

Van Buren County Planning Commission
219 E. Paw Paw Street, Suite 201, Paw Paw, MI 49079
November 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order & Attendance: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Alyssa Hosbein.

Present: Alyssa Hosbein, Tom Motycka, Jan Petersen, Celinda Gilmore, Scott Cedarquist, Will Pugsley, Barbara Rose, Tony Hemenway, Nick Carlson and Gordon Andrews.

Absent: Kurt Doroh. **Guests:** Lisa Imus Ransler

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Pugsley, supported by Cedarquist to approve the agenda for November 20, 2024. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Petersen, supported by Motycka, to approve the minutes from the October 9, 2024 meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Comments: None.

Reports:

1. **Land Preservation Board (LPB):** Ransler reported the board discussed ongoing marketing efforts for the December grant cycle, including strategies to involve additional townships in land preservation initiatives. Updated bylaws and application processes were also reviewed. Based upon the Planning Commission's recommendation, the Commission approved the amended Land Preservation Ordinance in November.
2. **Local Visits Report:** Petersen reported she and Hosbein had attended the Van Buren State Park Strategic Planning Session to update their management plan. A survey is available online until December 16th to collect citizen input. Cedarquist highlighted discussion on renewable energy and solar ordinances.
3. **Staff Report:** Ransler provided information regarding a workshop by EGLE regarding Alternative Energy Planning Strategies.

Unfinished Business

1. **Hamilton Township Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment for Storage Containers:** The Hamilton Township Text Amendment related to the sizes for storage containers. The amendment aimed to refine the township's zoning standards for storage container sizes, aligning them with community needs and state-level guidelines. A motion was made by Motycka, supported by Hosbein, to concur with Hamilton Township's decision on the amendment. This motion was approved.

New Business

1. **Paw Paw Township Notice of Master Plan Amendment:** The Planning Commission acknowledged receipt of the Paw Paw Township Notice of Master Plan Amendment. No additional comments or actions were noted during the meeting.

2. **PA 116 Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program Application:** The Planning Commission reviewed the PA 116 Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program Application from Dale Frank of Hamilton Township. Motion by Cedarquist, supported by Motycka, that the farmland preservation application was reviewed and accepted by the County Planning Commission. Motion approved unanimously.

3. **VBC Land Preservation Board Invitation to Landowners to Apply for Farmland Preservation Grants** - The Planning Commission discussed the Van Buren County Land Preservation Board's initiative to invite landowners to apply for farmland preservation grants. This program is designed to secure state funding to preserve high-value agricultural land, encouraging townships to adopt necessary ordinances to participate in these preservation efforts. Marketing strategies and township outreach were emphasized during the meeting.

Adjournment: Motion by Petersen, supported by Pugsley, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Motion approved unanimously.