

## **Empire Township Planning Commission Minutes**

**December 6, 2022**

The Empire Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Tom Kaldunski at 8:00 PM.

Present were: Tom Kaldunski, Jared Sachs, Doug Clark, Marla Vagts, Jenni Faulkner, Brad Fisher, Charles Seipel-Teng, and liaison Jamie Elvestad. Trent Larson was absent.

### **Public Hearing:**

A public hearing was opened to consider an application for an IUP to operate a dog kennel at the property that currently contains a dog kennel operated by Skyview Ranch. It was reported that the applicant has withdrawn their application for an IUP.

Charles Seipel-Teng read the hearing notice and noted that the Township has received no written comments regarding the application.

Eric Ruud, resident of Farmington, had questions about information provided to the applicant regarding the proposed IUP. It was reported that staff conveyed information to the applicant about the zoning ordinance requirement that permits a maximum of 30 dogs on the property at one time and about proposed timelines for the IUP. A long term IUP was not guaranteed because the Planning Commission would like to start at an agreed upon number of dogs at the site and then evaluate the permit after a specified amount of time to see if they would be comfortable permitting additional dogs. The zoning ordinance would also need to be amended to permit more than 30 dogs.

Jared Sachs made a motion to close the public hearing. Marla Vagts seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Jenni Faulkner presented information on proposed ordinance amendments regarding outdoor storage. Proposed amendments include adding fleet vehicles and having storage be no closer to the street than the front of the building. Screening can consist of buildings, walls, fencing, berms, plantings and proposed outdoor storage is reviewed as a part of the CUP application process. The Planning Commission discussed the possibility that licensed fleet vehicles are not considered outdoor storage if they are temporarily parked on the property. Fleet vehicles would be permitted anywhere on the property and would need to be on hard surface parking.

Jenni Faulkner and Brad Fisher discussed proposed spacing requirements. Brad recommended that the speed of the road be a determining factor in spacing and that requirements differentiate between commercial vs. residential uses. The Township cannot control spacing on county roads. Tom Kaldunski noted that roads that receive state and county state aid have specific spacing requirements. Brad noted that the City of Farmington has a separate set of standards for rural roads. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that standards should match current land uses as to not create legal non-conforming accesses. The spacing requirements will be based on scenarios as stated in the access plan or as approved by the city engineer. Staff will prepare draft spacing language for the Planning Commission to review.

It was reported that Altus has submitted a request for the release of the landscaping bond for the Feely West solar array. This summer it was determined that some of the planted trees and shrubs have died. This fall, the solar company replaced the dead plants and staff recently inspected the site and determined that the proper number of trees and shrubs have been installed. The Planning Commission recommended releasing the escrow provided that weeds on the site be controlled through the IUP and other ordinances. It was requested that the Township weed inspector inspect the solar array sites annually.

The Planning Commission reviewed a zoning application for a proposed storage shed at 1325 210th Street East. The proposed shed meets the zoning requirements. It should be noted to the applicant that no business activities can take place in the shed.

It was reported that the Town Board will consider setting terms for the Planning Commission, per the Township's ordinance.

Winkler Land Co. has submitted a preliminary plat application for the proposed Deer Creek Subdivision. It was noted that the proposed plat should be sent to the fire department and school bus company to determine proper cul-de-sac size and street lighting locations. It should also be noted that utility hook ups need to be provided to public park spaces and curb stops for the new homes should not be located in the driveways.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.