BENTON CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 9, 2023

**Members Present:** Jack Caughey, Jeff Locke, Ben Kudwa, Maureen Sorbet, Chris Tennes, Roger Harris and Barbara Wickerham

Absent:

**Others Who Attended the Meeting:**

Gary Suits-Benton Township Supervisor, Tammy Foster-Zoning Administrator, Mr. & Mrs. Hanft

**Call to Order**

Chairman Jack Caughey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

**Meeting Minutes Approval**:

A motion was made by Chris Tennes, supported by Ben Kudwa to approve the minutes of November 10, 2022. Motion carried 7 ayes; 0 nays.

A motion was made to approve agenda by Chris Tennes, supported by Ben Kudwa. Motion carried 7 ayes, 0 nays.

**Public Comment Non-Agenda Items**: None

**New Business**:

1. Election of Officers. Chris Tennes made a motion, supported by Maureen Sorbet to have Jack Caughey as Chair, Jeff Locke as Vice Chair, and Ben Kudwa as Secretary. Motion carried with 7 ayes, 0 nays.

2. Special Use Permit SUP 2023-001 – Expanding shed display areas at 3224 Lansing Road, Charlotte.

Chairperson Caughey opened the public hearing at 7:12.

Tammy Foster gave a briefing on the Special Use Permit which is required for special land use for an existing Eaton County issued Conditional Use Permit to expand shed display area. The permit request described the business as sawmill operations: rough sawn lumber, firewood, slab wood from cutoffs. Display of deer blinds, garden sheds from lumber not used for timbers, planking, trailer beds, etc. All buildings under 200 sq ft.

There were no written communications read out loud.

Supervisor Gary Suits said that he had one complaint on the overall appearance of property.

Mr. Lewis Hanft (owner of saw mill) discussed his intent and went over his permit application. Mr. Hanft said that he has met with several agencies to bring his property up to code.

Chairperson Caughey closed public hearing at 7:43 p.m.

The Planning Commission discussed daily traffic volumes, planned hours and days of operation, maximum number of permitted displayed building.

**Based on Planning Commission’s discussion following dialog with the applicant, Planning Commission recommends approval of the Application for Special Use Permit of the legal non-conforming sawmill use on this property to the Benton Charter Township Board contingent on the applicant bringing the current site conditions into compliance with the noted items of the Eaton County Community Development Department’s 2015 requirements and those required by Benton Charter Township’s Planning Commission. The permitted uses under this Special Use Permit are only those stipulated in the 2015 approved Site Plan, specifically sawmill operation, rough sawn lumber; firewood, slab wood from cutoffs and deer blinds, garden sheds from lumber not used for timbers, planking, and trailer boards.**

**Additional stipulations:**

**1. Display sheds shall not exceed 50 units, with not more than 5 buildings of the size of 10x20 or greater at one time.**

**2. Comply with Eaton County Construction Code Department requirements.**

**3. Permit for 2nd driveway from Michigan Department of Transportation or Eaton County Road Commission.**

**4. Comply with original permit landscape and buffer plan requirements.**

**5. Comply with Benton Charter Township Fire Department requirements.**

**These stipulations need to demonstrate progress for compliance within six months of approval.**

**Chris Tennis made the motion, supported by Ben Kudwa to approve the Special Use Permit as written above. Motion carried 7 ayes; 0 nays.**

3. Fee schedule for sign permits – recommendation for Benton Charter Township Board consideration.

A recommendation was made by Tammy Foster to include a fee for signage permits. After discussion **Maureen Sorbet made a motion, supported by Chris Tennes to recommend a fee of fifty dollars ($50) for signage permits. Motion carried 7 ayes; 0 nays.**

4. Meeting dates for 2023 (if needed or required)

January 5, 2023 July 6, 2023

February 9, 2023 August 10, 2023

March 9, 2023 September 7, 2023

April 6, 2023 October 5, 2023

May 4, 2023 November 9, 2023

June 8, 2023 December 7, 2023

Public Comment:

Chairperson Caughey asked if there was any more discussion on a new fire station and condition of vehicles.

Tammy Foster informed the Commission that Adam and Haley Auvenshine were in violation of operating a Bed and Breakfast. A violation notice will be sent to them.

Moved by Maureen Sorbet, and seconded by Ben Kudwa to adjourn at 8:55.

Next meeting is April 6, 2023 if needed.

Respectively submitted by Barbara Wickerham