

Watson Township Planning Commission

September 25, 2013

Regular Meeting

1. Call to order-

Chairperson David Carter called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll call and recognition of visitors-

Present: David Carter, Barb Wroblewski, Bruce Bos, Chuck Andrysiak, Michelle Harris, Bev McKinnon, Troy Baker

Absent: none

Visitors- Karen Fifelski, John Hollar, Lindsay Lindon

4. Approval of Minutes- motion made by Chuck Andrysiak to approve the Minutes with the addition at the end of #8d "such as furnaces, hot water heaters and wood furnaces." It was seconded by Troy Baker. All approved.

5. Public comments and communications concerning items not on Agenda-

- a. Lindsay Lindon and John Hollar inquired what Schnable Lake Campgrounds had developed in conjunction with the granted special use permit and if they had requested another special use permit for development of more sites. Chuck Andrysiak stated that, from what he understood, their long term plan is to develop more sites.
- b. Lindsay Lindon expressed her concern that the tree line that was planted was low to the ground and that there has been excessive noise coming from the campgrounds. Chuck Andrysiak will relay the concern to our township supervisor and ask her to call PCI to inspect the development for compliance to the conditions of the special use permit.

6. Approval of Agenda-motion made by Bruce Bos; seconded by Barb Wroblewski.

## 7. Old Business- Fracturing

- a. Chuck Andrysiak and Dave Carter attended the Gun Plains Township meeting at which representatives from the DEQ, FLOW (For the Love Of Water) and a consultant regarding water issues presented information. At the next Gun Plains Township meeting they will be discussing ordinance compilation. It seems they will be focusing on truck traffic limitations and obtaining the chemical lists among other possibilities.
- b. At the meeting there was discussion of the well head activity being off limits to the township and the importance of obtaining the chemical list to assist First Responders in case of an emergency. The state of Michigan requires a list of the chemicals within 60 days after drilling has begun. Their next meeting is October 16<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.
- c. Dave Carter shared that Hal Fitch (from the DEQ) explained the site inspections are conducted by the DEQ and he has sufficient staff to do this. According to Hal, they have enough manpower to ensure quality control.
- d. Facts that Chuck and Dave shared with us were: Michigan uses 20% of the natural gas it produces; when a permit to conduct fracturing activities is requested, the state has 50 days to process it; in 2008 there were 20 deep wells dug with 50 permits still being processed; the horizontal fracturing can go up to two miles out from the well head; the brine water used in the drilling is put into steel tanks and injected into deep disposal wells.
- e. Concerns that were discussed at Gun Plains Township meeting were: migration of chemicals; water usage; management of waste water; surface spills; earth quakes; methane emissions; neighbors have had issues with their well water because of the water table being lowered.
- f. Other points of interest:
  - Sites can be a quarter mile of homes
  - The typical size of the site is 80 acres
  - The actual pad size can be up to five acres
  - The drilling duration can be 24 hours a day for three- four weeks
  - Neighbors have experienced water table levels dropping enough to negatively affect their wells
  - According to the DEQ, locals can require bonding for the roads
  - Local townships can control the number of trucks used, the routes and hours of operation
  - The chemicals used in horizontal fracturing are the same used in vertical drilling, just in smaller amounts
  - It is not economical for the companies to reuse the same water because of the cost of the tanks

- There are concerns about the environmental impact of the abandoned pipelines
- g. We were informed that our Master Plan needs to support any ordinances that we draft. There are two avenues for us to pursue, either through zoning or by police powers. We will figure out which aspects of the hydraulic fracturing process we can influence and focus our efforts on those findings.

8. Old Business continued- School Section Lake

- a. Kathy Coffee has property on School Section Lake. A neighbor built a shed many years ago near their property line. The same neighbor put up a fence between the shed and the property line. Kathy Coffee has complained about the location of the building.
- b. Watson Township attorney, John Lohrstorfer, in a letter to PCI, recommended that an amendment to our zoning ordinance regarding side yard setbacks for School Section Lake be put together. Our current ordinance goes back to 2003. There is a three year statute of limitations.
- c. It was discussed that we should have someone from PCI, who knows the property lines, take an inventory of current building locations. A representative from PCI estimated a cost of \$200 for this action. The question was raised who would pay for the inventory cost. It was suggested that perhaps we should inventory all the lakes that have residences on them. Also we need to make a change to our Master Plan to reflect any changes to setbacks that we deem necessary. The planning commission will be requesting a bid from PCI and presenting that to the Watson Township Board.
- d. As a side note, there was a suggestion made to place a reminder in our township newsletter that residents need mechanical or equipment permits before any electrical or mechanical equipment is installed in their home or on their property such as furnaces, hot water heaters and wood furnaces.

9. New Business- none

10. On Going Business/Any Other Business- none

11. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 pm by Troy Baker. It was seconded by Barb Worbleski. All approved.

Submitted by,

Michelle Harris  
Watson Township Planning Commission Secretary