

## **OID TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**

### **OID TOWNSHIP OFFICE, BRANCH COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**January 5, 2021**

#### **JANUARY MEETING MINUTES**

The Ovid Township Planning Commission meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Andy AcMoody at 7:26 p.m.

Members present: Andy AcMoody, Chris Donbrock, Sean Groves, Jim Snivley, Tammi Schorfhaar

Other present: Gregg Gemmill, Robert Hawley, Chris Khorey, Joe Haas, Bill Benjamin, Matt Drennan

Chris Donbrock made a motion to approve the Agenda; seconded by Jim Snivley; motion carried.

Chris Donbrock made a motion to approve the December 1, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting minutes; seconded by Sean Groves; motion carried.

Jim Snivley made a motion to approve the December 15, 2020 Public Hearing minutes; seconded by Sean Groves; motion carried.

Unfinished Business: The zoning ordinance for solar energy which was discussed in the Public Hearing.

Sean Groves asked if we could explore suggested changes to the ordinance and try to determine how those changes might help and/or protect the community versus what is currently in place. Chris Khorey of McKenna walked us through the various sections of the ordinance and said that, in summary, the current ordinance does not protect adjacent landowners who are not participating and the proposed changes to the ordinance also address the current internal workings of these projects.

Joe Haas, our Township attorney, noted that the proposed changes to the ordinance also include changes to the Special Use process which would assist in the overall process and would allow the Planning Commission to make individual decisions on each project and determine whether or not a Special Use permit should be issued.

The Planning Commission requested that Chris Khorey explore potential language regarding wildlife movement and possible surveys from third parties that we can require. Chris confirmed that similar things have been done by other communities.

Sean Groves commented that he thinks the maximum height of 20 feet for the solar panels is considerable. The current ordinance provides for a maximum height is 16 feet.

Jim Snivley requested that we review the bond requirements further and consider increasing them as inflation could be a factor in the future. Robert Hawley said that Coldwater Township has a review period for the bond and Chris Khorey agreed that having a periodic review would be a great idea. Chris can incorporate language to that end.

Tammi Schorfhaar requested that Chris Khorey incorporate additional language in the ordinance pertaining to drainage and drainage tiles.

Joe Haas suggested that it might be best to take some time to review all of the comments and concerns which have been submitted and then perhaps discuss this entire issue further at the next meeting. There was consensus to do this among the members of the Planning Commission and Chris Khorey said that he will prepare a guideline for our use at the next meeting.

Zoning report: Robert Hawley will provide a complete report to us via email but he noted that things were relatively quiet over the holidays.

New Business: None

Chris Donbrock made a motion to have a work session on January 26, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. for continued discussion about the Solar Zoning ordinance; Sean Groves supported; motion carried. This meeting will most likely take place on Zoom. Information will be available on the Ovid Township website.

Comments from the Audience:

Bill Benjamin asked Matt Drennan what ESA Solar's presumed coverage percentage for the project proposed in Ovid Township is? Matt replied that they do not have one.

Matt Drennan of ESA Solar thanked everyone for attending tonight. The website [www.coldwatersolar.com](http://www.coldwatersolar.com) has a lot of information on it and Matt would strongly suggest people look at it. Matt said that there was also an economic impact study completed by a third party and it is available on the website for review.

Chris Donbrock moved to adjourn; Sean Groves seconded; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17pm.

Respectfully submitted by Tammi Schorfhaar, secretary.