

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Bridgewater Township Government Center
Thursday, October 29, 2020
Official Minutes

- ❖ John Klockeman called the meeting to order at 7:00
- ❖ Members present were Larry Alderks, Frances Boehning, Ray Larson, and John Klockeman. Supervisors present were Kathleen Kopseng, Glen Castore. Staff present was Cindy Nash.
- ❖ Guests present were Casey Bailey, Doug Ims, Mary Denison, Mr. & Mrs. Buchwald.
- ❖ Larry Alderks made a motion to approve the agenda with changes, Ray Larson seconded, all approved.
- ❖ Larry Alderks made a motion to approve the minutes of September 24, 2020, Ray Larson seconded, all approved.
- ❖ The Open Forum was opened at 7:05 pm.
 - Glen Castore reviewed the comments that were sent to Rice County for the new County Comprehensive Plan.

- ❖ Public Hearing for the IMS TEPP permit for crushing gravel was opened at 7:15 pm:
 - Cindy Nash reviewed the staff report.
 - Doug Ims stated that he has a crusher rented for crushing gravel and would like to complete the crushing and return the equipment by the end of November. It is his intention to end the current contract with Quame for the use the gravel pit.
 - Per Mr. Ims, the material needing to be crushed is anticipated to take two weeks to complete. The remaining material will be hauled out in the spring and the area reclaimed.
 - Larry Alderks made a motion to approve the TEPP with the conditions listed in the permit with a change of the ending date for crushing being December 31, 2020, Ray Larson seconded, all approved.

- ❖ Public Hearing for a variance permit for 4886 90th Street E, Northfield was opened at 7:27pm:
 - Cindy Nash reviewed the staff report.
 - Casey Bailey reviewed the topography of the site and stated that the garage was needed for overflow storage. There is a steep drop off on the side of the property.
 - Ray Larson reviewed what he knew of the property topography and the steep bluff and concerns regarding erosion.
 - Larry Alderks made a motion to approve the variance and asked that the building be pushed as close to the bluff as possible. John Klockeman requested that a corner stake be placed at the NE corner of the building no closer than 30-35 feet from the bluff. Larry Alderks stated that he would be fine with the building being 120 feet from the center of the road with erosion control measures being added. Ray Larson seconded the motion approving the variance 120 feet from the center of the road. Roll call vote: Ray Larson – Yes, John Klockemen – Yes, Frances Boehning – Yes, Larry Alderks – No.

- ❖ Solar Moratorium Discussion:
 - Cindy Nash reviewed the staff report and tax implications of solar gardens.
 - A suggestion was made to utilize I.U.P in place of C.U.P for solar gardens.
 - A discussion will need to be held regarding either placing a certain distance between solar gardens or limiting them to certain areas with specified CER ratings.
 - Other suggestions made in the staff report were briefly reviewed.
 - The question was asked regarding what were the goals of the Planning Commission for a new solar ordinance?
 - Prohibitions and standards are needed for both roof and ground mounted solar installations.
 - A method of conserving Ag land is needed in the language to prevent a preponderance of installations.
 - A revised ordinance will be brought to the November meeting.

- ❖ Placement of a second home on a residential property.
 - Cindy Nash reviewed the current ordinance regarding building a second home on a property.
 - A township resident has requested permission to build a small home for a family member that will be living there to assist them in aging in place. The resident has a note from a doctor stating that they need care.
 - It was noted that the Township ordinance must be as strict as the Rice County ordinance. A second residence is allowed on the property provided that it is a manufactured mobile home. This information was conveyed to the resident who was in attendance at the meeting.

- ❖ Upcoming Planning Commission meetings:
 - It was requested that future meetings be conducted via GoToMeeting online app due to the increase in Covid 19 cases. The dates selected were:
 - Wednesday, November 18th
 - Wednesday, January 6th

- ❖ Internet availability in the Township
 - Larry Alderks reviewed internet connectivity in the rural areas. He noted that StarLink may be a viable option for residents in the township to obtain high speed reliable internet without infrastructure. Information regarding StarLink will be shared with residents.

- ❖ The next Bridgewater Township Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, November 18th, 7:00 pm.

- ❖ Adjourn