

MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Virtual Meeting

Regular Meeting, December 3, 2020

8:00 p.m.

A. CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mike Walter, Dave Thompson, John Seefeld, George Daubner, and Sybil Kolon, Deena McIntosh

Members Absent: Doni McLennan

Others Present: John Enos, Laura Adams (20284 Kirk Rd. Manchester), Bruce Bush (19991 Boetger Rd. Manchester), Silas Bialecki and Sara Felder (11983 Noggles Rd.), Ron Milkey (8700 Sharon Hollow Rd.), Mary Goode (17866 Wellwood Rd.), Ana Sparks (16050 Wellwood Rd), Bob Kellum (11007 Mull Rd.), Randy Haas (19821 Boetger Rd.), Tasha Hawkins-Bullock (Sow Good Farms)

Notetaker: Nathan Booth

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda was amended to reflect the meeting is held virtually and corrected the next meeting date to January 7, 2021. A motion was made by Daubner with a second by Kolon to approve the agenda as amended. All ayes. Motion carried.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Kolon with a second by Daubner to approve the minutes of the November 12th meeting as amended. All ayes. Motion carried.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT --- (Limit to 2 minutes, please state name and address)

Walter - The owner of the Sow Good Farms is here to describe her plans today.

E. PRESENTATION FROM SOW GOODS FARMS

Tasha Hawkins-Bullock - I am the owner of Sow Good Farms which will be operating on Lehm Rd. Our plan is to utilize the land to grow crops year round. We will be using soil, container units, and greenhouses to grow as close to organic as possible. We will bring fresh fruits and vegetables to a manufacturer who will buy about 65% of our product, they are out of Oakland county. Also, we will be sending produce to Detroit. We are also looking at another parcel that is a little bit smaller to add to our production. The farm will be employing around 18 people. We will be working and coordinating with MSU. There will be no slaughtering.

Walter - We will have a site plan next meeting

Additional information was provided in response to questions from the Commissioners

There is no desire to grow cannabis. Only fruits and vegetables will be grown.

There will be LEDs on timers to mirror outdoor growing but, they will not be operated late at night.

Greenhouses and containers are on pre-order. The plan is to start the growing process in early spring.

Operations are starting in Manchester and then they hope to move on to other locations.

The plan is to hire as many local associates as possible.

The plan is utilize local businesses.

There will be a 10,000 ft building added to the property to process the produce for the manufacturer which is located in Rochester Hills.

Containers like shipping containers will be used for year round growing. The containers hold about 8900 plants per growing season and they allow for vertical growing. They are going to be painted to reflect the surrounding nature.

Well water will be utilized.

Enos - The commission is looking at this project for the greenhouse aspect. The rest of the farm is under the right to farm act.

F. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

I. Report of Chairperson

Walter - The township was approached about a project to build a motocross track on Bowens Rd. at Van Tyle Rd. for races and weekend-long events. This project is currently in the formative stage. The property is a 23 acre parcel. The plan is to schedule races throughout the summer but a number of weekends were not specified. There are no plans for any nighttime racing. There are plans to utilize the track during the week for practice. They looked into property elsewhere but then looked here because they spent their elementary years in Manchester and their parents still lives on Pleasant Lake Road.

Ron Milkey added that one of the project leaders son races motocross at 9 years old. They are conscious of the potential noise concerns and will adjust the location of the track and add berms to minimize noise.

II. Report of Township Board Representative

There was a discussion of the Township Board Meeting.

III. Report of Zoning Board of Appeals

There have been no meetings or requests for meetings.

IV. Report of Planning Consultant

Enos- nothing to report.

V. Reports of Committees

i. SWWCOG

Sybil indicated that she was unable to attend the meeting and yielded to Ron Milkey for the update. The State Representative and Sheriff did not make the meeting. The gravel pit that bought 400 acres on Pleasant Lake Rd. was of interest in Sharon Township. Manchester Township talked about the RV campground.

ii. Joint Planning Commission

They met prior to the November Planning Commission meeting. Pat Vailencourt reported on cityhood progress. The State Boundary Commission will meet on February 17 to consider the petition for city status. The old Manchester Market is going to be expanding. Acorn, Spartan Foods (for a grocery store), a small cafe and deli, and the original food prep for the restaurants will all occupy the building. The master plan was discussed. There was support from both the Village and Township on continuing with the MCJPC if the village becomes a city.

iii. Correspondence

There has been no correspondence.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

I. Agritourism/Event Barns – No discussion

II. Sow good farms - Discussed previously

III. Second Homes/Tiny Houses

Enos had provided revised language to add flexibility for lot size on a case by case basis and recommended setting a public hearing in January for input on the proposed language.

Daubner asked if there is there a minimum of the house size?

Enos explained that there is no minimum but there will need to be a case by case basis evaluation.

Kolon indicated some public comment from last meeting had not been incorporated, such as use by a caretaker or use of an existing building.

Enos indicated that he would make additional revisions.

Interested members of the public were invited to participate:

Woody Kellum asked about #8, why is there a restriction saying tiny homes have to be at the rear of a parcel.

Enos indicated all accessory structures, like sheds and garages, are in the rear of the yard. There were a few other general comments.

Dave Thompson asked how might this affect property values.

Enos indicated he believes it would improve property values.

Motion by Daubner, second by Kolon, to set a public hearing for January 7 at 7 PM. The motion carried by a voice vote.

H. NEW BUSINESS

Walter - Meetings first Thursday of every month for the year all starting at 8.

I. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Thompson - Indicated that if we can't have a public hearing in person he felt we should not have it. Also, on the accessory dwelling, the more and more things we put on ourselves for enforcement, the harder it will get. We do not enforce enough.

Walter- If we can not have a public hearing in person, we will suspend it.

J. PUBLIC COMMENT --- (Limit to 2 minutes, please state name and address)

Bob Kellum - If interested, how are we able to get access to proposed conversations to the temporary dwellings?

Enos - They should be in the office by next week.

Walter - If you don't want to come to the office, email me and I can get it for you.

Woody Kellum - Commented that he lives live next to a property that hold motorcycle events and indicated that he and some of the board members are aware of the history of the that property. He requested that the commission look into the restrictions on their race days. He indicated that the noise was an issue and that he felt that the property owners may not have always followed rules.

Walter - The Planning Commission is aware of the property and that they would keep an open mind about new projects and will consider all aspects of the race track if it becomes a project.

NEXT MEETING: *Regular Meeting- Thursday, January 7, 2021, 8:00 p.m.*

K. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Dauber with a second by Kolon to adjourn the meeting. All ayes. Motion Carried. Adjourned at 9:28 p.m.