



ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF THE JUNE 16, 2022 REGULAR MEETING

A regular meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, June 16, 2022 at 5:30 p.m., at the Ada Township Hall Assembly Room, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada Michigan.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Korth called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Butterfield, Easter, Jacobs, Korth

Members Absent: Burton, Heglund

(Member Dan Carter was appointed to the Township Board and is no longer on Planning Commission.)

Staff Present: Bajdek, Buckley, Said

Others Present: 1

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Easter, supported by Jacobs, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MAY 19, 2022, REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Easter, supported by Jacobs, to approve the May 19, 2022, minutes as presented. Motion carried.

V. PUBLIC HEARING - none

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Site Plan Review, Installation of a 12' x 28' Substation Control Enclosure in the R3-Medium Density Single-Family Residential District, 7050 Rix Street SE, Parcel No. 41-15-33-226-019, Consumers Energy (Thornapple Substation), Joe Lawson

Joe Lawson, representing Consumers Energy, 1 Energy Plaza, Jackson MI, 49201, said he was requesting the review and consideration for a site plan approval for the installation of a 12' x 28' control enclosure. He explained the reason for the proposed building was due to technology, equipment upgrades, and increased capacity, and that the existing building was not large enough (10' x 13') to house the current metering, new metering equipment, control units, and a new backup battery system that control the substation.

Mr. Lawson referred to the drawing of the new building and explained the make and materials used, the location, re-grading area, and their plan to clear out brush. He said they have already applied for a variance request with the Zoning Board due to the front yard setback, 8 ft. from the property line instead of the required 30-foot setback.

Easter asked if there was a reason not to tear down the existing building. Mr. Lawson explained that the new building was to hold additional equipment and the existing building was still needed.

Butterfield asked about plans for landscaping. Mr. Lawson said Consumers Energy was required to follow federal guidelines and the substation required a 7-foot fence with very limited landscaping due to design and security issues.

There was Board discussion regarding concerns for changing the character of the area and the variance request, location of facility, lack of a solid fence or landscaping, and the possibility of applying conditions for a solid fence and/or other landscaping options to screen the substation.

Planning Director Said explained to the applicant that there were four Planning Commission members present and that represented a quorum so it would require all four votes in favor for the site plan to pass or the applicant could opt to table the vote.

Mr. Lawson requested to table the vote and said he would share the Planning Commission concerns with his security department.

Jacobs suggested the Planning Commission seek legal consult to find out what right we have as a municipality to debate or not comply with potential federal guidelines; municipal law vs. federal law.

Moved by Jacobs, supported by Easter, to table their decision on the site plan review to request guidance from legal counsel. Motion carried.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Master Plan Update

Said shared an update about the steps moving forward with the Master Plan review. He informed that there were two community focus groups planned with their dates and times and encouraged the Commissioners to participate. He said there were also other pop-up events planned to engage the public and a survey available on-line within the next few days.

Korth stated he was impressed with the nimbleness and getting so much together so quickly. Said confirmed that the consultant, Progressive AE, were on schedule with their proposed timeline.

2. Text Amendments Update – Adult Foster Care Group Homes and Accessory Buildings

Said explained that there has been discussion about accessory building requirements, specifically the requirements for front yard placement, and he and Bajdek have met with Commissioners Korth and Burton to further discuss possible changes to allow more flexibility within the current standards. Said stated they are also reviewing standards for accessory buildings for non-residential uses.

There was Board discussion regarding possible review of other accessory building regulations;

building height, foot print size, increase in square footage, and whether to allow accessory use, under certain circumstances or zoning districts, via a site plan review and/or special use review.

Said summarized that the Adult Foster Care Group Homes-Text Amendment (for RP-1 district) was approved by the Planning Commission, however, the Township Board had some questions and concerns about it and tabled their decision and informally turned it back to the Planning Commission for review.

Following Board discussion the Commissioners concurred that the Planning Department staff proceed with a new process and initiate a new application for the Text Amendment considering all other zoning districts and not just RP-1.

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER / STAFF REPORTS - none

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT - none

X. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Easter, supported by Jacobs, to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Ada Township Clerk

rs:eb