

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF FLUSHING
6524 N. SEYMOUR ROAD
FLUSHING, MICHIGAN 48433
810-659-0800 FAX: 810-659-4212
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
DATE: DECEMBER 11, 2017 TIME: 7:00 P.M.
WEB ADDRESS <http://www.flushingtowship.com>

MEMBERS OF PLANNING COMMISSION

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Chair – Jerome Doyle | Robert Gensheimer |
| Vice Chair – Mark Newman | Donn Hinds |
| Secretary – Ronald Flowers | William Mills |
| Daniel J. McGrath, Board of Trustees Representative | |
| Joyce A. Wilson, Recording Secretary | |

PRESENT: Jerome Doyle, Ronald Flowers, Robert Gensheimer, Donn Hinds, William Mills and Mark Newman

ABSENT: Daniel J. McGrath

OTHERS PRESENT: Supervisor Thorsby and one (1) other individual

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 P.M. by Planning Commission Chair **JEROME DOYLE** with Roll Call and Pledge to the American Flag.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: COMMISSIONER NEWMAN MOVED, supported by Commissioner Flowers to approve the agenda as submitted.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: COMMISSIONER HINDS MOVED, supported by Commissioner Newman to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2017 meeting as submitted.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Solar Ordinance Preparation – Presentation by Rowe Professional Services Co.

Supervisor Thorsby stated since the School Bond Issue had been approved by the voters, he had been approached by the consultant for Flushing Schools inquiring about the Township Solar Ordinance as they planned to install some type of solar energy on all their school buildings. He further stated the solar power would be behind most of the buildings and on top of one.

Supervisor Thorsby stated since the Township did not have a solar ordinance, he and Attorney Steve Moulton had contacted Rowe Professional Services Co. and it was suggested that Caitlyn McGoldrick of Rowe give a presentation to the Planning Commission since she has worked with the City of Lapeer on their ordinance.

Ms. McGoldrick distributed a handout of the material she would be reviewing with the Planning Commission and it is made a part of the Official Minutes. She stated how policy might be made and discussed options for how solar power would be processed, through Administrative Review, By Right or Special Land Use. There was also discussion about solar power in residential, commercial and industrial areas. The Planning Commission also briefly discussed selling the power back to the power company.

It was pointed out that dimensions of solar panels could also vary from residential districts to commercial to industrial or farm land. Ms. McGoldrick stated the life expectancy of solar panels was 10 to 15 years. It was questioned whether farms could put them up under the Right to Farm Act. Through her research, she has found that on agriculture land, they would not get both the tax break for the solar energy and the agriculture tax break. She also pointed out the panels act almost like a roof as far as run off is concerned and it can become a drainage problem.

The Planning Commission also discussed whether solar panels would be allowed in the front yards. Ms. McGoldrick stated our potential ordinance could restrict solar from the front yard, and possibly limit the height on the roof. Supervisor

Thorsby stated it could be limited to only the roof in subdivisions. Commissioner Hinds spoke about the potential problems of sunlight being blocked by neighbors after solar panels were installed. He further mentioned A-frame solar panels that were popular in the 1980's that could be set up in the backyard.

The various options for solar ordinances was discussed at length and it was recommended that Ms. McGoldrick bring back a more defined proposed ordinance for the Township covering the suggestions that have been offered by the Planning Commission. Commissioner Newman suggested that public education for a potential solar ordinance was important and posting information to the web regarding this would be a good idea.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

VII. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Supervisor Thorsby gave an update on the status returning the Building Inspector and Code Enforcement function to the Township from the State.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

JEROME DOYLE, Chair

RONALD FLOWERS, Secretary

Date of Approval

Joyce A. Wilson, Recording Secretary
12/11/2017 Plan. Com. Mtg.