

Van Buren County Planning Commission
September 27, 2006
Human Services Building
801 Hazen St., Paw Paw

Minutes

Call to Order: 6:35 pm

Members in attendance: Jeff Radtke, Jerry Campbell, Dan Gehl, Pam Stermer, Scott Cedarquist, Kurt Doroh, Connie Selles, Jim Ray, Celina Gilmore, Ted Thar

Absent: None

Public present: Chuck Eckenstahler, (Covert Twp. Representative), Katherine Kauffman (Preserve the Dunes PTD Representative, and One local resident from Covert Twp.

Agenda: Approved on a Cedarquist Campbell motion.

Minutes of June 21st, 2006: Approved on a Doroh, Ray motion.

Public Comment: Rather Long discussion regarding the Comprehensive Update of the Covert Township Zoning Ordinance.

Eckenstahler asked the VBCPC to consider acknowledgment of letter from PTD and let Township Board consider whether to adopt or not. Stated that this has been a 24 month process and VBCPC may be in lose-lose situation if making strong considerations.

He touched on some of the key points of the Letter (received of PTD) and tried to explain Township rationale.

- Environmentally Sensitive Overlay District; these were taken from the MDEQ, and were assisted by study paid for by the Township.
- PUD not a landuse, rather a process by which the Township can better control the development in review
- Clear Cutting should be looked at and debated
- Zoning Administrator making some solo decisions was to save individuals money in permitting, not intended to give one individual control. In most cases individual would be advised to not bring in questionable requests.
- The words “non-contiguous” will be removed from Article 16.01 third paragraph.

Kauffman indicated that Township Board had not seen the Comprehensive Update as of yet so she felt it imperative for them to look at these concerns in order to make recommendations to the Covert Township Board.

- Question about the ESO Area and how it was determined
- PUD in LD1 creates a density increase
- Any variance should be approved by ZBA not Zoning Administrator
- There should not be an exemption of Permits in ESO for SF Homes

Additional Comment made by public regarding lot sizes

Reports:

County Commissioner – No new report.

Southwestern Michigan Commission (SWMC) Representative – Radtke reported had been appointed to yet another board by Commissioner Tanczos

Unfinished Business:

Smart Growth Scorecards – no progress since last meeting

Van Buren County Planning Comprehensive Plan- Ted Thar is checking and will report at next meeting.

New Business:

Covert Township Zoning Ordinance

VBC PC Comments to Covert Township Board

- Thank you for removing non contiguous from Article 16.01
- Applaud Covert Township for wanting to save homeowners money, however feel it best not to have many variances
- We feel all variances should be approved by ZBA rather than by Zoning Administrator
- We acknowledge the letter sent by PTD and move to send it along with some maps and our comments to Township Board for use in their decision

South Haven Township Zoning Amendments (August & September)

(August) Agree with South Haven PC on decision to allow proposed amendments on Mahoney and Murk properties. Approved on a Doroh Cedarquist motion

(September) Motion to concur with SHPC regarding the Amended Zoning on Compton Property. Approved on a Ray Gehl motion

Selles Workshop Reimbursement

VBCPC moved to reimburse Connie Selles for workshop attended which had been approved prior by the board.