

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
August 28, 2024**

Call Meeting to Order: Chair McManus called the August 28, 2024 Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00pm at the Garfield Township Hall.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

Roll Call of Commission Members:

Present: Molly Agostinelli, John Racine, Robert Fudge, Pat Cline and Joe McManus

Absent and Excused: Joe Robertson and Chris DeGood

Staff Present: Planning Director John Sych and Deputy Planning Director Steve Hannon

1. Public Comment (7:01)

None

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflict of Interest (7:08)

Agostinelli moved and Cline seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Yeas: Agostinelli, Cline, Racine, Fudge, McManus

Nays: None

3. Minutes (7:09)

a. August 14, 2024 Regular Meeting with Township Board

In item 5, the words "in the State of Michigan Building Code as adopted by Garfield Township" will replace the phrase "Garfield Township Building Code."

Cline moved and Fudge seconded to approve the August 14, 2024 Regular Meeting minutes as amended.

Yeas: Cline, Fudge, Agostinelli, Racine, McManus

Nays: None

4. Correspondence (7:03)

a. Letter from Staff dated July 29, 2024 to the City of Traverse City regarding the City of Traverse City Master Plan and Mobility Action Plan

5. Reports (7:04)**Township Board Report**

Agostinelli stated that the Board has four candidates for the township manager position and interviews will be held on September 5th.

Planning Commissioners**i. Zoning Board of Appeals**

Fudge had no report.

ii. Parks and Recreation Commission

Hannon stated that there was an article on the Copper Ridge Trail Head in the Record Eagle and that project is moving forward.

iii. Joint Planning Commission

Racine had no report.

Staff Report

Sych noted that the Board's decision regarding the definition of *start of construction* on the BATA project was used on the Marengo project as well. Sych stated that it may be helpful to define "substantial construction" in the Zoning Ordinance. McManus discussed the existing definitions regarding substantial construction in the ordinance and the need to make them very clear. Sych said it was important to quantify these definitions.

6. Unfinished Business**a. PD 2024-68 – Zoning Ordinance Short-Term Rentals – Continued Discussion (7:14)**

Sych stated that the Michigan Legislature has taken no action on House Bill 5438 which would regulate short term rentals in municipalities. He reiterated that the township could allow short term rentals in commercial areas if the bill was passed and attached a proposed licensing ordinance if one was needed. He reviewed the proposed licensing ordinance with PC members. Since there is no action at the state level, he recommends waiting until the state passes the bill to take any action of this topic.

b. PD 2024-69 – Zoning Ordinance Signs – Continued Discussion (7:25)

There are several cases from the past 5-10 years reviewed by the United States Supreme Court which may impact how municipalities can regulate signs. Many of these court cases focus on ordinance regulations which cover the content of a sign rather than regulations covering the size, setback, or other aspects of a sign. Staff did a proposed first draft of a rewrite of Section 630 of the ordinance which includes changes to the sign ordinance. Changes include adding content-neutral language throughout the entire Section; allowing the Planning Director to approve up to six (6) internal directional signs in the C-P district and in Planned Developments; removing the provision allowing for modifications to the wall sign

standards in the C-P district and in Planned Developments; and reconstructing subsection 630.N with content-neutral language, and renaming this subsection to "Signs Always Permitted and Exempt Signs". Hannon discussed standardization for yard signage. Commissioners asked about avoiding potential loopholes such as weekend signage and signage in residential areas. Signage for construction contractors and realtors and their size in residential areas was discussed. Commissioners did not support the Director review of directional signs but were agreeable to removing the bonus provision for wall signs in the C-P district and planned developments. Guidance could be sought from MTA or other law firms, or the MSU extension. Outreach could be done in other communities as well. Staff agreed to look at different signage scenarios and what impact they would have on the community.

7. **New Business (8:04)**

None

8. **Public Comment (8:04)**

None

9. **Other Business (8:04)**

None

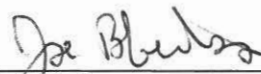
10. **Items for Next Agenda – September 11, 2024 (8:04)**

- a. French Manor LaFranier Special Use Permit Major Amendment – Public Hearing
- b. Tower North Wireless Communication Facility Special Use Permit – Follow-Up
- c. K-1 Speed/ High Tops – Site Plan Review Amendment
- d. Meadow Valley PUD – Directional Sign Review

Sych added that a site plan was received from the Cherryland Center and wants to review it with the three owners before bringing it to the PC.

11. **Adjournment**

Fudge moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:11pm.



Joe Robertson, Secretary
Garfield Township Planning
Commission
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