

Empire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2021

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

Present were: Tom Kaldunski, Trent Larson, Jared Sachs, Bob Bjerke, Doug Clark, Jane Kansier, Charles Seipel-Teng, and liaison Jamie Elvestad.

Charles Seipel-Teng read the public hearing notices for the three scheduled public hearings.

Public Hearing #1- A Hearing to Consider Reissuance and Amendment to the Specialized Environmental Technologies (SET) IUP was opened.

Ryan Tritz with SET explained that proposed changes from the existing IUP include the following: an expansion to the existing contact water pond, moving yard waste and soil stockpiles to the southern portion of the facility, expansion of the transfer station, and the relocation of material storage bins. The site will not be handling more waste, just expanding its footprint on the existing leased property.

SET is also proposing the revision of the language pertaining to its annual contribution to Empire Township from a percentage based on tonnage of waste received, to a flat contribution of \$6,000 and an additional \$.25 per ton in excess of 24,000 tons received. Mr. Tritz explained that the reason for this proposed change is that the site has been receiving substantially less Municipal Solid Waste than in the past. As part of the IUP, the facility will continue to accept yard waste from Empire residents.

A resident of Coats had concerns regarding the smell coming from the site, especially in the summer months. SET indicated that it is not feasible to bag all material to prevent the smell, but they do pay attention to wind conditions in addition to spraying deodorizer at the site. SET also indicated that they stop what they are doing and change course if a complaint about smell is submitted to them. The Planning Commission recommended that SET provide the Township with a complaint log on a quarterly basis.

Jared Sachs made a motion to close Public Hearing #1. Trent Larson seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Trent made a motion to recommend approval of the IUP renewal for SET based on the recommendations discussed in the public hearing. Bob Bjerke seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Hearing #2- A Hearing to Consider Amendment to Ordinance 515-F (Fee Schedule) was opened.

The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed fee schedule. Jane Kansier noted that the new schedule updates State building permit surcharges, penalties for false fire alarm calls, nuisance ordinance charging violations, peddlers license fees, and public facility rentals. She also reported that the proposed amendments include the increase of the peddling licensing fee from \$75 to \$250.

The Planning Commission further discussed the peddlers licensing fee. They did not want to dissuade peddlers from getting a license. It was proposed that the licensing fee be set at \$100 per company or organization, with an additional \$20 fee for other peddlers with the same company or organization. Peddlers that request a license after they sell door-to-door in the Township will need to pay \$200 for a license.

No comments from the public were received for the public hearing.

Jared Sachs made a motion to close Public Hearing #2. Trent Larson seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Jared Sachs made a motion to recommend adoption of amended Ordinance 515-F, the Empire Township Fee Schedule. Bob Bjerke seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Hearing #3- A Hearing to Consider Amendment to Ordinance 270-A, and Ordinance Relating to the Licensing of Peddlers in Empire Township, was opened.

Jane Kansier reported that the proposed amendments include removing the specific reference to the licensing fee dollar amount and replacing it with a reference to the fee schedule, and the added requirement that all peddlers display credentials, in the form of identification badges or clothing, while going door-to-door.

No comments from the public were received for the public hearing.

Tom Kaldunski made a motion to close Public Hearing #3. Bob Bjerke seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Jared Sachs made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed amendments to Ordinance 270-A as discussed. Trent Larson seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Jordan Heller with McNamara Contracting presented a proposal to construct a storage facility consisting of drive-up storage and surface parking lot storage for recreational units on a 4-to-9-acre site at the Southeast intersection of Highway 3 and County Road 46. The proposal would not require water and sewer utilities. To permit this, this section of property would need to be rezoned and an amendment to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan would need to be approved by the Met Council. The facility would need to be granted access to County Road 46 by Dakota County. Jordan will talk with the County. The Planning Commission discussed the possibility

that this may fall under spot zoning. It was recommended that Commission members think about the future of this area of the Township and if this is what they see as the future use of this area after the mines in the area are reclaimed. It was recommended that Mr. Heller come back to the Planning Commission in the near future for further discussion.

Doug Clark was welcomed to the Planning Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.