

## MINUTES

### MONTCALM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

### MONTCALM TOWNSHIP HALL

February 7, 2018

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- Chairman Karnatz led the Pledge of Allegiance

#### CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

- Chairman Karnatz called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

#### ROLL CALL

- Members present: Richard Karnatz (Chair), Jeff Dolphin (Vice-Chair), James Lantz (Secretary), Robert Hemmes (Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison), Amy Richards (Township Board Liaison)
- Members absent: None
- Guests/Others present:  
20 area citizens

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Jeff Dolphin and seconded by Amy Richards. Motion passed unanimously.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A motion to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2017, meeting was made by Amy Richards and seconded by Robert Hemmes. Motion passed unanimously.

## COMMENT FROM ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

- None

## COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

- James Lantz asked that speakers, when recognized by the Chair, state their name for the minutes.

## NEW BUSINESS:

- Ron Price, regarding property located at 611 Oak Dr., Turk Lake:  
Mr. Price lives at 601 Oak Dr. He asks that the Township either ban, or regulate, short-term (less than 90 days) rentals of non-owner occupied property in a residential district. He views short-term rentals as a commercial business and would like the Planning Commission to agree with that view. He is concerned about safety, particularly regarding the volume of traffic, speed of traffic, parking, and access for emergency vehicles.
  - Chairman Karnatz talked about a recent webinar by MSU Extension related to this topic.
  - Chairman Karnatz then recognized the owners of 611 Oak Drive, David and Cindy Ellis.
- David and Cindy Ellis stated that they own three (3) properties on Turk Lake. Before purchasing these properties, they checked the Zoning Ordinance, talked with the Zoning Administrator, and talked with the Health department to be sure that they were doing everything properly. They believe that, if the Township bans or regulates short-term rentals, their properties would be grand-parented in. They wish to renovate the properties, enhance the area, increase property values.
- Chairman Karnatz recognized Deb Pelton. Ms. Pelton asked how much parking was available at 611 Oak Drive. David Ellis responded that there are 2-3 spaces.
- An unidentified audience member stated that all prior easements were vacated by the court many years ago.

- Chairman Karnatz suggested that all parties talk this over, since it will be a while before the Planning Commission could have a recommendation.
- Solar Energy – Chairman Karnatz stated that he had become aware that companies are interested in building solar energy farms in the Township. The Michigan Farm Bureau is sponsoring some meetings on this topic in the near future. The Planning Commission will look into appropriate zoning ordinance amendments for this activity.
- Master Plan Review – Chairman Karnatz reminded the Planning Commission that it was time for the quinquennial review of the Township’s Master Plan. He stated that the Planning Commission would meet on at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, March 22, 2018 to begin work on solar energy farms, the Master Plan review, and the issue of short-term rentals.
- Chairman Karnatz shared information about two upcoming meetings of the Montcalm County Planning Commission. Several Planning Commission members plan to attend.
- Chairman Karnatz stated that the property located on the northwest corner of M-91 and Sidney Road had been sold, and that the parcel numbers had been changed. Jeff Dolphin moved, and Robert Hemmes seconded, that the appropriate map attached to the Zoning Ordinance be updated to reflect that the resulting two new parcels remain zoned Commercial. Motion passed unanimously.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW BUSINESS:

- One unidentified audience member indicated that the Township should install microphones so that the audience can hear what is being said.
- Bob Sullivan, who lives between the two Turk Lake properties discussed earlier, stated that he thinks that short-term rentals are a commercial activity and, as such, should not be allowed in residential district. He indicated that Ana Maria Island, Florida, only allows rentals of one month or longer. He further stated that vehicles parked along Oak Drive sometimes block the street, preventing emergency vehicles from getting through.

- David Ellis suggested that, when looking at the issue of solar energy farms, the Planning Commission look at the type of solar panels being considered.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

- Michigan Medical Marihuana Facilities Licensing Act (MMMFLA)  
Chairman Karnatz stated that the State has now issued the emergency rules. He then shared a copy of a survey from Augusta Charter Township related to the MMMFLA.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT CONCERNING OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

- Jim Courtney stated that he, Bill Woodruff (also in attendance) and another individual are interested in obtaining a permit to construct and operate a grow and/or processing facility in the Township. He indicated that they anticipate that they will be making a \$1,000,000 investment. He noted that lighting and security are top priority and highly regulated. He indicated that the inventory is identified through the use of RFID tagging and verified by an independent accountant.

#### ADJOURNMENT

- Jeff Dolphin moved that the meeting be adjourned. Amy Richards seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James D. Lantz, Secretary