

BENTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2021

Members Present: Jack Caughey-Chair, Jeff Locke-Vice Chair, Ben Kudwa, Tom Fasnaugh, Maureen Sorbet, Joy Suits, Chris Tennes

Members Absent: Dave Falsetta, Barbara Wickerham

Others attending the meeting: Tammy Foster-Zoning Administrator, Gary Suits-Benton Township Supervisor, Penny Haney, Fred Simmons, Jim Thomas, Un-named Representative from Climaxsolar

Call to order: Chairman Jack Caughey called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm

Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman Caughey led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting Minutes Approval/Agenda Approval: Motion was made by Tom Fasnaugh , supported by Jeff Locke to approve the minutes from February 4, 2021. Motion carried by 7 ayes, 0 nays. Chris Tennes made motion to approve the agenda, supported by Marie Sorbet and unanimous agreement by board.

New Business:

Penny Haney, supported by a representative from Climaxsolar and her neighbors spoke to the request to install solar panels for private residential use. William Crawford holds builder's license. Tammy Foster explained the solar memo showing aspects that meet standards and further information. She also outlined further information that needs to be provided including height of solar panels, lot dimension, concrete description, evidence of Eaton County Building Department approval, etc. Discussion included 45 panels producing 16kw and possible buy back of power by Consumer's Energy. Jack Caughey made a motion, supported by Ben Kudwa , to recommend approval of special land use permit for John /Penny Haney for installation of a small solar energy system, ground mounted, provided standards are met as recommended by Zoning Administrator. Roll Call

Vote: Fasnaugh -Yes, Caughey-Yes, Locke-Yes, Kudawa-Yes, Tennes – Yes, Suits – Yes, Sorbet-Yes.

Proposed Language Change for Agricultural Labor Housing in Permanent Zoning Ordinance. Steve Tennes attended by phone for the discussion of this request regarding Section 14.12 Agricultural Migrant Housing. which needs the addition of the words “or contracted : with “employed by Camp Operator” & 14.2 .5 which needs the number of dwelling units increased to 4.

Possible Outdoor Wood Furnaces Ordinance. Chairman Jack Caughey led discussion of possible need for an outdoor wood furnace ordinance. After discussion, Chris Tennes made a motion against making an ordinance for outdoor wood furnaces, supported by Joy Suits, with all board members present voting yes.

Blight Ordinance. Board discussed adding farm equipment as an exemption in areas zoned agriculture and a necessary for farm operations. Chris Tennes proposed changing “misdemeanor” to “municipal/civil infraction.”

Public Comment: Next meeting will be focused on Interim Zoning. Members should read page 1-43 of the 11/2020 Interim Zoning Ordinance Proposed Revised Language and be ready to discuss/review Articles 1-6. Tammy Foster stated this version of ordinances will be used until the review is completed. Supervisor Suits said board needs to review Master Plan.

Next Meeting Date: May 6, 2021.

Adjournment: 9:04 pm

Prepared by : Joy Suits, Planning Commission Member