ISABELLA COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

May 12, 2022

A meeting of the Isabella County Planning Commission was held on May 12, 2022 in Room 225 of the Isabella County Building, 200 North Main Street, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim O'Neil, Bob Campbell, Phillip Vogel, Jerry Neyer, Adam Brookens, Ann Silker, Steve Swaney

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kyle Camp, Kelly Bean

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT: Ray Johnson, Zoning Administrator
Tim Nieporte, Director of Community Development

The meeting was called to order by Mr. O'Neil at 7:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the commission.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. O'Neil requested that the agenda be approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Neyer, supported by Mr. Vogel to approve the agenda.

Yes: Tim O'Neil, Bob Campbell, Phillip Vogel, Jerry Neyer, Adam Brookens, Ann Silker, Steve Swaney

No: None

Motion carried

PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of the March 10, 2022 meeting were circulated to the commission prior to the meeting for their review.

A motion was made by Mr. Vogel, supported by Mr. Neyer to approve the minutes.

Yes: Tim O'Neil, Bob Campbell, Phillip Vogel, Jerry Neyer, Adam Brookens, Ann Silker, Steve Swaney

No: None

Motion carried

UNAPPROVED

LIAISON REPORTS

Zoning Board of Appeals – Mr. Vogel reported one variance was heard and approved.

Parks & Recreation – Mr. O'Neil reported that the Parks Board met at Coldwater Park and noted that the Parks Department was still struggling to hire seasonal workers.

Board of Commissioners – Mr. Swaney indicated that the Board reviewed the County's first quarter fiscals and they were as expected for the year. He also indicated the jail bid came in much larger than expected.

TOWNSHIP CONCERNS

Jackie Curtis indicated that Denver Township is doing well, however they received a large amount of rain and that several roads were still closed.

Richard Schmidt indicated that Sherman Township is doing okay.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

OTHER BUSINESS (NON-PUBLIC HEARINGS)

Mr. Campbell indicated to the members that he has a conflict of interest because Bandit Industries is a customer of his company.

Mr. Campbell excused himself and left the room.

Site Plan Review #22-03 Jason Daws and Lou Jensen/Bandit Industries

Mr. Johnson indicated that an application for site plan review was received for a 200 ft by 400 ft manufacturing building. Mr. Johnson indicated that the proposed building is next to the Woodruff Lake Airport to the south and a low-density residential district to the east. Mr. Johnson stated that staff has received a copy of an approval from the Central Michigan District Health Department for the construction of a well and septic for the building.

Mr. Johnson also stated that a determination of no hazard to air navigation was received from the Federal Aviation Administration. He also indicated that he has spoken to Mr. Jason Daws about maintaining screening in compliance with the ordinance on the east end of the property between development and the low-density residential district.

Mr. Johnson indicated that staff has reviewed the site plan and it appears to meet all requirements in the zoning ordinance. Mr. Johnson reminded the members that this site plan review does not require a public hearing and that the State Law requires the Commission to approve the site plan if they find it meets all requirements in the Zoning Ordinance.

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A motion was made by Mr. Neyer to approve Site Plan Review 22-03 (SPR#22-03) as submitted by Jason Daws on behalf of Bandit Industries and shall be conditioned by the following:

1. The applicant shall maintain screening in compliance with the zoning ordinance on the east end of the property between the proposed building and the low-density residential district.

The motion was supported by Mr. Swaney.

Yes: Tim O'Neil, Bob Campbell, Phillip Vogel, Jerry Neyer, Adam Brookens, Ann Silker, Steve Swaney

No: None

Motion carried

Mr. Campbell returned to the meeting room.

Site Plan Review #22-06 Danny Aldrich/Rooftop Landing Reindeer Farms

Mr. Johnson indicated that an application was received from Mr. Danny Aldrich for a site plan review to establish a use similar to Cider Mills, Wineries, U-Pick Operations, Farm Markets and other similar uses. He indicated that an application for a zoning permit for a 16 x 75 ft lean to on an existing pole barn was received and upon inspection of the property it was realized there was a commercial business in existence on the property. He stated that research of the property did not show that any permit applications had previously been submitted to operate a commercial business at this location.

Mr. Johnson stated that he met with Mr. Aldrich and discussed the business and the need for site plan approval because of the commercial nature of the site. He indicated that the applicant worked with staff and submitted a site plan showing the use of all buildings and structures on the property. He indicated that the application also included a comprehensive description of the use of the property.

