

MILAN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

January 11 2022

MEETING MINUTES

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum: All Planning Commission members were present except Pat Porter

Approval of past meeting minutes: No meeting minutes were available.

Correspondence: None

Report from Township Board member:

Public Comment: None

Business:

- **Discussion regarding the possible sale of Milan Beech**
Chairman Schauer mentioned that a person had inquired about the process of purchasing and opening Milan Beech. Their intent was to have overnight camping with cabins and possibly a liquor license. He was informed that he needed to appear at a planning commission meeting to discuss further.
- **Discussion of the proposed Solar Farm Project**
Chairman Schauer opened the floor up to questions from the public.
Question regarding glare. We do have an ordinance in place to address glare independent of the Solar ordinance. It is also part of the site plan review.
Question regarding revenue to the Twp. Chairman Schauer informed that the land will still be taxed as farm land however, the solar panels will be taxed as industrial property. This should provide funds to the Twp, however, we do not know any details. The Planning Commission does not take tax revenue potential into consideration regarding the appropriateness of the project. Our consideration is to insure that the project does no harm to the twp.
Question regarding the effect on property values. Chairman Schauer reported on a study that was done that showed minimal effect on property values. There were comments that there were other studies that showed significant decline to the immediate neighbors.
Question regarding if any applications has been submitted. No applications have been submitted at this time. We have been working on this because we knew this was happening.
Question regarding have we consulted other twps and their experiences. No we have not talked to any other twp except to look at their ordinances. It was suggested that we talk to Erie and Sumter officials.
Question regarding Apex. Estimated 950 acres will be affected. He indicated that they hope to go beyond the ordinance requirements.
Question regarding Apex have a good neighbor program. Yes they have one.
Question regarding if this will be spread out around the twp. Will there be a public vote? No there will not be a public vote regarding the solar project. The project will not be spread out over all of the twp. The project will be subject to a Special use approval.
Question regarding who is going to enforce the ordinances affecting the solar project. The process requires them to abide by all of the ordinances. The owner of the project is required to pay for any enforcement expenses that arise. We are concerned with mitigating any issues that arise for the twp and for residents immediately affected. The concern of the planning commission is to insure that this project is a benefit to the twp and to minimize concerns for those in the immediate area of the project.

Question regarding affect on wildlife. This is unknown but it is not anticipated to be negative.

Question regarding the projects benefits to the twp. Its in the eye of the beholder. It benefits the global warming program. It will not please everyone.

Question regarding inspection of the building of the project. The ordinance requires that we have inspectors, at the developers expense, monitor the construction and operation of the project in order to insure that they are living up to their agreement with the twp.

Question regarding decommissioning costs. The decommissioning process and cost are detailed in the ordinance. The costs will be reevaluated on a regular basis in order to keep up with the estimated costs.

Question regarding the affect of PA116 on the project. The state of Michigan is developing rules regarding PA116 use of solar farming.

Question regarding the future expansion of a new or larger project. The planning commission must approve any new expansion or additional project.

Question regarding weeds and maintenance. The site plan process will address weed control, and other aspects of the project, such as lighting, traffic, buffer zones etc.

Question regarding amending the current solar ordinance. We have a process inplace to amend the ordinance. However, at this time, there have been no suggestions to amend the ordinance. The planning commission will evaluate proposed amendments when they are submitted. The process for amending of an ordinance was explained in detail.

Question regarding contacting the FAA. We have not. Once the site plan has been submitted then we will be contacting any affected entities.

Question regarding did we look at other twps ordinances. Yes we did.

Question regarding are we willing to attend educational meetings. Yes we are willing.

Question regarding what prompted us to create the ordinance. When Apex introduced themselves to us in early 2020, we new that we should have an ordinance in order to protect the twp. This had been on our to do list but until now it didn't have high priority.

Question regarding will the solar farm be put on the twp map. No, special use approvals are not called out on the zoning map.

Public comment by Brenden Miller who lives in Lapeer county. He expressed his opinions and knowledge about solar farm in his area: glare, there has not been a problem; soil contamination, there has been no indication of contamination; taxing system, state is in the process of establishing financial rules; property values, they went up.

Rebecca expressed her opinion that there are numerous issues that need clarification. Chairman Schauer agreed and expressed willingness to address specific issues and amendments according to established guidelines.

Chairman Schauer agreed to have Sarah Mills review our ordinance and report to the PC.

Rebecca made a motion to have potential amendments to the Solar Energy Ordinance, 13.27, discussed at the February PC meeting. Bob Dopkowski seconded. Motion passed 5 yea, 0 nay.

A audio and a zoom meeting recording is available on the Twp's web site.

Adjournment at 9:17 pm

Next Meeting: February 8, 2022

**MILAN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
for
January 11, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.**

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum

Approval of past meeting minutes:

Correspondence

Report from Township Board member

Public Comment

Business: Open discussion

- **Discussion regarding the possible sale of Milan Beech**
- **Discussion of the proposed Solar Farm Project**
- **Other business that may be introduced**

Public Comment:

Adjournment

Next Meeting: February 8, 2022