

**BROOKS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
June 19, 2023 @ 7:00 PM
APPROVED**

Members Present: Mark Guzniczak, Pat Baker, Phil Knape, Chris Wren, Mark Pitzer, Karl Frederiksen, Ryan Schultz

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Joe Selzer, Cory Nelson

Chairman Guzniczak, called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was properly posted and a quorum of the Brooks Township Planning Commission was present.

Approval of Agenda:

Moved by Knape, **seconded** by Frederiksen to approve the agenda with the removal of item B. "Election of Officers". **Unanimously Approved**

Approval of Minutes:

Moved by Pitzer, **seconded** by Frederiksen to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2023, meeting as written. **Unanimously Approved**

Public Comment: Township Supervisor, Cory Nelson spoke in reference to the Smuggler's Cove issues. He acknowledged that part of his job is to have a pulse on the community, which he takes very seriously. He's certain that the pulse of this community wants this restaurant. He wants members to keep in mind that opposing parties built their home next to a 140 year old building that needed repair. He feels these opposing parties have taken the Township down an unnecessary trail. He wants to put his support behind the restaurant and wants members and the public to know where he stands on this issue.

Public Hearing: Article XIII-A - Commercial Planned Unit Development (CUPD) – Chairman Guzniczak opened the Public Hearing at 7:04. Copies of associated correspondence from Timothy Stoepker, attorney for Mr. and Mrs. Knape, to the Brooks Township Attorney, Clifford Bloom were distributed to board members. The correspondence continued Knape's strong objections to all issues associated with the rebuilding of Smuggler's Cove.

Chairman Guzniczak read the letter into the record and thoroughly reviewed the proposed change to Article XIII-A – Commercial Planned Unit Development (CUPD).

Public comment was offered, with no comment on the proposed amendment and the Public Hearing was closed at 7:12 PM.

Correspondence: None

Reserved Time - None

Unfinished Business:

- 1) Solar and Wind Energy Ordinance Draft Review – Tanya DeOliveira of Williams and Works, provided a draft amendment for review based on best practices and current state of related zoning ordinances in Michigan. Tanya also provided a memorandum which outlined a robust set of suggestions based on their experience in working with other townships of the same size and characteristics. A map was provided identifying potential parcels where utility-scale solar energy systems could be located in the future based on the criteria and language in the drafted ordinance.

Tanya suggested that the few agricultural zoned areas be left for food production only. The PC discussed increasing the lot area from 20 acres to 40 (page 5 Sec 4 – AA-3) and placing limitations on area solar farm(s) to provide only the amount of service required by the Newaygo community. Tanya noted that criteria can be added by specifying intended area locations, increasing the acreage and limiting the footprint of solar farms.

Commission members are encouraged to route any comments to Chairman Guzniczak for review with the Township attorney.

New Business:

- 1) Article XIII-A – Commercial Planned Unit Development (CUPD) – The CPUD was discussed by members. Mark Pitzer voiced concerns and believes it should be tabled for further review. All other members are in favor of the change which is very similar to the existing PUD. Chairman Guzniczak clarified that the change was drafted by the Township attorney based on the benefit of the community. He also noted that he had a clarifying discussion with the Township attorney following the receipt of the letter from the Knape’s attorney and understood that the Township attorney supports the change.

Moved by Wren, **seconded** by Frederiksen to approve the ordinance change.

Approved by Roll Call Vote: **Ayes** – Guzniczak, Baker, Knape, Wren, Frederiksen, Schultz
Nays - Pitzer

Staff Update: Zoning Report was submitted for May

Public Comment: Cindy Bumstead provided handouts and voiced strong concerns involving a “green cemetery” in the planning stages for the Newaygo area. Bumstead noted this “green” approach requires no embalming, no vault, and no casket, with a burial depth of three (3) feet. She states the targeted area is within 100 feet of the Newaygo City water supply, and within 1000 feet of the Muskegon River. The road to approach the proposed cemetery is a narrow gravel road in a residential area and would not facilitate parking for burial procedures. Mitchell George was also present and voiced the same concerns. The PC has had past involvement with this issue and states that this type of cemetery is not allowed by the Township Ordinance.

Planning Commission Members Comments: Chris Wren noted there will be fifteen (15) developers coming into Newaygo with proposals for new housing projects. Mark Pitzer reported a ZBA Hearing is scheduled for 7/19/23, regarding an accessory structure. Mark Guzniczak advised that he plans to include a half hour working session at the August meeting with Ryan Coffee and township board members.

Adjournment: Moved by Baker, **seconded** by Knape, to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 PM.
Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Baker
Planning Commission Secretary

Dianna Schaafsma
Recording Secretary