

St. James Township Planning Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
May 1st, 2018

Present: Anderson, McGinnity, Tidmore

Absent: Crosswhite, Powers

Other: Jessica Anderson, Carol Burton, Kitty McNamara, Sheri Richards, Rick Speck

1. Call to Order: Tidmore called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
2. Additions/Changes to Agenda: None
3. Approval of Minutes: NA
4. New Business
 - a. Discussion of Woollam development proposal

McNamara presented a timeline for the work on the Woollam proposal (to purchase the Beaver Island Marina and give it to the Township for either a marina or park) that had recently been approved by the Township Board. She went over the timeline, which begins with John Woollam's presentation to the Board. She explained that the Board had appointed McNamara and Martin to continue discussion with the Woollam Foundation on behalf of the Board and the residents of the township. She touched on several other important points on the timeline, which overall becomes much less defined as it moves into the future, due to the fact that we are still quite early in the process of fleshing out the proposal and the possibilities it presents. There is the possibility of having the Michigan Sustainable Small Harbors Project (a Michigan Sea Grant initiative) host a community visioning session this summer in order to help arrive at a community vision for the harbor of St. James.

Tidmore asked if there were any firm numbers on the performance and potential of the existing marina. McNamara explained that they were looking at mainland harbors for comparable marinas, and that yes, a careful evaluation of the potential profitability of a municipally held marina would be done before the township committed to anything.

McGinnity asked for clarification about whether the proposal from the Woollam Foundation would include Peaine Township in any way. McNamara said that no, the proposal was to ultimately give the land to the Township of St. James.

McNamara concluded by asking the commissioners for any points to consider going forward, especially as pertains to the Resilient Beaver Island Master Plan. It was suggested that the discussions of the future of the property take into consideration potential zoning ordinance changes cited in the master plan.

- b. Charlevoix County Planning Commission review of the Army Corps of Engineers public notice (Lake Charlevoix)

Tidmore explained that the notice and accompanying documents had been included in the packet for this meeting for educational purposes. A discussion ensued about the Corps' involvement in issues potentially impacting the riparian rights of waterfront property owners.

5. Old Business

- a. Update on Charlevoix County Planning Commission review of the proposed rezoning of the Willis property

Tidmore explained that the county Planning Commission had not had any issues with the proposed Willis rezoning, other than a mention that it might be wise to amend the ordinance to require screening for commercial uses of Harbor District properties adjacent to residential uses.

- b. Update on Charlevoix County Planning Commission review and subsequent legal opinion of the proposed rezoning of the Burton property

Tidmore summarized the issues the county Planning Commission had brought up in their discussion of the proposed rezoning (which they recommended denying). He then presented the case made by the Township legal counsel, which was that the County Planning Commission recommendation would not be enforceable, and that in addition, rezoning would allow for the possibility of the property becoming more conforming than it currently is.

Subsequent discussion covered the lack of availability of the most up-to-date Zoning Ordinance on the Township website, as well as the need to consider updates to the text of the ordinance to bring it into closer alignment with the Master Plan.

6. Public Comment: None

7. Correspondence: None

Meeting Adjourned 7:48 pm

Next scheduled Regular Meeting: June 5th, 2018