

**WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP  
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
September 8, 2021**

Paul Mooradian called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call: Baiardi, Varner, Moore, Wallin, Repasky, Uutinen, Mooradian

Absent: None.

Visitors: Jim Bartlett, Tracy Beckley, Dave White, Jimmy Spencer, Marci Spencer, Jim Palmer

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approval Agenda: Mooradian said that he received a forwarded email from Pond Hill asking to be on the agenda. There was not adequate advanced notice.

**Wallin moved to approve the agenda. Moore seconded the motion.**

**Vote: All yes.**

Public Comment: Jimmy Spencer indicated he wanted to discuss three points: 1) the concert which was cancelled, 2) how to proceed with their permit, and 3) an update about MDOT.

Marci Spencer apologized for the concert that was to be held shortly before the last Planning Commission meeting. She said they didn't think they were doing anything wrong and when they learned the concert wasn't allowed, they took the advertising down immediately. They cancelled the concert for the public, absorbed the cost, and made it an event for their family and employees.

Jimmy Spencer wanted to clarify what the difference is between a concert and music playing in the background. White said ticketed events wouldn't be allowed, someone playing in the café while people are eating would be okay.

Wallin said that the Planning Commission should not deliberate or discuss this case tonight. Repasky said we should listen only.

Mooradian said at the last meeting the Planning Commission did not extend the special use permit till December and therefore the case was closed. Mooradian said Pond Hill should reapply with their new information, using the new application form. Palmer said this is tough on them as they started this process on July 25, 2020 and have spent a lot of time and money. He said they have all the documents requested and all that needs to be changed is the maximum number of guests allowed. Palmer also said they are working on the Outdoor Gathering application for the Board. He asked that the application not be considered closed.

Mooradian said they can't resurrect the application as the decision to postpone was not accepted. Mooradian said the benefits of starting a new application is that there will not be time lags to get information, the Planning Commission can post a public notice, and the new applications *forms*

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approved earlier in the year have check lists mirroring the Zoning Ordinance which will be clearer. He said that the Enabling Act requires that if a postponement is not approved then the application is closed.

Mooradian said that an informal meeting was discussed at the August 11, 2021 Planning Commission meeting so that all the Planning Commissioners had the same information. Mooradian said applications can't linger.

Jimmy Spencer asked how the Planning Commission wants to be told about the MDOT updates. Mooradian said that when they submit the application, the information will go through Dave White and the Planner.

Jimmy Spencer felt they were doing a lot of work on septic, etc. in May which they felt was needed as part of the application. Mooradian said it is great that they have done improvements, but usually the order is that the site plan review is approved and then the physical improvements are done. Mooradian told them to contact White and look for the new application on the website.

Public comment period was closed at 7:19 pm.

Approve Minutes: Mooradian made the correction that Tracy Beckley and Dave White should be added as visitors. **Uutinen moved to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2021 meeting.**

**Seconded by Wallin.**

**Vote: All yes.**

Old Business: None.

New Business: The Planning Commission watched part of a MTA training webinar entitled Introduction to Planning & Zoning: The Process. Repasky questioned whether we should accept incomplete application and White clarified he works with the Planner to be sure all information is in. Mooradian reviewed what ex parte meetings are and that visits should be done individually or alone with the Zoning Administrator. Repasky suggested that a check list of rules be developed which could be included in the Planning Commission packets as a reminder.

Zoning Administrators Report: White presented his written report.

Township Board Representative Report: Baiardi reported the next board meeting will be September 14, 2021.

Correspondence: None.

Planning Commissioner Comments: Wallin feels that the Planning Commission doesn't need to review their previous decisions during the Public Comment period as the minutes state why decisions were made.

Moore brought up the suggestion that the Planning Commission should consider how the current ordinance affects the development of affordable housing. For example, accessory dwellings and

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minimum required square footage. Repasky felt that the professionals working on affordable housing should come to the Planning Commission with plans. The need for additional housing as people move to this area and the increasing demand for short term rentals was discussed. Varner asked if the short-term rental situation is a problem in the Township. Mooradian said yes. Varner asked if there is anything we can do for local control. Mooradian explained the State has legislation pending which is defending the owner's right to do short term rentals.

Moore also suggested that the Planning Commission discuss incorporating elements of the Coastal Resiliency training in the Waterfront Overlay District.

Baiardi asked White about a recent EGLE permit. The drawings show a residence above the garage and also an old "negotiated" setback line. White will follow up.

Mooradian read Moore's comments from the most recent ZBA minutes suggesting that the Board, Planning Commission, and ZBA meet together annually. Mooradian felt this was a good idea.

Mooradian had said there was no update regarding the Harbor Point Zoning.

Mooradian put together a list of possible Zoning enforcement issues that have been discussed by the Planning Commission in the past but need following up on. He feels a running list would keep items current. Baiardi clarified that the Zoning Administrator has the authority over Zoning Ordinance and Blight and that the Outdoor Gathering Ordinance is a board issue.

Public Comments: None.

The next scheduled Regular Meeting will be October 13, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

**Wallin made a motion to adjourn. Repasky seconded.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Submitted by:

Dawson Moore, Secretary

Prepared by:

Tracy Beckley, Township Secretary

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