

# **Empire Township Planning Commission Minutes**

**November 1, 2022**

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

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

A public hearing was opened to consider an application for CUP from Pine Bend Land Co. for outdoor storage at the proposed Dahn Construction site.

Jenni Faulkner presented a memo regarding the proposed CUP. The application calls for a construction office, shop and outdoor storage on lot 2, Block 2 of the DNH Empire Addition in the LI Zone. The proposed office and shop will be contained in a 28,800 sq. ft. facility, with Dahn Construction taking 11,591 sq. ft. and three remaining spaces in the remainder of the facility. Outdoor storage would be located south of the building and employee parking north. There will be a 10' tall, landscaped berm between the parking lot and street. Outside storage will consist of heavy equipment, semi's, semi-trailers, and accessory equipment. No building materials, dirt or rocks will be stored. Outdoor storage will be primarily screened by the building and berm on the north and by a landscape wall of coniferous trees on the south, east and west sides.

Outdoor storage will need to be limited to the area directly behind the principal building until the Zoning Ordinance is amended to permit outdoor storage over a larger area. Landscaping materials will be warranted for growth for a minimum of two years after planting. Grading and footing permits may be issued without the installation of public improvements, subject to sureties for site restoration and submittal of temporary access plan as approved by the Township Engineer.

The Township received no public comments regarding the public hearing.

Trent Larson made a motion to close the public hearing. Jared Sachs seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Tom Kaldunski made a motion to recommend approval of CUP for outdoor storage for Dahn Construction, with the removal of item 4.a from the memo recommendations. Marla Vagts seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Josh Hanson, resident in the MXR District requested that the Planning Commission consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to permit the raising of chickens in the MXR District. Mr.

Hanson noted that over the past decade, many neighboring cities have amended ordinances to permit chickens in residential areas. There is an increasing awareness in people wanting to know where their food comes from and raising chickens can be part of that. It would be good for kids to have the responsibility of raising chickens. The price of eggs has gone up dramatically in recent times. The Planning Commission thanked Mr. Hanson for his request, and it was their consensus that the raising of chickens be permitted in the AG District only. Jared Sachs noted that having chickens in close proximity to each other could raise the potential exposure to bird flu and would like to see more information about potential transmission at residential properties.

The Planning Commission reviewed a memo from Jenni Faulkner on the draft golf cart ordinance. It was the Township attorney's recommendation that the ordinance not permit ATV's of any kind, and strictly apply to golf carts. The ordinance would pertain to the MXR District only and would require annual permits to be issued to carts. Carts will need to be insured and driven by a licensed driver of at least 16 years of age. The Planning Commission discussed how the ordinance will be enforced and recommended that the Sheriff's Deputy comment on it. Jared Sachs made a motion to recommend that the Town Board consider adopting the draft ordinance. Trent Larson seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

It was reported that staff is working on a draft liquor ordinance that will need to be adopted once Empire incorporates, as well as a shoreland, fee schedule, and ROW ordinance.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.