Mr. Johnson indicated that the narrative stated that Mr. Aldrich raises reindeer on the property and has the property open to the public two months out of the year with limited concessions and a gift shop for customers. Mr. Johnson reviewed the definitions for Farm Markets, Cider Mills, Wineries, and U-Pick Operations with the members pointing out the specific definition similarities of these uses to the one on this particular property.

Mr. Johnson indicated that upon review of the site plan it appears to be in compliance with the zoning ordinance with two exceptions. He stated that the first was requiring a copy of an approved well and septic from the Central Michigan District Health Department and the other was an approval or permit for the commercial driveway from the Road Commission. Mr. Johnson recommended these as conditions on an approval of the site plan.

A motion was made by Mr. Swaney to approve Site Plan Review 22-03 (SPR#22-03) as

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submitted by Danny Aldrich on behalf of Rooftop Landing Reindeer Farms and shall be conditioned by the following:

1. The applicant shall provide staff a copy of an approval from the Central Michigan Health Department for the well(s) and septic(s) serving the property.
2. The applicant shall provide a copy of a driveway permit or approval from the Isabella County Road Commission for the commercial driveway.

The motion was supported by Mr. Neyer.

Yes: Tim O'Neil, Bob Campbell, Phillip Vogel, Jerry Neyer, Adam Brookens, Ann Silker, Steve Swaney

No: None

Motion carried

Union Township Zoning Amendment

Mr. Johnson informed the board that the office received a map amendment summary from Union Township. He indicated the proposed amendment is to rezone a property from the General Business (B-4) district to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) district. He also stated that this was requested by an applicant to be able to expand an assisted living facility. Mr. Johnson stated the Union Township Planning Commission made a motion to recommend approval of the amendment to the Township Board.

Mr. Johnson stated that staff sees no issue with the proposed amendment and if there are no questions or comments by the members, a letter will be sent to Union Township appraising them of the Planning Commission's review.

PA116 Farmland Agreement – Howard & Smith Land Holdings LLC - Broomfield Township

Mr. Nieporte stated that Howard & Smith Land Holds LLC., submitted an application to the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program (PA116) in Broomfield Township. The application is for a total of 19.94 acres in Section 18. The property is currently being used for agricultural purposes is zoned General Agricultural (AG-2) and planned for Rural Agricultural Residential (RAR) use by Isabella County.

The application appears to be complete with the applicant applying for the property to be in PA116 for 25 years.

Mr. Nieporte stated that staff would forward a letter to the Township Clerk informing them of the Planning Commission review.

PA 116 Farmland Agreement – Terry Turnwald - Lincoln Township

Mr. Nieporte in formed the board that Terry Turnwald submitted an application to the Farmland and

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Open Space Preservation Program (PA116) in Lincoln Township. He indicated the application is for a total of 73.75 acres in Section 2. Mr. Nieporte stated the property is currently being used for agricultural purposes is zoned General Agricultural (AG-2) and planned for Agricultural Conservation (AC) by Isabella County.

He stated the application appears to be complete with the applicant applying for the property to be in PA116 for 10 years.

Mr. Nieporte stated that staff would forward a letter to the Township Clerk informing them of the Planning Commission review.

Isabella County Master Plan Amendment Notice of Intent

Mr. Nieporte reported to the members that staff has, over the last few years, identified some minor areas in the County's Master Plan which need updating. He indicated that with the results of the 2020 Census being available, staff is requesting approval from the Planning Commission to begin the amendment process by sending a Notice of Intent to the required municipalities.

Mr. Nieporte reviewed the areas to be updated which include, the census data, minor modifications to the Sherman and Denver Township Future Land Use maps, inclusion of airport layout plans, renewable energy, and an update to the Master Plan Goals Survey (completed by the Township Boards).

He indicated that the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, act 33 of 2008, as amended, requires the Planning Commission to send a notice of intent to the Boards or Planning Commissions within, and adjacent to the County.

A motion was made by Mr. Neyer to authorize staff to begin the Master Plan amendment process by sending a notice of intent to the required communities.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Vogel

Yes: Tim O'Neil, Bob Campbell, Phillip Vogel, Jerry Neyer, Adam Brookens, Ann Silker, Steve Swaney

No: None

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

STAFF COMMENTS – Mr. Nieporte indicated that Kim Kennedy from the Community Development office has announced her retirement and her final day with the County is in the next few weeks.

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PLANNING COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS – Mr. Vogel thanked the Isabella County Road Commission for their work immediately following the recent rains and their repairs to the County roads.

Mr. Neyer asked about how the Reindeer Farm aligns with the Right to Farm Act.

Mr. Nieporte indicated that the Count's definitions align very well with the Right to Farm Act.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bean adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

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Ann Silker, Secretary

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