

LAKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Unapproved Minutes

February 18, 2009

The meeting of the Lake Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Colletta. Members Gerry Geppert, Rich Ehrlich, Tim Lalley, Dale Hartsell and Mary Johnson also present along with approximately 45 guests.

Motion by Geppert to approve Minutes of January 28, 2008, seconded by Lalley. Motion carried – all ayes.

Minutes of January 30, 2009, were corrected to reflect the addition of the motion by Geppert, seconded by Lalley changing the regular meeting of February 25, 2009 to February 18, 2009, said motion having been approved. Motion by Hartsell to accept the minutes of January 30, 2009 with the correction, seconded by Geppert. Motion carried – all ayes.

Motion to appoint Mary Johnson as secretary to Lake Township Planning Commission; by Colletta, seconded by Ehrlich. Motion carried - all ayes

Additional items added to agenda: Under New Business; Land transfer for Opal Dufty; 2009-2010 meeting schedule; moratorium request; under old business - Kim Depner, Roadside Stand; Motion by Hartsell to accept agenda with additional items, seconded by Ehrlich. Motion carried - all Ayes.

Correspondence:

There were many letters of correspondence concerning the wind turbines proposed for Lake Township. All letters to be read from the following individuals recorded and attached to these minutes:

Letter #1: Ivoughn and Mary Depner, 2/18/09

Letter #2: John McCallum, 2/5/09

Letter #3: Mary Nowak, 2/17/09

Letter #4: Jack and Nancy Breznau, 2/17/09

Letter #5: Dennis and Darcy Mausolf, 2/17/09

Guest Speakers:

Bob Smith requested that the residential height limitation of a home be changed to 35', also lot coverage that is currently 25%, be

increased to 35%. Colletta responded that the board would take this under consideration.

Guest speaker Kurt Damrow was introduced:

He stated: The Huron County Zoning Board does not override the Lake Township Planning Commission or Zoning Board. When a zoning ordinance is proposed by a township, it is sent to Russ Lundberg for review and feedback. Steve Allen said Corporate Council will review at no charge. The Lake Township board can do what it wants with the recommendation; the County will not override the Township.

Tax revenue from Windmill Projects - many companies are getting land leases. The PA198 is a tax incentive that knocks 50% off the tax revenue. The PA198 was given up by the Governor. In Elkton, Oliver Twp., the first year revenue is about \$83,000.00 and goes down each year respectively until it is exhausted. . The Governor has made a lot of promises that have not been kept or will not be.

Damrow continues that it is possible that two years down the road a statewide royalty fee may be in effect so there may be revenue given back to the community.

He recommends research, supports landowners who decide to put wind mills on their property, and feels good about a continued revenue source in a few years.

He left maps and plat books for use by Lake Township to keep for information. Also left was a draft of Oliver Township Zoning book for review but must be returned to Mr. Damrow.

Public Comments:

Paul Beck commented that he does not know what the push is on Windmills; they are only 2% efficient. Storage is limited; the community is looking for jobs that the wind farms do not provide. However, nuclear power would provide more jobs during construction and jobs after construction is complete; a nuclear power plant employs approximately 150-250 jobs year round. Nuclear is safe, and effective, other countries are going nuclear. Very few residents with large plots benefit from windmills. The electricity will not stay in this area, or in the Detroit area for that matter.

Mrs. Przystup asked what a landowner would get for having a windmill on their property.

Amended to read as follows:

Tim Lalley commented that he had a meeting with Bob Krohn who said that he knows a land owner who has 9 wind turbines on his property and makes \$100,000.00 per year.

Kurt Damrow replied that an average windmill would get \$3,000.00 per year per turbine.

~~Tim Lalley commented that he had a meeting with Bob Krohn who said that he has 9 wind turbines on his property and makes \$100,000.00 per year.~~

Gary Bauer replied that what he has seen is \$2500.00 per turbine per year plus \$10.00 per acre multiplied by the land owned.

Lou stated that Mr. Krohn said, due to confidentiality of the contract he could not reveal the exact amount of the contract that is in place.

