

COLUMBIA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

March 28, 2023
7:00 PM

Meeting held in person at Township Office

Minutes

Call to order, Pledge of Allegiance: Chairperson Wanty called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Mr. Trout called the roll: Present: Chairperson Todd Wanty, Vice-Chair Bob, Jenson, Secretary Mike Trout, Hollis Jeffreys, Walter Reed, Krissie Barnes; Absent; Mike McKay; Recognized Guests: Rick Church, Mark Eidleon, Terry Mahr, Madalyn Holzapel, Curtis Townsley.

Approval of Agenda: *Motion by Mr. Jeffreys, supported by Mr. Jensen to approve the agenda. Ayes all. Motion Carried.*

Approval of Minutes from February 7, 2023: *Motion by Mr. Jensen, supported by Mr. Reed to approve the minutes with minor correction. Ayes all. Motion Carried.*

Purpose of meeting: Chair Wanty presented the purpose of the meeting.

- a. Review Small Solar Energy System (SES) for 8279 Hyde Rd. Ron and Cindy Valentine
- b. Review proposed Ordinance changes from LandPlan.

Public Comment: Chair Wanty opened the public comment period at 7:03 p.m. There were no comments, and the Chair closed the public comment period at 7:04 p.m.

Old Business:

Community Survey – Chair Wanty inquired whether Mr. Reed had a chance to engage the school. Mr. Reed confirmed he had spoken with the leadership teacher who has shared the electronic link with their students. He will follow up.

Master Plan Update – No update.

New Business:

- a. Review Small Solar Energy System (SES) for 8279 Hyde Rd. Ron and Cindy Valentine. Mr. Church discussed the proposal for a small solar energy

system per section 7.23(B) indicating it was a ground mounted system that had received ZBA approval to place the unit in the front yard. The planning commission now needs to consider the proposal in accordance with Mr. Eidelson's letter dated June 6, 2022. Mr. Wanty indicated the application meets the standards for a small solar system and the applicant commented that it should be sufficiently screened and will be placed in the optimal location to capture the sunlight. *Motion by Mr. Jefferys, supported by Mr. Jensen to approve the application in accordance with Mr. Eidelson's correspondence. Ayes all. Motion Carried*

b. Review proposed Ordinance changes from LandPlan. Chair Wanty asked Mr. Eidelson to present the items in his letter dated March 22, 2023. He asked that the cannabis regulations (item #15) be discussed first due to the presence of Madalyn Holzapel and Curtis Townsley. Madalyn clarified that revenue to the township would be based on the number of retail licenses and not all licenses. Mr. Eidelson explained there would be two ordinances that need to be created associated with this process; a zoning ordinance and a police powers ordinance. The planning commission is being asked by the township board to develop a recommendation related to amending the zoning ordinance to potentially allow for businesses to grow process and sell cannabis. It is clear the task is to decide the types, number and location (zoning districts) of these facilities. There are many elements to consider, and regulations vary widely among other communities. Chair Wanty asked about a public hearing and Mr. Eidelson indicated there would need to be one. The chair has reviewed Brooklyn and Leoni ordinances for comparison. There is a consensus to move forward with the process. Ms. Barnes inquired about police and Mr. Reed brought up safety and security concerns also. Members decided that more information will be gathered and shared in preparation of the April 11 Planning Commission meeting for a more detailed discussion and a possible recommendation.

Mr. Eidelson proceeded to explain the remaining items in his letter.

- #1 – Change withdrawn due to the need for this to remain in place.
- #2 – Allows zoning administrator to waive licensed surveyor requirement in certain instances.
- #3 – Allows for a 2nd or 3rd floor dwellings above a use other than a business on the first floor in the commercial districts.
- #4 – Clarifies the prohibition of flag lots.
- #5 – Determines the setback averaging in the RLS should be no greater than 50'.
- #6 – Same as above specific to Lake Columbia.
- #7 – Allow replacement of the foundation if a non-conforming structure is destroyed per Section 6.4.
- #8 – Correction for approving small SES by Planning Commission instead of Township Board.
- #9 – Correct reference to off-premise signs in AG versus A1
- #10 – Corrects the reference for temporary dwellings from 3.4 to 2.4.
- #11 – Clarifies the 200 s.f. allowance for accessory structures in front yards.
- #12 – Clarifies fence and wall requirements for temporary fences and vacant lots.

#13 – Cannabis regulations discussed above.

#14 – Allows accessory structures in RLS on other than RLS.

Members were in favor of all the proposed changes except Mr. Trout had an issue with #7 due to the potential exacerbation of non-conformities.

Public Comment: Chair Wanty opened the public comment period at 8:27 p.m. Ms. Mahr commented that requiring a licensed surveyor can alleviate property disputes and that allowing non-conforming structures to rebuild is counter to the Master Plan and can negatively affect overall aesthetic goals. There were no further comments, and the Chair closed the public comment period at 8.29 p.m.

Commissioner Comments: There were no commissioner comments.

Adjournment: *Mr. Wanty made the motion supported by Mr. Reed to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Ayes all. Motion Carried.*

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

Mike Trout, Secretary