

PINE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
QUARTERLY MEETING
Monday, January 9, 2023 at 5:00 PM

The quarterly meeting of the Pine Township Planning Commission held at the Pine Township Hall, 7900 W. 2nd Street, Stanton, Michigan 48888.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Scott Millard at 5:00 PM, followed the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call. Millard introduced newly appointed commissioner Derek Buchholz.

ROLL CALL

Present - Scott Millard, Chair; Gary Christensen, Vice Chair; Jamie Gorby, Secretary; Chris Bell; Derek Buchholz; Dan Main

Absent -Tyler Nadeau, Township Board Liaison

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Main moved, supported by Bell, to approve the agenda. MOTION PASSED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Gorby recommended on page 3 under Public Comment, to correct the name to Laurie Johnson (not Laura). Christensen moved, supported by Buchholz, to approve the November 9, 2022 Minutes with the correction.

MOTION PASSED

OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DISCUSSION OF SOLAR ORDINANCE LEGAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The commission discussed changes recommended by attorney Leslie Abdoo.

The recommendations on pages 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 12 will be followed.

Gorby will contact attorney Abdoo for clarification on the following, which will be discussed at the next meeting:

- page 2 – 2.16 does the attorney recommendation intend to read “electrical grid”?
- Why wind turbines are not classified as Light Industrial when Solar is.
- Page 10 – #11 – Is i. Unnecessary since ii. is there?

- Page 10 - #11 Is iii. intended to read "not MORE than 10' apart (rather than less)?"
- Page 11 – vi. reads "every two years." Page 13 j. 1. reads "every three years". Should these be the same amount of time?
- Page 11 – xi. Add that topsoil must be clean, screened topsoil with no contaminants? Add (or change to) restored with a suitable cover crop?
- Page 14 – Section 3 is not intended to be included in this ordinance?
- Page 14 – Section 4 not intended to be in this ordinance, or does WECS need to be changed to SES? Reference to Section 10.03 – Section 10.03 is in which ordinance?
- The 20% solar panel coverage restriction needs clarification – does this mean total ground coverage, or the measurement of the individual solar panels added together? At Township Supervisor's request, ask whether 20% coverage is common, or highly restrictive.

Main moved, supported by Bell, to change page 9 3. ii., setback from 10' to 100'.

Roll call vote: Christensen – Yes; Gorby – Yes; Millard – Yes; Bell – Yes; Main – Yes;

Buchholz – Yes.

MOTION PASSED

SPECIAL MEETING DATE

A special meeting for work on the solar ordinance will be held on Monday, February 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM at Pine Township Hall.

BLIGHT ORDINANCE

Work on the blight ordinance will be tabled to the April 10, 2023 quarterly meeting, as Montcalm County Commissioners are still working on their blight ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gordon Gorby of Pine Township questioned why a building permit would be required for solar installations.

Bill Drews, Pine Township Supervisor, expressed concern about environmental impact and requested the commission read from attorney regarding solar setback from lakes. Questioned if 20% of lot coverage is very restrictive for Level 3 solar installations and wants the attorney to be asked whether that is common or highly restrictive? He also asked to see highlighted changes from original solar ordinance.

Leslie Rydahl of Pine Township stated she had attended Spencer Township public hearing, 20% solar coverage limitation was approved there, and that included the space between the panels. Spencer and Sidney townships have approved recent solar ordinances. She believes there should be greater setback from lakes and wetlands. Spencer's is 300' for everything – lot lines, water. She asked whether there is wording in the decommissioning language for

what happens if the decommissioning company goes bankrupt/does not have funds to restore the property.

Julie Drews, Pine Township Deputy Supervisor stated there is a fund set aside (in the ordinance) for restoration

Dawn Sweet of Pine Township asked whether tarps/black matting would be used and are permeable? She is concerned that chemicals would be used to keep vegetation down, which would go into the water table and create a health hazard.

Laurie Johnson of Pine Township stated they look at water flow, and will want to prevent erosion and contamination. It is engineered to last & be productive. They will want to make the planet better. She believes that a good plan will address all of these issues. They will probably hire horticulturists/arborists who will know what trees will work best, and suggested autumn olive.

ADJOURNMENT

Gorby moved, supported by Bell, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSED.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 PM

Minutes submitted by



Jamie Gorby, Planning Commission Secretary

Minutes typed by Barbara Kaaikala