, if this is the case the application must also be signed by the land contract seller.

It was the consensus of the board to forward the comments to Deerfield Township.

#### PLANNING COMMISSION 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Zalweski gave a presentation of the 2011 Planning Commission Annual Report.

A motion was made by Mr. Dailey, supported by Mr. Neyer, to adopt the 2011 Annual Report and to forward to the Board of Commissioners for their review.

Yes: Dailey, Thompson, Jindeel, Gilchrist, Kent, Neyer, Alwood.

No: None.

Motion carried.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jackie Curtis asked why the Zoning Ad Hoc Committee was not reported about in the 2011 Annual Report.

Mr. Zalewski explained that the Zoning Ad Hoc Committee is a committee appointed by the Board of Commissioners and is not a function of the Planning Commission.

#### STAFF COMMENTS

None heard.

#### PLANNING COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Ms. Alwood stated that she reviewed the article in the Michigan Planner magazine entitled "fourteen ways to build a better commission". The commission should consider meeting with other counsels and the Board of Commissioners, have better communication with staff, tour the county and get ideas from other Planning Commissions, and support staff as they present information to the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Dailey stated that it would be a good idea to have a joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Gilchrist asked if there was anything else he should be doing while appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Zalewski explained that the role of the Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison is to keep the lines of communication between the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals open and to report any issues there might be with the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Neyer stated that hopefully some of the improvements that were made to the Zoning Ordinance have helped the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Thompson stated that he would like the Ag Subcommittee to continue to work together and look into the idea of keeping chickens in the Lakes Residential District (Urban Agriculture issue). The committee consists currently of Mr. Gilchrist, Mr. Neyer, and Mr. Bean. Mr. Thompson appointed Mr. Welty to that committee as well to replace the seat vacated by Jim Kremsreiter. He also explained that staff sends out a monthly report to the townships and that would be something he would like the Planning Commission to receive as well.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by the call of the Chair at 7:50 p.m.

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Christine Alwood, Secretary

Brandy Harger, Recording Secretary