

ELY TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission
January 10, 2022 – 6:30pm
Meeting Taped and In-Person

CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chairperson Randy Ruppel called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL

Arthur Gischia, Randy Ruppel, Dustin Kennedy, Steven Bertucci Jr. and Aaron Carr – Present. Also, present - Erin Stratton, Recording Secretary and Fred VanLuven, Zoning Administrator.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was in order.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Motion by Kennedy, supported by Carr to approve the Minutes of the December 13, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting. Ayes – 5, Nays – 0. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Gischia made a motion to approve, with support from Kennedy. Ayes - 5, Nays – 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Erin Stratton, 7 County Road CH- The recording secretary wanted to clarify which training she was currently doing, Assessor and Zoning Administrator, and state that she is not under the impression of any guaranteed job with Ely Township. She stated that if anyone on the commission

feels any conflict of interest at any time with these possible qualifications and/or employment in the future, then she would step down as recording secretary, and the position would go back to the Office Manager.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. Holli - Re-zoning – VanLuven stated that an application for parcels 52-03-231-001-00, 52-03-231-001-10, and 52-03-231-002-00 was turned in to Re-Zone from Timber Production (TP) to Resource Production (RP). The reason for this request as it is being sold and the buyer intends to build a home on the parcels and according to our Zoning Ordinance that is not allowed in TP. He then read the notice that was published in the Mining Journal in the required time, and in his Finding of Facts, all requirements were met. There is legal access from County Road 478. All surrounding property owners were notified by mail, and those properties are currently zoned TP. Property owner Dave Holli was present and stated he has many acres in Ely Township, and has never converted any of those to Commercial Forest to save on taxes. He stated that he recognizes a trend in out-of-state purchases of properties in the Upper Peninsula. Gischia referenced the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Ordinance to suggest that if the properties were Re-zoned as RP, they would be in violation. The Ordinance states that electrical service needs to be available in RP, and verified with Holli, that it is not. Gischia suggested that the properties be Re-zoned to Recreational Structure (RS), as the electrical service is not stated in the Ordinance for that. He made a motion to do so. Carr opened up discussion on the difference between RS and Recreational Structure-10 (RS-10), and stated that with the parcels equaling 160 acres, it may be better to Re-zone to that. RS-10 has more options available for land use than RS, and also allows for a Conditional Use for single family dwelling. Gischia restated his motion to approve the Re-zoning of the three properties, but Re-zone them to Recreational Structure-10. Kennedy supported this motion. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried.

B. Holli – Conditional Use – VanLuven stated that another application for parcels 52-03-231-001-00, 52-03-231-001-10, and 52-03-231-002-00 was turned in for a Conditional Use for a single-family dwelling. He read his Findings of Fact and stated that the publication in the Mining Journal and letters to property owners were included with the Re-zoning notifications. VanLuven recommended approval of the Conditional Use. Gischia made a motion to approve the Conditional Use for said parcels. Kennedy supported. Ayes-5, Nays-0. Motion carried. Carr communicated to Holli that if the purchaser has not built their home on the property in one year, they would need to apply for an extension of the Conditional Use. Gischia did inform Holli that the Re-zoning needed to still be approved by the Township Board, and Marquette County. The County has 30 days to review and give their recommendation.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Recreation Plan Update – The Public Hearing is scheduled for January 17th, 2022 at 6:00pm. Gischia asked if there was any public interest in the Plan, and Stratton not in the office, but one resident did state they viewed on the website.

B. Update on US41 Corridor Meeting – Ruppel attended and the minutes were reviewed.

C. Annual Report – Zoning Action Requests – Carr prepared a spreadsheet of the prior years Zoning Compliance Permits and the Commission commended him. It was discussed to keep this format for the future and save this file for reference.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Officers – Ruppel nominated Kennedy for the position of Chairperson, seconded by Carr. Kennedy accepted with the stipulation of not being able to attend the Corridor meetings. Ruppel said he would continue to do so. Carr nominated Ruppel for the Vice Chairperson position, seconded by Kennedy. Ruppel accepted. Ruppel nominated Carr for the Secretary position, seconded by Kennedy. Carr accepted.

2022 Officers for the Ely Township Planning Commission:

Chairperson: Dustin Kennedy

Vice-Chairperson: Randy Ruppel

Secretary: Aaron Carr

B. Road Commission Letter – The letter from the Marquette County Road Commission was discussed favorably. It states that the Road Commission is asking the Marquette County Board for funds from the American Rescue Plan Act, to split evenly between Townships in the intent for road repairs. No action was needed at this time.

ZONING ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

VanLuven's report included his conversation with Terry Carlson in regards to the campsites at the AMVETS property, and his advisement of the needed Zoning Compliance Permit. He also states that he has not had any communication with Mrs. Harsila in regards to the permits for the Salvage Yard, but discovered that on social media, they are liquidating the vehicles. He reiterated his support on the Holli applications as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Ruppel at 7:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Stratton, Recording Secretary