

Au Train Township Planning Commission - Regular Meeting

February 18, 2021 - 6:00 pm

Held Virtually Using Zoom Video Conferencing

Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance:

Vice Chairman Fillmore called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Members Present: Jake Miller, John Carr, Duke Fillmore, Bill Weisinger, Matt Lang

Others Present: No less than eight visitors were present at some time during the meeting including Zoning Administrator Jason McCarthy, Supervisor Michelle Douchette, and CUP Applicants Adam & Jennifer Laugenberg

Election of Officers:

PC Officers for 2021 are:

- Chairman - John Carr
- Vice Chairman - Duke Fillmore
- Secretary - Matt Lang

Approval of Agenda:

One addition was made to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: To approve the November 12, 2020, PC meeting minutes as presented.

Moved: Carr

Supported: Fillmore

Motion Carried Unanimously

Public Comment:

None.

Zoning Administrator's Report:

The January, 2021, ZA Report was previously distributed to PC members and is on file with the township clerk.

New Business:

Public Hearing, Adam and Jennifer Laufenberg Conditional Use Permit Application for a campground on their property at N7685 Old Golf Course Road

The public hearing was opened at 6:09 pm. Adam and Jennifer Laufenberg talked of their desire to develop a primitive campground on their property on Old Golf Course Road and addressed several questions from the PC.

There was no correspondence received concerning the CUP application.

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There was no public comment concerning the CUP application.

The PC reviewed the nine standards of Section 802 Basis of Determination/General Standards of the Au Train Township Zoning Ordinance and how they pertain to the CUP request.

After discussion, the following motion was made:

Motion: To approve the CUP for up to 25 campsites with the following condition attached: ATV or snowmobile usage into or out of the campground is not permitted unless direct access from the campground to the trail network is developed. The intent of this condition is to keep all ATV and snowmobile traffic away from the M-28 corridor. This condition does not apply to usage inside of the campground itself.

Moved: Fillmore

Supported: Carr

Vote: Miller - Yes, Fillmore - Yes, Lang - Yes, Carr - Yes, Weisinger - Yes

Motion Carried

The public hearing was closed at 6:48 pm.

Meeting Dates for 2021:

The PC regular meeting schedule for 2021 is as follows:

- February 18
- May 20
- August 19
- December 9

All meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the Au Train Township Hall unless required to be held virtually.

PC Budget for 2021:

A proposed 2021 budget for the PC was developed and will be sent to the Township Board.

Motion: To adopt the proposed 2021 PC budget of \$29,450.

Moved: Carr

Supported: Fillmore

Vote: Carr - Yes, Fillmore - Yes, Weisinger - Yes, Miller - Yes, Lang - Yes

Motion Carried

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Old Business:

Shipping Containers

The Township Board has asked the PC to revisit the proposed zoning ordinance amendment(s) related to shipping containers. The PC discussed various potential uses of shipping containers as well as concerns of the long term aesthetics of shipping containers. Allowing shipping containers via the CUP process was also discussed. ZA McCarthy and M. Lang will propose basic language governing shipping containers at the next PC meeting.

Mobile Food Trucks

Including language in the zoning ordinance regulating mobile food trucks was discussed. ZA McCarthy and M. Lang will research and propose some basic language governing mobile food trucks at the next PC meeting.

Vacation Rentals

Vacation rentals in the township were discussed. Various items discussed include: 1) How vacation rentals support tourism and employment opportunities in the area; 2) Establishing vacation rental free zones; 3) Confusion over the consistency of past/present ZA rulings related to vacation rentals; and 4) The need to document where existing vacation rentals are located in the township.

Updates to Zoning Ordinance

The ongoing amending of the zoning ordinance was discussed. M. Lang will send a current summary of the proposed zoning ordinance amendments to PC members. J. Miller will document his suggestions for additional amendments. A work session to continue working on the zoning ordinance amendments was scheduled for March 18, 2021, to be held via Zoom.

Public Comment:

M. Douchette mentioned that she would like to require a food truck's yearly inspection report from LMAS be sent to the township for filing. Secondly, she expressed her appreciation to the PC for working on a compromise on shipping containers. Lastly, she stated her belief that there needs to be a balance of vacation rentals within the township. She has fielded complaints on vacation rentals from the community. She also knows of someone who has moved away because of how vacation rentals were allowed to change the character of their neighborhood.

Correspondence:

M. Lang talked of his correspondence with the MTA (Michigan Township Association) regarding whether or not someone can be required to identify him/herself before speaking at a PC meeting. He expressed his opinion that the MTA's response seems to contradict what is stated in Attorney General Nessel's Open Meetings Act Handbook. He will forward the correspondence to the PC members.

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Adjournment:

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Fillmore

Supported: Lang

Motion Carried Unanimously at 8:47 pm.

Acronyms used in this document: CUP - Conditional Use Permit, PC - Planning Commission, ZA - Zoning Administrator