

## **Bengal Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, February 28, 2024**

**Meeting called to order by Chairperson Brandy Solomon at 7:02 pm.**

**Pledge of Allegiance** led by Brandy Solomon.

**Members Present:** Eric Boak, Kurt Koenigsknecht, Sam Nielsen, Brandy Solomon and Brenda Zlotek

**Public Present:** Ethan Walthorn, Assistant Planner from McKenna; Forrest Thurston Township Inspector/Enforcement Officer.

**Additions to agenda-** None

**Approval of Minutes from January 31, 2024:** Motion from Sam Nielsen to approve minutes as amended, seconded by Kurt Koenigsknecht. Motion carried.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items-** None

**Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items-** None

### **Reports:**

**Township Inspector/Enforcement Officer update-** Forrest Thurston had no new business or issues to report.

**Zoning Board of Appeals Update-** Kurt Koenigsknecht reported that there were no new ZBA cases. The new ZBA members joining in June will need training through either McKenna or Michigan Township Association.

**Township Board Liaison-** Eric Boak reports the Township is still waiting for final bids on the Dexter Trail Bridge. A representative from Briggs Library spoke to the Township Board about the activities at the library. Additionally, Eric reported the township is working on the budget for finalization at the March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Unfinished Business:**

**Proposal for joint Planning Commission with Essex Township** is still a possibility depending on the county's finalization of wind and solar zoning. The Planning Commission reiterated a joint planning commission should not incur additional costs to Bengal.

**Defining time frame for inspections and non-compliance fees.** Forrest Thurston said the issue seems to be with larger home building companies are not calling for a final inspection prior to occupancy. The Planning Commission discussed an increase in escrow, asking the County to work with the township for notification of request for occupancy permits (so the township can do a final before occupancy permit is issued), and educating the property

owner of the proper inspection process. Forrest Thurston will try talking to his contact at the county to see if they can communicate better with the township Inspector going forward. If the problem continues the Planning Commission and or Township board will discuss it with the County Building Dept.

**State Control of Large-Scale Solar and Wind:** there is a petition being circulated by a group called “Citizens for Local Choice”, to get the issue of returning control of wind and solar zoning back to the local government on the November ballot.

**New Business-** None

**Planning Commission Comments:** a document titled " Solar and Wind Acreage in Clinton County" <https://rod-eweb.clinton-county.org/recorder/eagleweb/docSearch.jsp> was sent to Brenda Zlotek from resident Lori Pung . The document shows the breakdown of Lease/Easements for Solar and Wind in each township in Clinton County for a period searched from 1/1/2019-2/23/2024. The Planning Commission and our Zoning administrator as of now, have not received any permit request showing that the lease agreements are proceeding in Bengal township. Lease agreements would not be something the Planning Commission would be privy to, and we believe some of the listed lease agreements may have been entered into before Bengal Township adopted a Zoning ordinance. We appreciate the diligence of our residents bringing any potential Planning and Zoning issues to our attention.

Eric Boak announced to the Planning Commission he will be stepping down from the township board and the Planning Commission in November.

**Motion of Excused absence-** not applicable

Meeting was adjourned at 7:46 PM by Chair Brandy Solomon

Respectfully submitted pending approval,

Brenda Zlotek

Bengal Township Planning Commission Secretary

Approved

04 / 24 /2024

