

Watson Township Planning Commission Meeting Summary for 2014

February 2014- Mark Sisson gave us a report on horizontal hydraulic fracturing. He stated that economically southwest Michigan is not a viable place to drill at this time among other key points to consider. Then walked us through a list of possible ordinances he compiled for us to perhaps consider regarding this practice.

March 2014- We had a fracturing presentation by Bill Mitchell a Geologist from the State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality; office of Oil, Gas and Minerals. Then, it was reported that Kathy Rex from Schnable Lake Campgrounds, had not complied with the fencing requirements of her special use permit.

April 2014- Chuck Andrysiak gave a summary of a preparatory meeting for B93 Birthday Bash that he attended. There was discussion about special use permits regarding time limitations for implementing the requested operation(s) once the permits are granted. Next, an inquiry about Schnable Lake Campgrounds being allowed to develop the campsites permitted without first complying with fencing requirements was heard. Also, we conducted continued discussions related to incorporating ordinances involving hydraulic fracturing into zoning ordinances.

May 2014- No meeting was held.

June 2014- The Watson Township Board had reviewed the solar/wind purposed ordinances. They sent them back to us with some questions. Next, we heard a report that a representative from PCI had inspected the fence at Schnable Lake Campgrounds and determined it was acceptable. Then, more discussion of possibly incorporating hydraulic fracturing into our zoning ordinance occurred. It was determined that we had been very thorough in our discussions and research over the past several months. Further, we talked about the property of the former Watson church located on 116th Ave having been for sale, what could be done with the property according to zoning and that there was a request for establishing a small retail business there.

July 2014- No meeting was held.

August 2014- No meeting was held.

September 2014- Watson Township Board reviewed the proposed Outdoor Furnace Ordinance. It was sent back to us with two changes they wanted. They also reviewed and returned the Wind Energy and Solar Energy Ordinance with a few minor adjustments they requested. Then, Dave Carter updated us in regards to hydraulic fracturing drilling news. Next, two of our members attended a Michigan Township Association mini seminar and gave a report. Then, we reviewed a request to deem Schnable Lake as a 'no wake zone' lake with discussion about what that may or may not entail.

October 2014- We learned that the Watson Township Board was planning to take action on the wood burning and the wind and solar proposed ordinances at their next meeting. It was decided that we wait to see what the state of Michigan is going to come out with for regulations regarding hydraulic fracturing before we make a choice of how and if we are going to proceed with any action. Dave brought to our attention that according to the law we are required to begin updating our Master Plan document every five years. There was discussion about whether or not we could address mega-farming into our Master Plan. A member attended an Allegan Township special meeting and gave a report.

November 2014- No meeting was held.

December 2014- It was reported that the Watson Township Board adopted the wind/solar ordinance. They did not adopt the wood furnace ordinance. Then, there was a request for a site plan review for Hidden Ridge Campground building additions. Finally, we worked on updating our Master Plan and added a January 2015 meeting for the special use permit request.