

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MONITOR
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
September 3rd, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jim Bellor at 6pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America was recited by all present.

Members present: E. Rosenbrock, A. Shabluk, J. Meier, C. Schweitzer, B. Campbell, J. Bellor

Members absent: B. Walsh (excused)

Also present: R. Sheppard, Attorney, D. Scherzer

**Motion by Campbell, supported by Schweitzer to approve the agenda as presented.
Motion unanimously carried.**

**Motion by Rosenbrock supported by Shabluk to approve the minutes of August 13, 2024,
as presented.
Motion unanimously carried.**

Public Input

Chairman Bellor opened public comment at 6:02 p.m.

Resident addressed the members regarding the signage at the dentist office located on Midland Road that does not comply with the signage ordinance. The sign is placed in a manner that makes it difficult to back out of their driveway. He questioned how the dentist office was able to put this sign up.

Bellor commented the members are aware of this issue and are under the impression he was going to meet with the appropriate people to obtain the proper permits, in which has not happened.

Bellor also mentioned Sheppard has sent him a letter and once we receive a response, we will move forward with addressing the residing issues.

Resident questioned if he could tone it down at night or possibly even shut it off.

Bellor discussed having David check the brightness of the sign with his light meter.

Public input was closed at 6:04 p.m.

Items for Consideration

Bellor mentioned the Monitor Township Development Manual was well done.

Scherzer stated that the Development Manual will be brought back before the Planning Commission in December as there will be several changes made to the Trustees, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals members.

Bellor agreed.

Unfinished Business

Zoning Ordinance – Chapter 15 Signs

Sheppard stated the members should've received a letter from him dated August 5, 2024, in last month's packet, where he outlined all the deficiencies in the signs.

Sheppard mentioned he went through Chapter 15 to identify the deficiencies, conflicts, problems with the sign ordinance regulation, in contrast to either the definitions or other parts of the ordinance.

Sheppard stated that the Ordinance defines a sign as a minimum of 8 feet high, yet it also limits signs in commercial zones to 8 feet high. This is a conflict.

Sheppard recommended keeping the pylon and pole sign as a minimum of 8 feet in height.

Sheppard commented on the beginning of Chapter 15 Section 3 where numerous signs are erected without a permit.

Sheppard questioned what the members would like to do with the signage size, keep it at 32 square feet and keep giving variances, or go to a 50 square foot sign and no more variances.

Scherzer agreed.

Bellor stated that as discussed in the past between members, variances should not be granted for signage.

Members agreed.

Discussion ensued among members.

Sheppard discussed Menard's frontage and the issues with the Ordinance regarding this. He questioned whether we should be allowing detention ponds to count towards frontage.

Rosenbrock stated he does not see a problem with a detention pond being counted towards their frontage only because they sit so far off the road.

Meier questioned who owns the property past the detention pond.

Sheppard stated that the lot west of Menard's has been sold to Covenant.

Sheppard discussed further issues with Menard's regarding things they have done in other areas in terms of closing stores, placing covenants, etc.

Bellor questioned why this was not discussed prior to the Planning Commission approving their site plans for the storage units and other stores in front of Menard's.

Sheppard stated he has continuously brought this up.

Meier stated he does not believe the Menard's building will have an issue being bought if they do choose to close.

Rosenbrock responded with a stipulation on it, nobody will want to buy it and the Township will take the fall in the end.

Sheppard stated that he pointed out before that the Township has the minimum road widths for a reason, and we let Taco Bell slide through.

Bellor stated he has watched the Planning Commission turn down development on the north side of Wilder Road three times now, and that is part of the reason the Planning Commission allowed this.

Discussion ensued among members.

Sheppard questioned what the Planning Commission would like to do regarding the temporary, non-permitted flag signs.

Rosenbrock and Bellor stated they believe most of the flag signs are seasonal.

Sheppard read Section 2.85 Subsection S which defines temporary signs as something that is placed for a "short" time.

Sheppard discussed the verbiage used and stated that this would never hold in front of a judge because one person's version of short versus another may be drastically different. The Ordinance is vague here.

Shabluk questioned whether it is beneficial to enforce this or not.

Sheppard gave an example of more specific verbiage that should be considered.