Mr. Damrow commented that there is the 7-15 year accelerated depreciation in place, plus the promises from the Governor to help the community replace curbs, roads, help the community in other ways to offset the cost of the turbines. He continued that he did not think the Governor would keep any one of these promises to the community, but there would be other plans in place to compensate the landowner.

Clay Kelterborn commented that he had the opportunity to talk to large land owners in Hume Township and a lot of farmers in that area are not signed up due to the inability to farm around the access roads. The farming community and Planning Commission need to be concerned about the people and the community based upon letters that have been received and the impact that the turbines have already had on them. We need to listen to what landowners say and acknowledge that the turbines create noise, light flicker and have effect on the community. He continues that we need to take a good hard look at the revenue since that money will not be there forever. "As farmers in our community we have a responsibility to our neighbors, whether they are from another county, city or state, no matter where they are from."

Mr. Steve Tait commented that he farms in Lake Township and he signed his land up for wind turbines, "I wanted to make sure that they are set back far enough from my neighbors. I want to make sure to respect my neighbors."

Kurt Damrow stated that the windmill project is in its infant stages, with manufacturing to be coming to Michigan.

Paul stated that I have first hand information on job information from Imlay City, I spoke to DTE employees who maintain windmills, and they said that there are only 6 people who maintain windmills. If anything major goes wrong with a windmill a man is sent in from out of state to repair and maintain it.

Kurt Damrow stated that the wind project is working with Delta College and young people of Huron County to get the young community into the industry, not just locally, but nationally. They are looking at programs even in high school to train young people in wind energy and turbine production.

Tim would like Russ Lundberg to consider some of the side effects that have been brought up by the Lake Township community.

Kurt commented that Russ Lundberg would definitely take into special consideration needs of Lake Township; he will be at the Board Meeting sometime in March.

Lou Colletta asked if Oliver Township has 32 windmills up for one year, how did they just come up with the draft.

Kurt responded that the draft has been in progress and in place.

Lou responded that he has seen the Oliver Township minutes and there is no mention of any ordinance.

Valerie McCallum stated that at the planning commission meeting last year at the State Park Bob Krohn said that they did not have an ordinance yet.

Mr. Gene Champagne stated the Oliver Township Board and planning board are finally getting formal complaints and that may have helped to get the ordinance speeded up. He stated he was hearing good things and he was listening to people sharing with Lake Township, talking with neighbors, everyone is not all good with the Harvest Wind farms, noise, setbacks. He can relate to living on a wind farm. He continued that he feels good that he is finally sharing his opinion about the negative aspects of wind farms.

Lou stated to Mr. Smith that this is why this is taking so long to get this to go. Everyone is telling us to take our time. Oliver Township had nothing to work with.

Valerie stated that she would like to agree with the nuclear energy aspect that was brought up earlier. Nuclear power producing 1000

megawatts takes up 300 sq. ft. as compared to 200 square miles for a wind farm producing the same. . She proceeded to read portions of a letter from Mr. Larry Wunsch, dated 1/2/2009. This letter is recorded and attached to these minutes.

Kurt responded to the letter: he talked to engineers and by putting different tips on the ends of the blades of the turbines and implementing different engineering, some of the problems, like flickering, may be eliminated. With Lake Township having so much information to work with, Lake Township is very fortunate. Out of 83 counties in Michigan, Huron County is in good shape.

Lou stated that Governor Granholm has mentioned putting wind farms on the Great Lakes.

Valerie stated that she would like to see the Planning Commission do more research on what is going on in Europe; they are all decommissioning wind farms and going for nuclear power

Kurt Damrow stated that DTE is already working on nuclear power, solar power, and water. We're not looking at the entire Township to be covered with windmills.

Steve Tate stated he does not think DTE is the problem, or the land owner. It's who we elect for government that is the problem; it's what is mandated by the government.

Clay asked if there was not a state mandate, would DTE be looking at wind for energy?

Bob Siver commented that we should have the maximum sensitivity to the people of Lake Township, those who will be living next to the turbines.

Lou stated we are taking into consideration health, safety and property values. Setbacks are very important; we don't know what's going to happen with the economy and property values.

John Depner stated that he appreciates the work the board has put into the project. The talk tonight has been more open and fair. We are a narrow Township, 2 miles wide and 6 miles long with shoreline, wildlife, birds, Rush Lake and that leaves us with very little to work with. One of the primary reasons was to preserve farm land.

