

VAN BUREN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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Van Buren County Planning Commission March 27, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

1) Call to Order & Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Present: Alyssa Hosbein, Tom Motycka, Scott Cedarquist, Pam Stermer, Jan Petersen, Kurt Doroh, Will Pugsley, Barbara Rose, Celinda Gilmore and Tony Hemenway. Others present included Lisa Imus Ransler and Tom Stermer

Absent: None.

2) **Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Doroh, with support by Motycka to approve the March 27, 2024, agenda. Motion approved unanimously.

3) **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Motycka, with support from Rose to approve the February 28, 2024, meeting minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

4) **Public Comment:** Tom Stermer was present to thank Pam Stermer for her years of service with the Van Buren County Planning Commission.

5) Reports:

a) **BOC Liaison Report:** Commissioner Doroh reported that the County GIS Director, Jerry Happel was at the Board meeting this week highlighting all the new maps and historic plat maps available online. Susan Metzinger, our new probate judge started holding court last week. Palisades announced that the Federal government will provide \$1.5 billion for the power plant's restart, and Michigan will add another \$150 million to the \$150 million committed last year.

b) **Land Preservation Board (LPB) Report:** The next Land Preservation Board meeting will be held on May 8, 2024, with a presentation from MDARD regarding PDR Easements and the PA 116 program.

c) **Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) Report:** no meeting was held in March.

d) Local Visits Report:

i) Petersen reported that the Mattawan Village Council had a presentation on the Mattawan Schools Bond proposal.

ii) Motyka reported that the Decatur Township meeting was cancelled and that the Antwerp Township Supervisor had resigned.

iii) Rose reported that the Covert Planning Commission was looking for additional information on Palisades reopening and the battery plant interest.

- e) **Staff Report:** Ransler reported that the Michigan Coastal Management Program Development Coordinator offered to come to a Planning Commission meeting to further educate the community on the Coastal Management Program and financial resources to increase the resilience of coastal communities in Van Buren County. The Planning Commission indicated that they would be very interested in the presentation and would also invite coastal communities to send representatives.

Ransler also reported that there were currently 2 openings on the Planning Commission and that we needed to recruit new members.

6) Unfinished Business:

- a) **MSUE Citizen Planner Course** – Attendees reported that they enjoyed the course with good discussion and attendance.
- b) **Coordination of Local Visits:** Motyka suggested that the coordination of local visits wait until after the Citizen Planner course is complete, and the membership on the Planning Commission was full.

7) New Business:

- a) Pam Stermer was recognized with a proclamation for her 20+ years of service to the Van Buren County Planning Commission. This was Pam's last meeting as she decided not to seek another reappointment.
- b) Solar Report – Cedarquist provided an informational report on the recent solar workshop he attended.
- c) The South Haven Charter Township Master Plan was received for review. The Planning Commission has 63 days to provide a review.
- d) Motyka, supported by Cedarquist, made a motion to concur with the South Haven Charter Township Zoning Text Change to include add a Communication Tower definition, allow communication towers as allowable as a permitted special use with conditions, rename Section 15.33 as "Communications Towers". Motion to approve by acclamation.
- e) Housing Initiative Report – Ransler gave a summary of the County's initiative in performing a Housing Target Market Analysis (TMA) and provide each of the 29 different local units with a housing analysis specific to their boundaries, as well as the creation of an overall County Housing Strategic Plan, emphasizing best practices to attract housing and development.
- f) Correspondence was received regarding an Intent to Plan from Arlington Township to update their Master Plan.
- g) Correspondence was received regarding an Intent to Plan from the City of South Haven for an update to their Master Plan

8) Adjournment: Hosbein adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Submitted by: Lisa (Imus) Ransler, Recording Secretary