

SHERMAN TOWNSHIP ZONING/PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

August 8, 2017

Chairman Ford called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Members Present: Alan Ford, Roger Krontz, Kathy Sahli, Lance Thornton, Bill Pueschel, Vince Mifsud, Frank Kalasky

Members Absent: None

Visitors: Steve Wolf, Ben Rouch, Jamey Rouch

Minutes: Motion by Thornton, support by Pueschel, to approve the July 11, 2017 minutes with addition. Motion carried 7-0.

Old Business: Mr. Thornton brought up the non-conforming (location and construction) building located at 27020 Banker Street that has been under review by SCMCCI. Mr. Thornton's concern is that the building has been determined to be out of compliance and no action has been taken to remove the structure.

New Business: Ben and Jamey Rouch (63412/63450 M-66) submitted a five year business plan for Rouch World dated August 8, 2017. In addition to the ORV park, horseback riding, and special event center, the plan mentions a campground, woodworking shop, kayak/canoe rentals, and family restaurant. The Rouch property is comprised of seven (7) different residential and commercial parcels.

Chairman Ford distributed an e-mail from Catherine Kaufman (Bauckham, Sparks, Thall, Seeber & Kaufman PC) dated 08/08/17 entitled "Draft of Mixed-Use District" and a draft copy of possible "Crossroads Mixed Use District" ordinance language as a means to regulate the Rouch project. This language would be an extensive addition to the current zoning ordinances and would require compliance with the Township Land Use Plan. Since the current Land Use Plan for the Township was drafted in October 2000, a review of the Land Use Plan would be suggested.

Mr. Thornton suggested the idea of an "overlay" district as an alternative solution to the Rouch situation. An overlay district would superimpose additional regulatory standards on existing zoning. This would provide a method of placing special restrictions (in addition to basic zoning ordinances) on designated parcels in the Township.

Chairman Ford is to consult with the Township attorney regarding the best option for resolving the Rouch property zoning requirements. This discussion should include a history of the Rouch World project, the number of separate parcels involved, a review of the August 8, 2017 Rouch World Business Plan, the issue of commercial uses within a campground (ORV park, woodworking shop, etc.), the possibility of an overlay district (with possible language). A site visit with the attorney, the Rouches, and possibly a representative from SCMCCI was suggested.

Township Supervisor Wolf updated the Commission members on pending legislation Michigan H.B. 4503 and S.B. 329 proposing that a municipality treat short term rentals (i.e. Air bnb) as a residential use and not a commercial use. This legislation would prevent local municipalities from precluding such use and would invalidate local prohibitions against short term rentals. Local units of government, including Sherman Township, are opposed to this

legislation as it limits the ability of local municipalities to regulate land use within their jurisdictions.

Supervisor Wolf also updated the Commission members of discussions he has had with other St. Joseph County township supervisors regarding large solar farm installations and methods to limit their impact on the agricultural nature of the County.

Adjourn: Motion by Thornton, support by Sahli, to adjourn. Motion passed 7-0 at 8:10 PM.

Next scheduled meeting Tuesday, September 12, 2017, 7:00 PM at the Township Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank J. Kalasky, P.E.
Secretary