

Almont Township

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ALMONT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

November 13, 2019

The regular meeting of the Almont Township Planning Commission called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairman Francis, at the Almont Township/Village Hall, 819 N. Main Street, Almont, Michigan 48003. Recited was the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Bletch, Rick Dodge, Steve Francis, Ron Schapman, Kim Streeter and Bryan Zender. Caitlyn Habben of ROWE Professional Services Company was also present.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andrea Bara

PRESENT: 6 guests

MINUTES: MOVED BY DODGE AND SUPPORTED BY BLETCH TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 11, 2019, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE: NA

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NA

LATE AGENDA ITEMS: Dodge asked that discussion be held on a motion he made in January 2018. Consensus was to allow this item under Old Business.

INTRODUCTION: NA

PUBLIC HEARING: NA

NEW BUSINESS: 1. Paula Alfonsi-Possible revision to Zoning Ord. 39, As amended, Art. 2, Sect. 2.3H

Paula Alfonsi, a resident of Almont Township expressed her concerns over the fact that Article 2 – Accessory Building to One and Two-Family Residential Uses, section 2.3H allows for someone to build a barn prior to the construction of a dwelling. Mrs. Alfonsi noted that in allowing a barn to be constructed prior to a house, it may allow someone to possibly operate a business.

NEW BUSINESS: 1. Possible revision to Zoning Ord. 39, As amended, Art. 2, Sect. 2.3H continued:

Discussion followed on the pros and cons of making a property owner build a dwelling on a vacant parcel on land before they could build a barn. Planner Habben was asked to do some research as to what the other townships within Lapeer County allow for accessory buildings in Agricultural/Residential zoned areas.

MOVED BY STREETER AND SUPPORTED BY ZENDER TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF A TEXT AMENDMENT TO SECTION 2.3H. MOTION CARRIED.

2. CES Presentation – Planner Caitlyn Habben

Planner Habben presented a slide presentation on Shipping Containers and PC Best practices. As Almont Township is considering text language on provisions for shipping containers as accessory structures/buildings, especially in the Ag/Res zoned districts, the material was informative.

Planning Commission Best Practices was a refresher course on documents the Planning Commission should have such as Bylaws, Zoning Ordinance, and Master Plan. Also recommended were copies of the Michigan Planning Enabling act and Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. Discussion on the Bylaws lead the Planning Commission to consider reviewing and possibly updating their copy of Bylaws which is dated 2004. Also discussed was when a commissioner should abstain from voting due to a conflict of interest. Term limits and ex parte contact were briefly discussed as well.

OLD BUSINESS: 1. Shipping Containers

Commissioner Dodge noted that he had attended the Imlay Township Planning Commission meeting where shipping containers were discussed. Imlay Township plans to follow the ordinance for accessory buildings.

MOVED BY STREETER AND SUPPORTED BY BLECH TO RECOMMEND TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD THAT A SIX MONTH MORATORIUM BE PLACED ON ALLOWING SHIPPING CONTAINERS AND TRAILERS TO BE USED AS ACCESSORY STRUCTURES WITH ALMONT TOWNSHIP. MOTION CARRIED 4-2.

OLD BUSINESS: 2. Minutes from January 2018

Commissioner Dodge noted that as the author of the motion for Country Smoke House, he had used the word “parapet”, which the definition of the word doesn’t properly fit the description of the tower on the new addition. It was noted that the minutes for January 2018 have been approved. Question was asked if this is even legally possible and if it was worth doing. Planner Habben was asked to research the ramifications of amending the motion and if there would be any benefits and to bring her findings to the December 11, 2019 Planning Commission meeting.

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Reports:

Planner: NA

Engineer: NA

ZBA: Dodge gave verbal report on the two petitions heard by the ZBA on October 30, 2019. Both variance requests were approved.

Zoning & Building: Verbal report given.

General Comments: Commissioner Streeter noted that the Township Board and the Village Council will be having a joint meeting to discuss the possibility of extending water services south of the Village. Dodge asked what goals the PC would like to achieve for 2020.

MOVED BY STREETER AND SUPPORTED BY DODGE TO ADJOURN AT 9:00 P.M. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully,

Ida L. Lloyd,
Recording Secretary