

St. James Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 7th, 2020

Present: Anderson, Cole, Croswhite, McGinnity, Tidmore

Absent:

Other: Kitty McNamara, Sheri Richards, Rick Speck,

1. Call to Order: McGinnity called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Additions/Changes to Agenda: none
3. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. Motion to approve minutes from (October 1st, 2019 Special Meeting proposed by Tidmore, seconded by Anderson—motion passed.
4. New Business
 - a) Planning Commission administrative support

McNamara explained how the Township had been exploring possibilities for additional support staff to allow for more proactive governance. One area of emphasis, given the impending task of updating the zoning ordinance to align more closely with the Resilient Beaver Island Master Plan (amongst other things), is a Planning Commission Administrative staffer. She explained that it was hoped that a part time administrative assistant would be able to allow the Commission to be more active and effective without putting the work solely on the members themselves, who largely serve as volunteers. While updating the Ordinance itself is a task for a professional planning firm, there are many smaller things that a part time staffer could take on that would help the Commission better fulfill its important obligations.

- b) Food Truck Ordinance Draft (and sample application)

McGinnity explained that the draft presented was drawn from Petoskey's City Ordinance, which therefore includes mostly police power items, rather than solely zoning. There was a discussion of how zoning for use of Township property would differ from zoning for mobile food vendors operating on private property. It was decided that more research was necessary to put together a list of proposed changes to the Ordinance to account for this new type of business. One thing noted by Speck was the timeline for changes to the ordinance as opposed to passing an entirely new and separate ordinance. It is unclear how such an ordinance would stand up without corresponding changes to the Ordinance itself.

One concern expressed was with mobile food vendors and storage of units in the off season. It was also expressed that the purpose of instituting mobile food vendor regulations would not be to prevent such businesses from operating here, but merely to

ensure that this new type of business activity is not conducted in such a way as to conflict with the intent of the Ordinance or Master Plan. McGinnity encouraged the commissioners to think about the issue and do research individually and send ideas or examples to him in before the February meeting.

c) Zoning for Recreational Marijuana

McGinnity opened the discussion with a few of the issues that will have to be considered as we think about before the Township considers opting in Adult Use marijuana businesses as outlined in the Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana Act (MRTMA) and the state's Marijuana Regulatory Agency (MRA). The extent to which zoning can be used to allow townships to choose what types of marijuana businesses to allow is not entirely clear yet. There was discussion of various aspects of the law and its impact on the local level. McNamara explained the Township would like to look at selectively opting in as soon as summer 2020, so it is important that the Planning Commission provide recommendations as to zoning. McGinnity noted that further research was required and urged members to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Rules and Ordinance, with an eye toward what businesses might fit where in the existing Ordinance, and if any changes might be required to allow for appropriate growth while remaining cognizant of the impact of the industry on island life, economy, and image.

5. Old Business

6. Public Comment: none

7. Correspondence: none

Meeting adjourned 8:19 pm

Next scheduled Regular Meeting: February 4th, 2020