

1 PAVILION TOWNSHIP

2
3 PLANNING COMMISSION

4
5 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 17, 2022

6
7 A meeting of the Pavilion Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday,
8 November 17, 2022, at the Pavilion Township Hall, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

9
10 Members Present: Ed Cagney, Trustee
11 Lynn Coville
12 Dan Frizzo
13 Abe Northup
14 Stan Strzalkowski, Chair
15 Cori VanDoren

16
17 Members Absent: Paul Roberts

18
19 Also present were Township Attorney Rob Thall and Planning Consultant Jodi Stefforia.

20
21 **Call to Order**

22 Chair Strzalkowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

23
24 **APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY**

25 Strzalkowski stated that John O’Keefe has retired from the Planning Commission. A new
26 Secretary and an individual to take minutes need to be appointed. Stefforia stated that
27 she was willing to take the minutes as the Recording Secretary. VanDoren stated that
28 she is willing to serve as Secretary. Motion by Cagney with support of Frizzo to elect
29 VanDoren as Secretary and to appoint Stefforia as Recording Secretary; motion passed.

30
31 **Approval of Agenda**

32 The Chair asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. There were none.
33 Motion by Cagney with support by Coville to approve the agenda; motion passed.

34
35 **Approval of Minutes**

36 The Planning Commission reviewed the minutes of the October 20, 2022 meeting. There
37 were no changes. Motion by Cagney with support of Frizzo to approve the October 20,
38 2022 minutes as presented; motion passed.

39
40 **Correspondence**

41 There was no correspondence.

42
43 **Citizen and Board Comments**

44 None.

1 **Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments**

2 Motion by Frizzo with support of Northup to open the public hearing; motion passed.

3
4 There was no comment. Motion by Frizzo with support of Cagney to close the public
5 hearing; motion passed.

6
7 ***Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments***

8 Strzalkowski noted that four areas of the zoning ordinance are proposed for
9 amendment: accessory buildings, building setback from a water body, definition of
10 family, and lawn care businesses. Lawn care businesses are presently allowed in the A-
11 1 Rural Agriculture zoning district as a special exception use. It is proposed that the use
12 be eliminated from the A-1 and listed as a special exception use in the C-2, Commercial
13 district.

14
15 Thall noted that any lawfully existing lawn care business in the A-1 district would be
16 grandfathered. The use may continue provided it is not abandoned. The ordinance
17 contains the length of time when a nonconforming use is considered abandoned and
18 may not resume.

19
20 Motion by Frizzo with support of Cagney to recommend to the Township Board that the
21 text amendments be adopted; motion passed.

22
23 ***Solar farms***

24 The Planning Commission discussed the solar ordinances from other townships that
25 had been previously been provided.

26
27 VanDoren asked if the eventual ordinance will separate personal solar arrays from
28 commercial scale and if there is a change at a commercial-scale operation, will the use
29 return to the Planning Commission for review.

30
31 Thall stated that a commercial scale use will initially obtain special exception use
32 approval and if the owner wants to change the use or approved site plan, it would
33 require returning to the Planning Commission. That is the process for any special
34 exception use. A minor amendment to a site plan would likely be reviewed by the
35 Zoning Administrator.

36
37 Frizzo stated that the Prairie Ronde ordinance is more in-depth on what can and cannot
38 be done and covers accessory use of solar and commercial scale. He likes the
39 additional detail provided in the ordinance as compared to Ross Township.

40
41 Strzalkowski concurred. The private use language however does not let the homeowner
42 sell to the utility company and he knows that some homeowners do sell back. We also
43 need to determine if we want to allow a group of homeowners to share a system.

44
45 Thall suggested that the Prairie Ronde Township ordinance be used as the base and
46 then personalized to Pavilion Township.

1 Stefforia asked how the Township Board feels about solar energy.
2
3 Cagney stated that he believes the Board is waiting to see what the Planning
4 Commission determines.
5
6 Stefforia stated that we need public input. The public will not be aware that this is being
7 considered until a project is proposed.
8
9 Thall concurred. The public needs to be aware so that they may comment. In Climax
10 Township, a crowd came out very opposed to a project. Consumers Energy is taking a
11 gentle approach presently to see which communities are interested. He does not agree
12 with a total ban and that communities should allow it somehow even if to a small
13 degree. A company will have the zoning process available to them as they seek sites
14 and need more acreage if the use is limited to a particular zoning district. The rezoning
15 request may or may not be approved especially if it triggers a Master Plan amendment.
16
17 Cagney stated that we do not want solar farms randomly around the Township.
18
19 Thall stated that they will want to be near existing lines and a substation. He
20 recommends that the Planning Commission start with a restrictive ordinance.
21
22 Frizzo said he likes the idea of directing the use to industrial and commercial districts.
23
24 Cagney stated that he cannot see why solar panels cannot be placed on top of large
25 industrial buildings.
26
27 Frizzo concurred adding that the rear of the N Avenue industrial properties could be
28 used as well.
29
30 Cagney stated that requirements for decommissioning should definitely be included.
31
32 Strzalkowski said that the ordinance should require that the site go back to its original
33 state.
34
35 Thall stated that the ordinance should not allow for salvage value when calculating the
36 decommissioning bond value.
37
38 Strzalkowski asked if there was consensus to use the Prairie Ronde Township
39 ordinance as a base. There was consensus. He directed Stefforia to prepare a draft
40 ordinance.
41
42 Thall suggested that the Commission consider making solar a special exception use in
43 the commercial and industrial districts at an industrial level and permitted in all zoning
44 districts at an accessory level scale. Just a permit use for residential scale should be
45 considered. The Commission might want to review the site plan commercial scale solar
46 for use by a business such as those along N Avenue.

1 Stefforia read the language from the Master Plan regarding solar that indicated that the
2 Planning Commission would study and consider where to allow large scale solar. This is
3 what is being done presently. Consensus is that the use is not preferred in the
4 agricultural areas. She will prepare a draft for review at the next meeting directing the
5 industrial scale use to the industrial and commercial districts.
6

7 ***Bylaws***

8 Draft Bylaws were reviewed based upon comments made at the previous meeting.
9 There was consensus that the Chair would announce at the beginning of a meeting the
10 known absence of a member so that the record would reflect that it was an excused
11 absence.
12

13 Motion by Cagney with support of Frizzo to approve the bylaws with the correction of a
14 couple typographical errors; motion passed.

15
16 **Any Other Business**

17 None.
18

19 **Adjournment**

20 The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.
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23

24 Prepared by: Jodi Stefforia, Planning Consultant
25 Minutes prepared: November 20, 2022
26 Minutes approved: _____, 2022