

MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Manchester Township Hall, 275 S. Macomb, Manchester, Michigan 48158
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 7th, 2024 7:30 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Walter at 7:33 PM. Members Present: Mike Walter, George Daubner, Mike Fusilier, Sybil Kolon. Doug Brooks arrived at 7:56 PM. Absent: Dave Thompson. Others Present: Recording Secretary Brenda Bancroft, Township Planning Consultant Alissa Starling, Zoning Administrator Carl Macomber, Manchester Township Supervisor Ron Milkey, Carl Werner.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Fusilier, second by Kolon, to approve the agenda as presented.
Ayes: all. Absent: Brooks, Thompson. **Motion carried.**

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the February 1st, 2024 Manchester Township Planning Commission Meeting were presented.

Need to correct an error in the header – date should be 2024, not 2023.

A motion was made by Kolon, second by Fusilier, to approve the minutes of the February 1st, 2024 Manchester Township Planning Commission meeting as amended.
Ayes: all. Absent: Brooks, Thompson. **Motion carried.**

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Planning Commission heard no comments from the public.

E. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

I. Report of Chairperson – Chairperson Walter reported that the Manchester School District is looking into a potential solar farm and energy storage facility on a piece of property owned by the district. Has concerns over the storage facility with potential emergencies with battery storage. Will provide the Planning Commission with any updates regarding as they may develop.

II. Report of Township Board Representative – Mike Fusilier provided the Planning Commission with a brief report from the February 2024 Manchester Township Board Meeting.

III. Report of Zoning Board of Appeals – Walter reported they had a well-attended meeting in February – for a set-back request by Andy Bobo did not come to a decision on whether to deny or approve the request as they required more information in order to do so. Will have a follow-up meeting next week to make that decision.

IV. Report of Planning Consultant – Manchester Township Planning Consultant Alissa Starling reported that she is working on having a draft ready for Purchase Development Rights to review for the next Land Preservation Meeting.

V. Reports of Committees

i. SWWCOG – No report. Next meeting is on March 13th, 2024 in Sharon Township.

ii. GIHRIC (Greater Irish Hills Regional Intermunicipality Committee) – Kolon reported that they have the Joint Recreation Master Plan ready and went through public comment and now approval process. This was the purpose for forming this group, so is pleased that it's ready for approval. State of the Irish Hills event will happen later in the year at MIS.

iii. Joint Planning Commission – Walter reported that they had met previously to this meeting and discussed getting up to speed with the Joint Planning Commission. Has scheduled a special meeting on March 21st 2024 to review the Joint Master Plan draft that Carlisle-Wortman will be providing, and will look at what to include and what may need to be revised. Is hoping to have a final draft soon. In addition, they are exploring what the Joint Planning Commission's responsibility should be in the future, especially after the Joint Master Plan is approved.

iv. Land Preservation – Kolon provided a brief report of this meeting, which was held directly before the Planning Commission meeting. Will be discussing purchase of Development Rights Ordinance at the next Manchester Township Board meeting.

VI. Correspondence – No Correspondence.

F. NEW BUSINESS

I. Section 14.07 Sign Ordinance Updates

Carl Werner spoke to the Planning Commission that the Sign Ordinance needs a complete update. Alissa Starling gave some suggestions and agreed that it needs to be redone, especially in light of the recent legislation from the State of Michigan regarding sign ordinances. Walter informed the Planning Commission that they need to provide their input for revisions – his largest concern is

illumination and promoting dark skies. Walter also discussed that this language needs to match what is included in the Joint Master Plan.

The Planning Commission decided to form a Sign Ordinance Subcommittee with Carl Werner, Mike Walter, and assistance from Alissa Starling. Hope to have draft language for the next meeting as this is a priority.

II. Section 10.03 CM District Review

Discussed the language in CM district - “Living quarters for security and maintenance personnel” Planning Commission revised from permitted use and recommended the changes to the Township Board.

Will look at revising that from permitted to conditional use.

III. Section 9.04(G)(5) Rates Review

Discussed language, “A cash bond of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) shall be provided to the Township prior to the start of an approved sale to guarantee site clean-up as required in paragraph 4, preceding.

Will work at revising this to change from a cash bond to a sliding scale in this section – hopes to have this updated for review at the next meeting.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- I. Agricultural Tourism – Have briefly placed this topic on the back burner in order to focus on updating ordinances to complete the updated ordinance book. Walter asked for input regarding what direction the Planning Commission should move in regarding this topic. The Planning Commission discussed various options for how they should proceed – will visit this again at the next meetings. Walter would like to focus on the health and safety concerns with the public. Alissa Starling discussed they could look at parking, access and egress, and parking in regards to health, safety, and welfare.

H. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Fusilier commented that he has a colleague that is going to grow vegetables under solar panels – and heard that Meijer and Walmart would drop them as a client due to concerns with heavy metals as a potential liability.

Walter commented that he has been made aware of several farmers in the area have been approached for leasing their property for solar farms. He anticipates solar farms to be a primary topic for the Planning Commission for a long time within Manchester Township and the surrounding communities. Also mentioned that there is a petition circulating regarding repealing

state-level jurisdiction over large-scale renewable energy projects and restoring control back to the local townships.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was one comment from one member of the public.

J. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Kolon, second by Walter, to adjourn the meeting. Ayes: all. Absent: Thompson.

Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:31 PM.

Approved: April 4, 2024

Brenda Bancroft
Recording Secretary