

St. James Township Planning Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
January 15th, 2019

Present: Anderson, Croswhite, McGinnity, Tidmore

Absent:

Other: Paul Cole, Eric Hodgson, Kitty McNamara, Rick Speck

1. Call to Order: Tidmore called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
2. Additions/Changes to Agenda:
3. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes from November 8th, 2018 Special Meeting proposed by Croswhite, seconded by Tidmore; motion passed.
4. Old Business

a. Hodgson Derelict Building

Tidmore explained that he had talked to Hodgson and asked him to attend a Planning Commission meeting to discuss possibilities and limitations for improving the property to the south of the Shamrock. Hodgson explained that he had been discouraged from doing anything with the property other than using it as a storage building and parking area because in previous interactions with the Planning Commission and Township Board both had indicated that there would be a good chance that if the building were removed, nothing could be rebuilt on the lot. He described a plan to raze the structure, legally combine the lot with the lot the Shamrock sits on, and use the space to add onto the Shamrock. The driveway would move to the property line beside the real estate building.

The Commissioners discussed the history of the issue, possible challenges to improving the property, and the possibility of the Planning Commission drafting a Memorandum of Understanding/Letter of Intent stating that, provided the submitted development plan for the combined properties results in a use that is not *more* nonconforming than the sum of the two properties' current nonconformity, the Planning Commission will not withhold approval of the development plan. McGinnity and Speck will draft a letter to be submitted to the Township attorney.

b. Gallagher Lane Access to North Beach

Tidmore explained that he'd contacted Pat Harmon at the Charlevoix County Road Commission to find out if the historic portage at the north end of Gallagher Road existed in any legal sense. A title search is underway, but is taking some time, given the age of the dedication. Speck will notify the Commission of the results of the search when they come in. It was reiterated that the Planning Commission is merely exploring the issue and has not decided on a course of action should the public access to the North Beach still legally exist.

c. Transportation Study

Tidmore presented transportation figures for passengers and vehicles coming to the island this year. He explained that Charlevoix County is issuing a RFP for a county-wide transportation study, and that he had contacted Jill Drury to make sure that Beaver Island will be fairly represented in that study, especially given its unique challenges. He expects the study will be conducted in the fall of 2019.

5. New Business

a. Downtown Parking

Tidmore explained that he had met with the Superintendent of Beaver Island Community School about the possibility of designating the school parking lot as public parking when school is not in session. The issues pertaining to parking were discussed and additional possible “public” parking areas were mentioned as well.

b. Updates to Zoning to more closely align with Master Plan

Tidmore reminded the Commission that the Township Board has asked it to look at the Zoning Ordinance with an eye toward updating it to bring it into closer alignment with the new Master Plan. McNamara suggested exploring the possibility of both township Planning Commissions working together on the updates. Tidmore explained that he is trying to arrange with Harry Burkholder from LIAA to help with those revisions.

c. Tidmore mentioned a County Leadership event January 28th. He also presented lake level forecasts and the end of year figures for the number of vehicles coming to the island vs. the number leaving.

6. Public Comment: None

7. Correspondence: None

Motion to adjourn proposed by McGinnity, Tidmore seconded—meeting Adjourned 8:20 pm

Next scheduled Regular Meeting: February 5th, 2019