

SHERMAN TOWNSHIP ZONING/PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
November 13, 2018

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

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

Members Absent: None

Visitors: Jamey Rouch, Ben Rouch, Steve Wolf, Don Leeth, Lee Adams

Minutes: Motion by Sahli, support by Mifsud, to approve the October 9, 2018 minutes as presented. Motion carried 5-0 (Krontz, Pueschel abstain).

Old Business:

Chairman Ford distributed copies of Michigan Public Act 269 of 1989 regarding public shooting ranges in Michigan. A discussion followed regarding a shooting range and retail gun store at the Rouch property at 63412 M-66. Shooting ranges are not listed in land uses in the current zoning ordinance and therefore are subsequently not permitted. The St. Joseph County Conservation Club has operated a shooting range on their property in the Township for many years and recently expanded the facility. It is a non-conforming use in the Township and some method should be created to eliminate the non-conforming uses and regulate the Rouch project.

The Rouches explained their shooting range is currently constructed in a wooded area on the property which significantly limits noise issues. There would be no open space shotgun shooting (trap/skeet) which would also minimize noise generation.

Chairman Ford/Supervisor Wolf to contact Roxanne Seeber at Bauckham, Sparks, Thall, Seeber & Kaufman PC regarding their opinion of shooting ranges in an environment such as Sherman Township, the legal requirements of a shooting range, existing shooting range ordinances in other Michigan townships, and the procedure (including documentation) to revise the PUD. The Rouches are to provide details of their proposed shooting range including hours of operation, noise abatement procedures and a physical layout of the project including berm height.

Master Plan Update:

Lee Adams, Southcentral Michigan Planning Council, discussed possible Master Plan goals and objectives and implementation strategies with the Commission.

1. Residential Development: The combination of an aging population with a large percentage of low income households, (from demographic information distributed) suggests that some method of enabling residents to remain in their homes and maintaining current housing quality on limited incomes should be investigated. Options such as community organizations to educate homeowners on maintenance practices, specialty tool rental, and connection with volunteers or contractors were

discussed but determined to be impractical for this community. Landlord accountability and condition of rental properties is a concern and should be reviewed. Regulating housing development to preserve rural character and quality of lake areas is an important concern per the resident survey.

2. Agricultural Development: Refine current goals and objectives regarding preservation of the Township's most productive agricultural areas. Identification and protection from development of most productive farm land should be included in the Master Plan.

3. Commercial Development: Encourage cluster development in designated areas. Include wind and solar projects. Large wind/solar installations regulated with special land use permits.

4. Industrial Development: Refine current goals and objectives.

5. Open Space and Recreation: Refine current goals and objectives to support future residential planned unit development projects.

6. Community Facilities: Remove.

7. Public Utilities Distribution and Utilization: Refine current goals and objectives to encourage development of telecommunication facilities in the Township.

Adjourn: Motion by Sahli, support by Mifsud, to adjourn. Motion passed 7-0 at 9:00 PM.

Next scheduled meeting Tuesday December 11, 2018, 7:00 PM at the Township Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank J. Kalasky, P.E.
Secretary