Amended to read as follows:

Tim asked DTE if they knew where the wind turbines where to be placed?

Valerie stated that when Kurt mentioned nuclear, we are not here to re-invent the wheel; there are countries that have had wind farms a lot longer than we have. We have a responsibility to our community to do the research. The wind turbines are costly, do not create jobs, and have health risks. We need to look at alternatives that create more jobs and revenue in the long run.

Kurt stated that we cannot tell people what to do with their property. Just have everyone look at these maps, sit down with people and show them maps, where homes are, you may find out you are way beyond Oliver Township.

~~Tim stated we have already mapped out where wind turbines will go and asked how DTE would handle different ordinances between Townships that span across each other?~~

Matt Wagner stated that the thought process is respect for landowners, residents, wildlife. Mike Serafin of DTE stated that they will always opt to place a turbine the farthest away from a home that an ordinance and geography will allow by looking at that particular situation.

Tim asked what DTE considers a safe setback?

Matt Wagner responded that DTE is starting a pre-construction noise study.

Kurt stated we will need to take into consideration our campgrounds and county parks.

John Depner stated that if 35-40 go into Lake Township with more in Chandler, Meade and Hume to a total of 200 windmills, and there is a vision of 1500 to 2000 wind turbines in Huron County; no matter where you stand you will see one.

Clay asked DTE how DTE would respond to the individual negative impacts such as Gene Champagne's?

Matt Wagner responded that they would treat it individually and on an individual basis, it would be up to the individual.

Paul Beck stated that not only is DTE competing for the wind, the present administration is promising that we will be getting this and

that and the next administration might cut us off from all of the funding.

Kurt responded that anything is possible.

Tim asked DTE how many acres they have leased in Huron County and how many wind turbines they anticipate per acre?

Matt Wagner responded 56,000 acres, 1 turbine per 125 acres

Gerry Geppert mentioned a private windmill in Sebewaing.

Kurt said there was a 2 year study of wind turbines to see how they impact the environment.

Lou stated that we are trying to put private wind energy systems for residential use in the ordinance.

Dan Depner stated we have one man sitting here that has been negatively affected by having wind turbines too close to his home. Hopefully it is early enough to make the right choices, not just in our Township, but our County. What recourse will we have if we do not make the right choices; I see we have two choices. Make the right choices in the beginning or make decisions in haste and effect many people and be back here in a year's time with many people with health effects. What will be built into your Ordinance for the non-participating property owner? Do we know what recourse the property owner will have. It is in every one's best interest in this room to make the best decision. I would hope Huron County, the Commissioners and Lake Township Planning Commission, because we all live here, are asking if even one or a few people are affected, is that O.K. with us? Or if we throw enough money at it will it be O.K.?

DTE responded they would try to avoid that situation, if not; we will work with that person after the fact.

Lou stated where does that liability lie, with the Township or the utility?

Motion for 5 minute break by Colletta, seconded by Geppart, all ayes.

Meeting resumed at 9:15p.m.

New Business

Opal Dufty –
Land split. Site plan check then goes to the Township Board.

Roadside Stand: Depner

Lou talked to MTA, called Ray Township, looked up Township Ordinance. There seems to be a roadside stand on every corner. They cannot sell anything from a roadside stand that was purchased from another or sold from another store. Anything sold from a roadside stand must be made or grown on that property.

Old Business

RR District building review, Ordinance ready for recommendation.
Lou made motion for recommendation, Gerry second, 4 ayes, 1 nay.

Interior Light Packet for consideration for Township Planning Board to review, see what's applicable, next meeting for consideration.

Calendar for upcoming meetings:

25 March 2009	27 Jan 2010
22 April 2009	24 Feb 2010
27 May 2009	24 Mar 2010
24 June 2009	
22 July 2009	
26 Aug 2009	
23 Sept 2009	
28 Oct 2009	
No meetings Nov or Dec 2009	

Mining and Mineral Extraction tabled until next meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Gerry, seconded by Dale. Motion carried – all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:56p.m.

Mary Johnson, Secretary