

**WATERVLIET CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES
JUNE 7, 2022**

Present: Linda Rizzo, Joseph Stepich, Scott McKee, Deane Fizzell, Colleen Curtis, Louis Nordell, Deanna Heminger.

Also Present: None

Chairperson Heminger called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Roll Call was taken.

The minutes of the April 26, 2022 meeting were read. J. Stepich made a motion to approve the minutes as read. D. Fizzell seconded and the motion carried.

Shipping Container Amendment of Zoning Ord. No. 77

At 2:05 p.m. C. Curtis moved to close out of the regular session and enter the scheduled public hearing. D. Fizzell seconded and the motion carried.

With there being no one in attendance for the public hearing, D. Heminger motioned to close out of the public hearing and re-enter regular session. C. Curtis seconded and the motion carried. The public hearing was closed at 2:06 p.m.

Back in regular session, J. Stepich made a motion to recommend the amendment of Zoning Ordinance No. 77, Article XX - Definitions, Sec. 20.02 (A) to permit shipping containers in the M-1 and M-2 Industrial Districts with a Special Land Use Permit for use by established municipal fire departments or emergency first responders for training purposes only. D. Fizzell seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Master Plan Up-Date Discussion

J. Stepich informed the Commission that the sale of the Woodruff property to the Berrien County Parks and Recreation Commission is imminent, at which point, the Paw Paw River park system will extend from the County Park parking area in town all the way to the M-140 outlet bridge. He also stated that the County did receive a grant to develop the Enders property and added that to transition between that and the newly acquired Woodruff property the County would be surveying an easement across the east end of the airport's east-west runway.

Stepich also told the Commissioners that the fire department is acquiring a 1.9 acre parcel

in the industrial park for a training facility, ten acres north of that is being purchased by the Green Door for a grow facility and the remainder of the land to the north of that is being purchased by Withrow Excavating who will be moving their operation from Benton Harbor to Watervliet. With that said, Stepich stated that all the land in the industrial park will be sold. As such, he continued, the Township needs to focus on developing further areas for industrial development.

Stepich asked the commissioners, "Where do we start?" He stated that the recent building boom the area is currently experiencing is "despite our efforts. We can't take credit for that.", and asked the commission to consider things that would be proactive and keep the momentum going. Stepich continued by asking what actions should the township take to promote itself. L. Nordell stated simply; "We don't advertise." Stepich, concurring with that statement, said that the township needs to compile a list of its assets and use those as selling points.

After further discussion, Stepich told the Commission to come up with one specific goal to promote the community. D. Heminger said that the soccer field would be a good attraction to get people into town and that some type of building should be built on the site that could be used for various purposes. L. Rizzo added that even though the field is not ready for use currently, some type of sign should be installed letting people know what is coming.

Stepich stated that through this discussion three things could be interpreted as goals. Those, he said, are promoting the soccer field, expanding infrastructure and general community promotion.

With there being no further discussion or business before the Commission, D. Heminger made a motion to adjourn. L. Rizzo seconded and the motion carried.

The meeting was closed at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Robert Lohr
Zoning Administrator