

# Watson Township Planning Commission

February 5, 2014

## Regular Meeting Minutes

### 1. Call to order-

Chairperson David Carter called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

### 3. Roll call and recognition of visitors-

Present: David Carter, Bruce Bos, Chuck Andrysiak, Michelle Harris, Bev McKinnon, Barb Wroblewski and Mark Sisson our Planning Consultant

Absent: Troy Baker

Visitors- Carl Wroblewski

### 4. Approval of Minutes- motion made by Bev McKinnon to approve the minutes with the grammatical adjustments. It was seconded by Bruce Bos. All approved.

### 5. Public comments or communications concerning items not on Agenda- none

### 6. Approval of Agenda- motion made to accept with the added item under new business, by Barb Wroblewski; seconded by Chuck Andrysiak.

### 7. Old Business-

- a. Fracturing- Dave Carter filled Mark Sisson in on what the nature of our discussions have been the past few months regarding horizontal hydraulic fracturing. Dave has contacted the DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) requesting information.
- b. Mark Sisson's report on horizontal hydraulic fracturing-
  - Economically southwest Michigan is not a viable place to drill at this time; considering the costs incurred for installation of a well and the risk of coming up dry.
  - Watson Township has no direct authority to regulate fracking, oil, gas etc. If we decide to do what may be reasonably prudent to protect the environment, we can

explore other township's ordinances and adapt them to fit our township goals.

- It is recommended that regulations include all industries and activities if any, so they would not appear exclusive to fracking.
- Mark Sisson then walked us through a list of possible ordinances he compiled for us to perhaps consider. Such as requiring a land reclamation plan that regulates how the area is left when the industry has completed their activity. Another potential one would be a well head protection plan that could include restrictions on disposal or storage of hazardous wastes, etc.
- Waston Township could request a bond to ensure the monies for any potential infrastructure restoration.
- There is a Natural Rivers Protection Act that could be referenced.
- The location of a well head and how it's accessed cannot be regulated.
- It has been advised that the planning commission decide if it makes sense to pursue recommending ordinances given the impacts to agriculture or other industries that may be unintentionally regulated as a result of said ordinances.
- Mark Sisson left us with an extensive packet of pertinent ordinance information to review.
- The direction that we have received from the Watson Township Board is to continue our education on the subject of horizontal hydraulic fracturing. They have indicated they are not ready at this time to adopt any new ordinances related to fracturing.

#### 8. Any other business/ongoing business-

- a. We received a copy of a letter that Kirk Scharphorn Jr, Zoning Administrator, sent to Kathy Rex, owner of Schnable Lake Campground in regards to the conditions of the Special Use Permit that she was issued. Specifically, that the fence along the east property is not in compliance. Condition #5 states "The applicant must construct a barrier fence line a minimum of 4 feet high along the East property line; the length of and parallel to the electric fence for purpose of blocking access to the electric fence." Our suggestion is a 4-6 ft. woven wire fence is set up meeting the previously stated condition.
- b. We are awaiting word from Kathy Rex as to plans, if any for expansion of the Schnable Lake Campgrounds this year. The Planning Commission Chair, Dave Carter requested this information for budgeting purposes.

- c. The Planning Commission requested that Chuck Andrysiak, the Watson Township Board representative, ask the township board what they would like us to do with the tabled ordinances we have already drawn up. Chuck will inquire at the next township board meeting.
  - d. We reviewed the summary of the Watson Township Planning Commission Meeting summary of 2013.
  - e. Dave Carter announced that Martin Township is making a change to their master plan. They are re-zoning an area from agriculture to commercial for the purpose of expanding a future land use corridor. (south side of 124<sup>th</sup>; 131 to 10<sup>th</sup> st)
  - f. Dave Carter shared a brochure with us regarding an upcoming basic training seminar for any planning commission members that may want to attend.
9. New business-
- a. Watson Planning Commission meeting schedule for 2014- March 26<sup>th</sup>, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, and June 25<sup>th</sup> July 23, September 24<sup>th</sup>, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, December 3<sup>rd</sup> and February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
  - b. Election of Officers- Chuck Andrysiak motioned that we retain the current officers; seconded by Bev McKinnon.
10. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:11pm by Bev McKinnon; support given by Bruce Bos.

Submitted by,

Michelle Harris  
Watson Township Planning Commission Secretary