

TOWNSHIP OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF HILLSDALE, MICHIGAN - PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
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CALL TO ORDER – The regular meeting of the Township of Somerset Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson, Connie R. Gale, on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 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 four residents.

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

Note: David Pumfrey needed to leave the meeting at 7:30 due to work obligations.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Namoo Carolan motioned to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of September 8, 2020. Second by Lynn Hartzler Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Minutes approved.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Namoo Carolan motioned to approve the Agenda. Second by Lynn Hartzler Ayes: 5 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 had no comments
- The Zoning Administrator Don Figiel discussed accessory buildings
- As a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Connie Gale summarized two Appeals reviewed October 20, 2020. One was for a porch/deck with a roof, the other was for a reduced front setback on a garage. Both items were approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Board approval of the proposed updated Zoning Ordinance. Chairperson Connie Gale noted that the officially signed pages of the approved updates to the Zoning Ordinance are now on the website and hard copies are available.

Chairperson Connie Gale continued discussions of proposed additions, eliminations, and corrections to the updated Zoning Ordinance based on 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 initial items added concern signage. The discussion focused upon the complexity presented by the Region 2 Planning Commission proposal, the Township prior to the Boards previous mandate to remove all signage restrictions, and an attempt to come up with a much-reduced recommendation.

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Chairperson Connie Gale polled the Planning Commission members: two noted to simply not have a sign ordinance and two noted to have a simplified sign ordinance. Chairperson Connie Gale indicated a simplified sign ordinance would be proposed for further discussion.

Chairperson Connie Gale then reviewed the multiple items which reflected the noted prior input. She also explained needed review of the new recommendations from Region 2 Planning Commission. A number of these discussion items included proposed changes to our Zoning districts, parking, storage, group homes, accessory buildings, definitions and reflection of the Master Plan/Zoning Plan.

NEW BUSINESS – Chairperson Connie Gale discussed Bylaws in context of the December Board meeting and the January Planning Commission meeting.

Chairperson Connie Gale next discussed the proposed 'township ordinance' civil action enforcement ordinance and proposed blight ordinance in context of the Zoning Ordinance enforcement ordinance and the policy for following such.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ON-GOING BUSINESS – No additional business was discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS –

- A. Maureen Butrico requested a copy of the modified pages to the Zoning Ordinance presented by Region 2 Planning Commission. She opined the need for allowing short term rentals within the township, and noted her interest in where the topic of accessory buildings ends up.
- B. Dan York discussed the relationship of Accessory vs Principal structures and the amount of vacant properties at Lake LeAnn.
- C. Gary Grueneburg discussed also acquiring the modified pages to the Zoning Ordinance presented by Region 2 Planning Commission. He went on to discuss clear vision triangles at streets, residential and commercial parking, multiple families within one home, working from home, burning of leaves and accessory structures.
- D. Don Figiel continued his discussion of Section 2.5.1 AG Use, Pole Barns on lots without a Principal structure and parking.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM by Chairperson Connie Gale

Respectfully submitted by Richard LaRowe, Somerset Planning Commission Secretary