

TOWNSHIP OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF HILLSDALE, MICHIGAN - PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
February 9, 2021/ PAGE 1 OF 3

CALL TO ORDER – The regular meeting of the Township of Somerset Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson, Connie R. Gale, on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 7:00 PM in the Somerset Center Community Room, 12715 E. Chicago Road, Somerset Center, Michigan. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. In attendance there was the Zoning Administrator Don Figiel, and one resident.

ROLL CALL OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS – Chairperson – Connie R. Gale – (Present) Vice Chairperson Namoo Carolan – (Present) Secretary – Richard LaRowe – (Present) Board Representative David Pumfrey – (absent) Member Lynn Hartzler – (Present)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Namoo Carolan motioned to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of November 10, 2020. Second by Lynn Hartzler Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Minutes approved.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Namoo Carolan motioned to approve the Agenda. Second by Lynn Hartzler Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Agenda approved.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST – No member noted a conflict of interest for the topics to be considered by the Planning Commission at this meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED: - No correspondence was received for this meeting.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD REPRESENTATIVE, ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS –

- The Board Representative was absent.
- The Zoning Administrator Don Figiel stated he would speak later in the meeting.
- As a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Connie Gale summarized two Appeals and one interpretation item from the January 26, 2021 ZBA meeting. The ZBA approved two appeals: one sought a variance from Section 2.6 road side requirement of 25 feet requesting a reduction to 12 feet. The other sought a variance from Section 2.6 rear setback. The interpretation item was a request by the Zoning Administrator on Section 2.5.1. The ZBA determined it was not in position to interpret this particular item.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: The only comment was a question on the absence of David Pumfrey. The members stated they had no knowledge of why David Pumfrey was absent.

TOWNSHIP OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF HILLSDALE, MICHIGAN - PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
February 9, 2021/ PAGE 2 OF 3

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Chairperson Connie Gale led a discussion on continued updates being considered to the recently approved Zoning Ordinance. She informed the Commission that in 2020 Region 2 Planning Commission had billed \$16,000 for their efforts in updating the Zoning Ordinance. This was \$4,000 above the estimated \$12,000.

Discussion took place by all four Commission members with regards to what signage language should be in the Zoning Ordinance; possible changes to the current wind/solar energy items in the Zoning Ordinance; possible changes including clarifications needed to the Accessory Building items of the Zoning Ordinance.

Chairperson Connie Gale continued discussions of proposed additions, eliminations, and corrections to the updated Zoning Ordinance based on the Region 2 Planning Commission reflection of her communications with the Township attorney, the Region 2 Planning Commission and prior input from the Zoning Administrator.

The discussion focused upon the complexity presented by the Region 2 Planning Commission signage proposal, the Township's sign ordinances prior to the Board's previous mandate to remove all signage restrictions, and the present attempt to come up with a much-reduced recommendation.

NEW BUSINESS – Chairperson Connie Gale reviewed Bylaws and Master Plan requirements along with the draft of the Annual Report, Training requirements and responsibilities, and Election of Officers. The following roll call votes were taken.

- A. Chairperson Connie Gale presented the Annual Report, Richard LaRowe motioned to approve the Annual Report by **roll call vote**. Second by Lynn Hartzler: Richard LaRowe Aye; Connie Gale Aye; Namoo Carolan Aye; Lynn Hartzler Aye. Motion passed.
- B. Chairperson Connie Gale, as the Trainer, summarized the needed training and interaction with the Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Township Board of Trustees. Namoo Carolan motioned to approve reappointment of Connie Gale as the Trainer by **roll call vote**. Second by Lynn Hartzler: Richard LaRowe Aye; Lynn Hartzler Aye; Connie Gale Aye; Namoo Carolan Aye. Motion passed.
- C. Chairperson Connie Gale noted for the year 2021 she is willing to serve as Chairperson; Namoo Carolan was willing to serve as Vice-Chairperson: Richard LaRowe was willing to serve as Secretary. Lynn Hartzler motioned to elect as Chairperson, Connie Gale; Vice-Chairperson, Namoo Carolan; Secretary, Richard LaRowe by **roll call vote**. Second by Namoo Carolan: Connie Gale Aye; Lynn Hartzler Aye; Richard LaRowe Aye; Namoo Carolan Aye. Motion passed.

TOWNSHIP OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF HILLSDALE, MICHIGAN - PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
February 9, 2021/ PAGE 3 OF 3

ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ON-GOING BUSINESS – Zoning Administrator Don Figiel provided a handout and introduced the Planning Commission for multiple proposed uses for the northeast corner of U.S. 12 and North Waldron Road. The Planning Commission agreed to having this matter presented by the possible land purchaser at the March Planning Commission meeting

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Dan York asked members to consider carefully the current restrictions on Accessory Buildings/Structures. He requested consideration of allowing Accessory Buildings/Structures on parcels without Principal Building/Structure.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM by Chairperson Connie Gale

Respectfully submitted by Richard LaRowe, Somerset Planning Commission Secretary