

VAN BUREN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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Van Buren County Planning Commission
January 24, 2024

Meeting Minutes

1) Call to Order & Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

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

Absent: None.

2) **Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Pugsley, with support by Cedarquist to approve the January 24, 2024, agenda with the addition of 8b under new business. Motion approved unanimously.

3) **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Stermer, with support from Jones to approve the November 29, 2023 and January 3, 2024 Minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

4) **Public Comment:** None.

5) Reports:

a) **BOC Liaison Report:** Commissioner Doroh reported that the Board held their organizational meeting, and Randy Peat was serving as Chair and Paul Schincariol was serving as Vice Chair. Commissioner Chappel continued to work on the ORV Road Ordinance, and Judge David J. DiStefano was retiring at the end of the month.

b) **Land Preservation Board (LPB) Report:** The Land Preservation Board is reviewing the scoring criteria to determine what properties are chosen for purchase of development rights.

c) **Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (SWMPC) Report:** Roger Engle was appointed to the SEMPC Board. Van Buren County has 7 representatives on the SWMPC Board, 4 non-elected people and 3 Board of Commissioners.

d) Local Visits Report:

i) Pugsley reported that Waverly Township was planning to build a new building for police and fire, and Arlington Township was adding on to the Township Building.

ii) Petersen reported that the Arlington Township Planning Commission was reviewing aggregate mining, and that Hamilton Township was working on a shopping container ordinance.

iii) Cedarquist reported that he had been hooked up to broadband and had concerns about the new solar legislation at the State level.

iv) Doroh reminded everyone to continue to advocate for the Citizen Planning course that the meetings they attended.

v) Motycka reported that Decatur and Hamilton townships were working on a Master Plan and that Decatur Township had denied a battery storage facility.

6) Election of Officers:

- a) The nomination of the Chairperson was tabled until the next meeting.
- b) Motycka, supported by Jones, made a motion to nominate Cedarquist to the office of Vice Chairperson. Motion approved unanimously.
- c) Doroh, supported by Gilmore, made a motion to nominate Ransler as the recording Secretary. Motion approved unanimously.
- d) James, supported by Gilmore, made a motion to adopt the proposed 2024 meeting schedule, proposing to meet monthly the 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm with the exception of November and December, which would meet on the third Wednesday at 6:30. Motion approved unanimously.

7) Unfinished Business:

- a) **MSUE Citizen Planner Course** – All Planning Commissioners, with the exception of Cedarquist and Stermer will attend the course. Ransler will arrange for the registration. There are currently approximately 19 participants enrolled.
- b) **Coordination of Local Visits:** Hosbein will send summary of coverage with open units that still need consideration.
- c) **Section 106 Review Requests:** The Planning Commission has received 3 requests to review property for historic significance before a cell tower is placed. They include parcels in South Haven Charter Twp, Porter Township, and Hartford Township. Motycka, supported by Rose made a motion to request the Planning Commission be considered a commenting party on each filing. Motion approved unanimously.

Discussion focused on groups that should be consulted. It was confirmed that the applicant is required to contact the local historical society and all Native American tribal governments. For the South Haven Charter Township parcel, there was concern expressed about potential African American historical significance.

8) New Business:

- a) **Antwerp Zoning Map** – Motyka, supported by Rose, made a motion not to concur with the recommendation made by the Antwerp Township Planning Commission regarding the proposed Zoning Ordinance and Map amendment for the Rose Creek Estates Planned Unit Development. A primary area of concern revolved around the density and the number of septic tanks and wells proposed for the Rose Creek Estates development. The Commission also expressed reservations about the proximity of these infrastructure elements to the floodplain, wetlands, and Cook's County Drain.

- 9) **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Submitted by: Lisa (Imus) Ransler, Recording Secretary