

MINUTES BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, December 12, 2017 --- 7:30 p.m.

Big Rapids Township Hall, 14212 Northland Drive, Big Rapids, MI 49307

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:30 P.M.

Chairman Philip Keating called the regular meeting of the Big Rapids Charter Township Planning Commission to order at the township hall on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present: Philip Keating, Carman Bean, Zach Cook, Gordon Oliver, Mark Sweppenheiser and Amanda Wethington. Mary Davis was excused. The record shows a quorum is present. Also Present: Zoning Administrator and Recording Secretary, Brent Mason and Supervisor Bill Stanek.

III. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

Mr. Keating asked if any of the Commission members had known conflicts of interest with any item on the agenda for this meeting. No one indicated that a conflict of interest existed.

IV. MINUTES:

Mr. Keating asked the Commission to review the minutes of the November 14, 2017 regular meeting. Mr. Oliver made a motion to approve the November 14, 2017 minutes as submitted. Mr. Sweppenheiser seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously with six ayes. Mr. Keating commented on how comprehensive the minutes for the Planning Commission have been, and how much that is appreciated. Mr. Stanek also agreed that the minutes were very complete.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

The 2017 Planning Commission Annual Report was presented to the Commission in its final version. Mr. Bean and Mr. Keating both commented on how much they appreciated the final version of the report, and that it appears to be put together quite well. The commission reviewed the Annual Report. Mr. Sweppenheiser made a motion to accept the 2017 Planning Commission Annual Report as presented and to forward the report to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Cook seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously with six ayes. The Report will be presented to the Board of Trustees at their January 2, 2018 meeting.

Mr. Mason presented a letter from the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly (MWRA) soliciting funds from the Planning Commission. Mr. Keating asked if there was any action that needed to be taken, and Mr. Mason suggested that no action was needed. The

Commission did discuss the value of the MWRA and the good job they do in helping to protect the Muskegon River basin. Mr. Sweppenheiser also commented on grant funds that the MWRA has been instrumental in obtaining for river projects in the area.

Mr. Keating asked for background information regarding the letter from Sue Glatz in reference to the possible cell phone tower on property adjoining her property at The Hills of Mitchell Creek. Mr. Mason stated that the letter was received on November 15, 2017, one day after the last Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Mason read the letter into the record:

November 10, 2017

Planning Commission
Big Rapids Township
14212 Northland Drive
Big Rapids, MI 49307

Board Members,

I am writing concerning a proposed Cell Tower to the west of my property, known as The Hills of Mitchell Creek. I will be out of state when your meeting is being held, but hope you will give my letter some consideration.

I think the site of the tower would be detrimental to selling my lots. I realize that this is a selfish statement, but when I sell lots, people build on them and they pay property taxes, which the Township receives. The site of a Cell tower would not be a natural site, therefore would not be conducive to a wooded setting, natural beauty, etc.

I hope you will consider the above when making your decision. Thank you for your time.

Yours truly,
(signed Sue Glatz)
Sue Glatz

The Commission members discussed the requirements for a cell phone tower as laid out in the Zoning Ordinance, and asked questions about the requirements for issuing a special use permit. Mr. Bean asked questions about notification for the public hearing, and whether we should notify property owners beyond the minimum 300 feet required by statute, since this could affect people further away than the required 300 feet. Mr. Keating requested that Mr. Mason should respond to Ms. Glatz's letter and state that at this point we have not received a request for this use, and also include a copy of the zoning language that is applicable to the area and cell towers. Mr. Mason stated that he would do that.

The new Land Use ordinance books were presented to the Commission. Mr. Mason reiterated that he was sorry it took so long to finally get the new books out to the Commission members. He continued with information about the new layout and the inclusion of new land use sections that haven't been included in previous Zoning Ordinance books.

Mr. Keating asked if there was any other business for the Commission, and the only item discussed was whether an MSU Extension Citizen Planner Course might be brought to the area. Mr. Mason advised that he is looking into the possibility and hopes to work with

Mr. Sweppenheiser and the City of Big Rapids in possibly co-sponsoring a class locally. Mr. Keating asked about the class content and meeting. Mr. Bean and Mr. Stanek explained how the class is laid out and what type of time commitment it would take.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Hearing no further business for the Planning Commission, Mr. Keating entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:49 p.m. The motion was made by Mr. Bean and seconded by Mrs. Wethington. The motion carried unanimously with six ayes.

Motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes of December 12, 2017 by: Mr. Bean, Seconded by: Mr. Oliver. Roll call vote carried with 7 ayes.

Philip Keating, Chairman
BIG RAPIDS CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

Date Approved