

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
February 27, 2018

The regular meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:30 PM at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present	Absent
Shawn Martinie	George Schippers
Travis Vugteveen	Steve Young
Bill Maschewske	
Tom TenBroeke	One Position Vacant

Also present were Township Attorney Ron Bultje and Zoning Administrator Brian Werschem. There were no members of the public present and no attendance sheet is included.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Tom TenBroeke to approve the agenda without changes.

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

A motion was made by Tom TenBroeke and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to approve the January 23, 2018 Planning Commission minutes with the spelling correction of “Ton” to “Tom” in the third paragraph.

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

Non-Commission Member Inquiries -- None

Reports and Communications

Travis Vugteveen reported the following from the Township Board.

1. The Kamp rezoning request was denied.
2. The Fire Department is to purchase a Jaws of Life device.
3. A special use or PUD contract was approved.
4. The Punt family forest was taken out of the Commercial Forestry Act.
5. The purchase of a mower for the cemetery was approved.

Announcements – None

Old Business

The discussion of solar farms and gardens was continued from the previous meeting. The purpose of the discussion was to draft a Zoning Ordinance amendment to provide for and regulate this use.

Chairperson Martinie – Reviewed a summary of the Ann Arbor, Olive Township, and Holland Charter Township ordinances regarding solar farms/gardens.

Following a discussion of the ordinances, it was agreed to limit the scope of a draft ordinance to Solar Farms/Gardens and not include Bio-Fuel Facilities as was done in the Olive Township documents.

Chairperson Martinie – Inquired where the prime corridors are in the Township for Solar Power.

Zoning Administrator Werschem – The main corridors will be near major energy pipelines.

Township Attorney Bultje – Stated that Olive Township currently has a moratorium in place regarding solar farms even though they have an ordinance adopted to address this issue.

The existing Solar Farm on 48th Ave. south of Pierce St. was discussed and reviewed on the Ottawa County GIS system. The parcel was noted to be approximately 18 acres in size.

Bill Maschewske – Suggested M-1 and some areas of the RR Zoning District as possible locations.

Township Attorney Bultje – For the M-1 Zoning District, it could be an interim use.

Bill Maschewske – Also suggested Industrial zoned areas as good locations, although it would subtract from available industrial zoned property.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the B-1 and B-2 Zoning Districts were not appropriate for Solar Farms/Gardens. Mobile Home Park zoning was also considered but rejected. It was agreed that the first draft would be to limit Solar Farms/Gardens to the M-1, I-1, and I-2 Zoning Districts.

Travis Vugteveen – Raised the issue of whether allowing Solar Farms/Gardens in the A-1 Zoning District would help preserve A-1 property. It was agreed that there were pros and cons and to not include the A-1 Zoning District as an acceptable district for solar farms/gardens.

It was agreed the next step was to have the Township Attorney prepare a draft amendment to the Zoning Ordinance addressing Solar Farms/Gardens based upon the input received at this meeting.

At 8:50 PM., the issue of the Reed v. Town of Gilbert court decision and its effect on sign regulation in the Robinson Township Zoning Ordinance was discussed. A document from

Scholten Fant dated January 7, 2016, which outlines the requirements compared to the Robinson Township Zoning Ordinance, was reviewed and discussed.

Township Attorney Bultje – Recommends that he prepare a red line examination of the current Zoning Ordinance as the most efficient way to proceed.

Zoning Administrator Werschem – Stated he has been asked several times in the past 3 months about signs in the following areas.

1. Signs on a farm in the RR Zoning District.
2. Several requests for farm signs in the A-1 Zoning District.

Zoning Administrator Werschem noted that it would seem reasonable to allow farm identifying signs in both the RR and A-1 Zoning Districts.

Township Attorney Bultje – Suggests completing the red line analysis of the current sign regulations before considering expanding the scope in the A-1 and RR Zoning Districts.

The Planning Commission requested Township Attorney Bultje to prepare the red line analysis of current sign regulations for future review.

At 9:10 PM., the annual election of officers was held as scheduled.

A motion was made by Tom TenBroeke and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to nominate Shawn Martinie as Chairperson, Steve Young as Vice-Chairperson, and Bill Maschewske as Secretary. There were no more nominations and a roll call vote was taken.

Tom TenBroeke – Yes
 Bill Maschewske – Yes
 Shawn Martinie – Yes
 Travis Vugteveen – Yes

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

A motion was made by Tom TenBroeke and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to designate May 22, 2018, August 28, 2018, November 27, 2018, and February 26, 2019 as regular meeting dates of the Planning Commission.

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

A motion was made by Tom TenBroeke and seconded by Bill Maschewske to approve the 2017 – 2018 Annual Report and the 2018-2019 Proposed Budget of the Planning Commission as presented.

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

A motion was made by Tom TenBroeke and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to pay Planning Commission salaries for the month of February 2018 (1 meeting).

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

New Business – None

Any and All Business

Zoning Administrator Werschem noted that the main sign for the new Merle Boes service station/convenience store at 120th Ave. and M-45 will be moving. The current sign location is too close to the M-45 right-of-way.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Tom TenBroeke to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary
Robinson Township Planning Commission