Rock River Township

Planning Commission Mtg – October 23rd, 2023

Proposed minutes

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Members present: Don Johnson, Tammy Shega, Olivia Kingery, Jon Rondeau, Rowan Bunce

Guests: Scott Bunce, Jana Hytinen, Dan Johnson

Motion by Kingery and supported by Rondeau to approve the August 21st minutes with corrections. All ayes. Motion passed.

Motion by Bunce and supported by Shega to approve the agenda. All ayes. Motion passed.

Communications – none. Per Bunce, we are still waiting for CUPPAD’s proofing of rental ordinance.

Zoning Administrator report. Permit for garage for R. Ollila on Kannisto Road. Permit for pole barn on D. Spencer on M-67. New storage containers are on M-94; this person had called ZA and was told that he needed a permit, but he hasn’t gotten one. There is also a discrepancy in regard to the location of those containers. They’ve been there approximately 1 week.

Has some bylaw and MP comments/questions. He was told that the bylaws didn’t comply with the zoning ordinance steps but he can’t see that.

Bunce had questions about storage container – do other townships have ordinances about them? What definition would you suggest to use for them?

Per ZA; some have required to paint them, some of required them to take all the wording off, some require them to be in the rear yard. Skandia allows them the same as any other set back and allows them in all zoning areas. You may not want to have them in town development etc, although the recent one is in town development. They would have to adhere to normal setbacks.

Right now we will consider it an accessory building. We will need to add the definition if we want to put other regulations on it. Bunce wants to get a definition for the containers and decide where they will be allowed. We will do this as new business at the next meeting.

Maki got a call from a bank regarding contacts for the Village. We’ll put the Village contact information on our website.

He also wants to look into what people should do when they use a mobile home while building. There aren’t any current provisions, but we could use temporary buildings – he has had experience that this has been a problem in the past. Says the most successful was to get a variance from the board of appeals, since it gives a good record and there has to be some accountability. Bunce says that there has been a limit for temporary building of 180 days in MI Section 31-03. Discussion followed. (Rowan - Page 25/pg#166 – speaks to the temporary building while building but there is no time limit.) Add to the temporary building use definition – “for no more than 365 days.”  (Will be considered and voted on at next meeting.)

ZA also recommended that we add the recreational building to zoning areas, as they are not in any at this time. Motion to add recreation structure (pg23/#140) by Bunce and supported by Rondeau. Recreational building added to all zones other than industrial (to TD, RR1. RR5, RP10 districts). All ayes. Motion passed.

Old Business - Master Plan

Bunce reviewed what we had per section, and what we should add to it. Much discussion led by Bunce in regard to new trails and organizations and what he has so far. Some items will not change – geographical and most economic data, for instance – he is going to update graphs, etc.

Shega to speak with Dan Rushford w/ACRC in regard to an updated road record similar what we currently have. The new map shows the current roads, however.

Johnson will check with CUPPAD for the recreational plan, which is a separate document from the Master Plan and use that as a starting point for updating.

We can add our notes/changes to the word document that Bunce had sent us previously. Kingery will get a Google doc going so that we can all add our notes and changes. There are quite a few minor updates to add/subtract from it. Olivia will ask for photos from social media and add to the document as well.

Implementation strategies – forward looking parts of the MP that will need to be done. Future land use needs to have some economic goals also. What we’ve got at this time, we used a previous survey for, and prior to completing this (future land use) portion, we can redo a survey to keep updated. Dottie from CUPPAD is willing to help with this portion. Rowan went through some goals and policies for the benefit of the board and the audience. Also discussed the Planning Commission reviewing ordinances annually.

ZA had some suggestions for clarification – Kingery will do a complete proofing while she uploads it into Google doc. Once it is completed, we will email it to surrounding townships.

New Business - Updating bylaws for the Planning Commission.

Last update was in 2009 – what CUPPAD had was not our most recent one.

Relative to the bylaws (page 4) there is no longer a county board – to be corrected. Need more added to the meeting section regarding minutes – and combine “membership” with III. Change public comment and meeting times. Discussion regarding what CUPPAD had vs what ours said.

Motion by Rowan amend the RRT Bylaws to add Membership absence, currently Article VIII, as Sec D to Article III; to add an additional public comment period at the beginning of the meetings, Article V – Section D between 4 (approval of agenda) and 5 (public hearings); to strike the county planning commission language from Section E of Article V. Section E will now read, “after a hearing or an amendment to a Rock River Township zoning ordinance, the Chair person shall prepare a report for submittal to the Township Board. The report shall include the recommendations of the Commission, the reasons for the action taken, and a summary of public hearing comments. The Chairperson or designee shall attend the township meeting when the report is submitted;” to add a Section I to Article V (minutes and record), and to amend Section A to reflect a new meeting schedule as by-monthly, with meetings on second Monday of that month. Support by Olivia. Roll call – all ayes, motion passed.

Future planning – December regular meeting will be December 11th at 7:00pm.

Public comment – Jana Hytinen– don’t our tax bills come in December? This will change a tentative survey schedule.

Dan Johnson – the County Board is in the final phases of their recreation plan with the help of a person by the name of Coggers with CUPPAD, and their meetings now are in video on their website. The CUPPAD woman is sending info in regard to the legalities of consolidation of township vs county to the county. It is believed that Skandia Township has done this with Marquette County.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Rondeau and supported by Bunce Adjourned at 8:51.