

St. James Township Planning Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
August 14th, 2019

Present: Anderson, Cole, Croswhite, McGinnity, Tidmore

Absent:

Other: Kitty McNamara, Tim Newman, Sheri Richards, Rick Speck

1. Call to Order: McGinnity called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

2. Additions/Changes to Agenda:

Rental business in R-1 added to New Business; Update from County Planning Commission added to Old Business

3. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes from April 30th, 2019 Regular Meeting proposed by Tidmore, seconded by Anderson—motion passed.

4. New Business

a. Newman development plan

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 Tim Newman to summarize the project for the Commissioners. The proposal is to move an apartment building from the Beaver Island Marina property to a currently wooded lot on the back highway. There was some discussion of building department involvement, and questions of the exterior finishes of the building. A motion to recommend approval of the development plan was proposed by Anderson, Tidmore seconded—motion carried. (I forget who made the motion)

b. Recreational Marijuana Establishments

McNamara explained that she planned to propose the attached opt-out ordinance to the Township Board at the July meeting. She asked that the Planning Commission set up a joint meeting to discuss possible ways that the zoning ordinance might be updated to account for the legalization of recreational marijuana. There are four categories of marijuana related businesses that would have to be considered, and in most zoning districts a new special use would have to be added in any such businesses were to be allowed. She indicated that the township is hoping to have a public meeting to share information and gather feedback from members of the community on if and how to allow for marijuana related businesses. Another joint Planning Commission meeting after the public meeting would be needed to hammer out any changes to the ordinance.

c. Food Truck Ordinance

McGinnity explained that there had been some talk about the need for a food truck ordinance, and that it was important to be proactive with it rather than reactive. He presented some examples from surrounding towns and cities. It was agreed that more information was needed, and that it should be kept on the agenda for the time being.

d. Rental Business in R-1

McGinnity explained that a new watercraft rental business had appeared based out of an R-1 property on Carlisle Rd. There was an extended discussion of the nature of the business and whether it was allowable in a residential district. It was decided that it appeared not to be a “home business” as allowable in R-1. The Commission decided to obtain a legal opinion prior to approaching the owner. McGinnity to contact the Township attorney.

5. Old Business

a. Hodgson building:

McGinnity presented the letter he had drafted to accompany the document bringing together the sections of the Ordinance pertinent to Hodgson’s potential project. No changes were suggested. McGinnity to send with the summary to Hodgson.

b. County Planning Commission Update:

Tidmore informed the Commissioners of the movement in at least one of the townships in Charlevoix County to require that any special uses for a specific property be recorded with the county upon being approved.

6. Public Comment:

Richards asked if there was any news or progress on the Karnes property across from the municipal marina. There was a discussion of the issues with the property, which is currently a blight. It was decided to reach out to the owners and see if traction can be found for getting it removed.

7. Correspondence: None

Motion to adjourn proposed by McGinnity, meeting Adjourned 8:00 pm

Next scheduled Regular Meeting: August 6th, 2019