

St. James Township Planning Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
April 30th, 2019

Present: Anderson, Cole, McGinnity, Tidmore

Absent: Croswhite

Other: Kevin McDonough, 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:

Planning Commission Officer Elections moved to first item of New Business. Update from County Planning Commission added to Old Business

3. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes from January 15th, 2019 Special Meeting proposed by McGinnity, seconded by Anderson—motion passed.

4. New Business

a. Planning Commission Officer Elections:

Tidmore explained that he intended to step down as chair, and that it also made sense to hold officer elections to fill the empty Vice-Chair position. Tidmore nominated McGinnity as chair, Anderson seconded, McGinnity recused himself—motion passed. Anderson nominated himself for the position of Vice Chair, Tidmore seconded, Anderson recused himself—motion passed. There was discussion over whether the Township Board member who served on the Planning Commission could hold a seat as an officer of the Planning Commission. It was agreed that further research was warranted to avoid any perceived conflict, and the absent member should be given the option to nominate herself for the office of Secretary. For the time being McGinnity will continue to serve as acting secretary in addition to serving as Chair.

b. Lisa Gillespie Development Review Application:

McGinnity reminded the Commissioners that this was not a public hearing, and that this development plan had only come before the commission because it is in the Harbor District, where all development plans have to come before the Commission for a recommendation before a decision is made by the Administrator. McGinnity invited Kevin McDonough to summarize the project for the Commissioners. The proposal is to first remove the existing mobile home, which is nonconforming due to at least one setback issue. The home would be replaced with a modular home oriented lengthwise on the property, avoiding any setback issues. The Commissioners discussed the project. A motion to recommend approval of the development plan was proposed by Anderson, Tidmore seconded—motion carried.

c. Marijuana Webinar Series:

McNamara explained that the upcoming webinar series looks to be very helpful to township officials in planning ahead for this issue and that she hoped that someone from the Planning Commission would as well as someone from each Township Board would be able to commit to attending. The webinars take place May 23rd, June 20th, July 25th, August 22nd, September 19th, and October 24th. The Commissioners agreed. McGinnity said the Library could host the viewing, though the fact that they happen during business hours might make it less conducive for viewing. He also offered to enroll, though he cannot commit to being available to attend every webinar in real-time, and any other member could take his place or join him.

5. Old Business

a. Hodgson building:

McGinnity presented the document he had created to send to Hodgson bringing together the sections of the Ordinance pertinent to the development plan he is contemplating submitting. There was discussion of various points and how they might be interpreted. Tidmore suggested McGinnity draft a letter to Hodgson to accompany the document. There was some discussion of the content and intent of such a letter. McGinnity agreed to put something together and send it to the other members for feedback.

b. Gallagher Lane access to North Beach:

Speck explained that he had done a more thorough search, and it does not appear that there was ever a legal easement or right of way to the water at the north end of Gallagher Lane.

c. Updates to Zoning to more closely align with Master Plan:

Tidmore explained that weather had prevented a meeting with LIAA regarding the possibility of getting assistance with updating the Ordinance to follow the Master Plan. McGinnity will reach out to Harry Burkholder of LIAA to discuss the possibilities. McNamara suggested coordinating with Peaine Township to update the Ordinance together, and to get an estimate from LIAA for the project costs. There was a discussion of the need for an ordinance governing food trucks, as well as other areas in need of updates.

d. County Planning Commission Update:

Tidmore informed the Commissioners of the Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative meeting on May 9th at the Community Center, the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance Annual Spring Event on May 17th in Bay Harbor, and the 2019 Master Citizen Planner Live Webinar Series. The latter takes place the third Thursday of the month, February, April, June, August, October, and December, from 6:30-7:30 pm.

6. Public Comment: None

7. Correspondence: None

Motion to adjourn proposed by Anderson, meeting Adjourned 8:10 pm

Next scheduled Regular Meeting: June 4th, 2019