Schweitzer commented unless the Planning Commission is going to enforce it, then they are wasting their time discussing it.

Bellor stated that half of our Ordinance book is not being enforced and that people do not do their homework ahead of time.

Bellor stated he believes this would be creating something that would not be enforced.

Sheppard stated that regardless, they still need to figure out what to do about the 8-foot minimum/maximum conflict.

Bellor questioned how the Township can legally stop some of these signs from being illegally placed.

Sheppard stated that Dave DeGrow needs to shut these down, since he issues the sign permits.

Bellor questioned why the sign at the dentist office on Midland Road it is not being stopped.

Meier questioned if this is something Sheppard would be able to fight in court.

Sheppard responded yes, but reminded members that Dick Sabias gave the original permit, but since this sign is a replacement sign, it must comply with the current Ordinance.

Sheppard stated this issue was discussed between David Rochow, Don Scherzer, and himself months ago and that David Rochow wanted this stopped.

Sheppard commented that until he gets the green light from Dave DeGrow, he cannot do anything.

Bellor responded he does not believe this should have taken six months for Sheppard to get the green light.

Meier questioned why the Planning Commission does not tell the Board to start a legal case against Randall Ruff.

Scherzer stated the Planning Commission should write a letter to the Board with a recommendation.

Bellor stated Bob Walsh is the liaison between the Planning Commission and the Board, and he should be discussing this at the Board meeting when he gives them a report, rather than having the Planning Commission write a letter.

Meier told Bellor that Bob Walsh usually gives a very quick report at the Board meetings and gives them nothing.

Scherzer stated Bob Walsh will not be here the next few meetings, so expecting this over the next several months is not going to happen.

Members decided a letter would be best.

Bellor asked Sheppard what he recommends the Planning Commission should do regarding the several different discrepancies.

Sheppard stated he thinks we should keep the pylon and pole signs at a minimum of 8 feet before the sign face exists and that we can take the maximum sign face up to 50 square feet.

Sheppard believes him and Don Scherzer should look at changing the numbers in the table regarding sign measurements.

Discussion ensued among members.

Bellor asked Scherzer and Sheppard to bring their recommendations for next month.

Sheppard stated he would like to increase the number of incidental signs because he does not believe that businesses should have to go for a variance for traffic control signage.

Schweitzer read the drafted letter to the Board regarding 1631 Midland Road and Bellor agreed to sign and drop off to the Township.

Section 2.93 Definition of Structure –

Scherzer stated that he kept the previous language and just added a few sentences to it. The most important sentence being that all setback requirements for buildings shall apply to structures unless specifically identified as otherwise in the Ordinance.

Scherzer confirmed that this does not eliminate the definition of a building and it does not include fences or deer blinds.

Discussion ensued among members.

Members agreed on the change of verbiage.

Motion by Bellor, supported by Rosenbrock to accept the new verbiage under Section 2.93 regarding structures.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion unanimously carried.

Bellor questioned if SK Siltron has updated their site plan.

Scherzer confirmed.

Reports –

SK Siltron CSS LLC – Spicer Review/Watermain Location

Bellor questioned if SK Siltron has updated their site plan.

Scherzer confirmed.

Scherzer stated that SK Siltron is moving this watermain to build a new building, which sounds like a simple operation, but it is not because they must build a new watermain, put that in service with a brand-new fire hydrant, pressure test, disinfect, etc. and then they have to begin taking out the old watermain.

Sheppard told Planning Commission members that SK Siltron received a tentative variance for the setback of the originally building and explained that it is tentative because they submitted a request for 1 foot, but it is actually a 1 1/3 feet, which forces a re-notice prior to full approval.

Bellor stated that there is no access around the building, and he had brought this up in the past.

Discussion ensued among members.

Scherzer commented on Prime Brother's project and told members that according to Joe Baker, Mark Hugo has not been in contact with him regarding previous issues with distance from a fire hydrant.

Bellor stated Mark Hugo called him after the meeting and told him that they are not going to be storing furniture in the trucks but wants that in writing.

Members agreed that should be in writing.

Bellor mentioned the fire code states the hydrant must be located 300 feet from the premises, not the building, so he believes it complies.

Motion by Shabluk, supported by Schweitzer to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Schweitzer
Secretary
S/jjh