

## St. James Township Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: February 6, 2024 6:00PM

Print Shop Museum Conference Room

Meeting called to order: 6:01PM by Taylor-Blitz Quorum established, Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of Commissioners: Present: Lori Taylor-Blitz, Mark Engelsman, Paul Cole, Vic VanDeventer

Absent: Cynthia Pryor – Excused, Called-in

Also present: Rick Speck, Shelby Harris, Pam Grassmick

**MOTION** to approve Agenda by: VanDeventer 2<sup>nd</sup>: Cole

All in favor: **Approved**

**MOTION** to Approve Minutes for January 9, 2024 and January 18, 2024 Special Meetings by: Cole 2<sup>nd</sup>:  
VanDeventer

All in favor: **Approved**

### NEW BUSINESS:

#### A. Housing Market Analysis of Beaver Island

After discussion, the Housing Market Analysis from Community Research Services LLC was **Approved** to be recommended to the Township Board to be included as an addendum to the Beaver Island Master Plan 2023.

**MOTION** for Approval: By: Cole 2<sup>nd</sup>: VanDeventer

All in Favor **Approved**

#### B. St. James Township Strategic Plan and Public Works Committee

The Planning Commission was updated and entered into lengthy discussion of the proposed Public Works, Safety and Health Committee's Strategic Plan Actions Discussion with follow up questions towards a possible fishing pier and future outlook for the Township Campground, all with positive remarks and support.

### OLD BUSINESS:

A. **Zoning Ordinance Amendment Status** – RFP response proposals are due February 29, 2024 by 5:00PM. No responses have been submitted currently.

#### B. Joint Planning Commission Meetings

- a. **Planning Commission Training** – Harris shared two training opportunities for Planning Commissioners including a Citizen Planner Course through MSU Extension that will be offered May – June 2024 and an invitation from Andrea Brown of Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association (MAP) to have municipal officials join in their membership that includes forums, classroom and webinar trainings and outreach opportunities.

**MOTION:** To recommend to the Township Board to update the St. James Township Planning Commission Professional Development Budget to **\$1,500.00**

By: Cole      2<sup>nd</sup>: VanDeventer      All in Favor   **Approved**

- C. Tiny Houses Status** – Engelsman began a conversation centered around the questions of “What are people looking for in tiny homes?”, “Where can owners build something affordable?” and “What are the health and building requirements for each option?” that was followed by great discussions around costs, housing styles, zoning updates, short-term rental effects, critical work force housing need, education, the BIA’s Housing Task Force status and more.

**ACTION:** To bring the subject of “tiny homes and other housing options”, “funding options” and “guiding/education for a future plan” along with an update from the BIA’s Housing Task Force to the next Joint Planning Commission.

By: Engelsman      2<sup>nd</sup>: Cole  
All in Favor      **APPROVED**

**ZONING ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:** Zoning Administrator Speck brought up the need for a Public Hearing to rezone the Rogers Property to Harbor District, while informing the Planning Commission that the Willis property was rezoned to Harbor, and Little Traverse Conservancy still needs to request a zoning update. None of these zoning changes are currently shown on the Zoning Map as it needs several updates but Speck is working with the Supervisor Welke, Planning Commissioner Pryor and Kiersten Stark of Charlevoix County Planning for 3 new updated maps at smaller sizes and costs to be mailed and utilized until the Zoning Ordinance Update is complete.

**ACTION:** Host a St. James Township Planning Commission Public Hearing followed by a Special Meeting on **March 19, 2024 at 6:00PM**

**TOWNSHIP UPDATES:** None given at this time.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Pam Grassmick of the Charlevoix County Planning Commission sent correspondence in regards to an EGLE Public Notice for conveyance and filling of bottomlands at Jeremy Fogg’s property north of the Marine Museum within St. James Harbor that was denied by the County Planning Commission. Grassmick followed up by notifying that as of this date there are 20 days for community members to provide input after the Township Clerk posted the notice, sharing concerns with for the slope and road, the Beaver Island Master Plan’s statement to protect the harbor from further sea walls and suggesting a procedure to be developed of how to more thoroughly inform the public of such notices.

Grassmick also sent correspondence inquiring into new building along the St. James Harbor on Ben Fogg’s property in regards to the new building being closer to the waterfront than the previous building and despite of NOAA’s mapping, if there was further information in the site plan on when and where a new septic system will be put in based on the expansion of the building and if there is an EGLE/Army Corps permit for the sheet metal going in for a break wall?

Discussion followed of how this building application was approved through the St. James Township ZBA and where improvements to future procedures of the ZBA will be made in order for this to not be set as a precedent within the harbor.

**ACTION:** Develop thorough procedures of how the ZBA and Planning Commission operate together.

**BOARD MEMBER AND PUBLIC COMMENT:** St. James Township Planning Commissioner Cynthia Pryor commented on the great active discussions that occurred at this meeting and the hope for them to continue.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** March 5, 2024 at 6:00PM – Print Shop Museum Conference Room

**PUBLIC HEARING AND SPECIAL MEETING DATE:** March 19, 2024 at 6:00PM – Print Shop Museum Conference Room

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** By: Cole 2<sup>nd</sup>: VanDeventer All in Favor Approved. **Adjourned 7:19PM**