

Empire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

January 4, 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, Jane Kansier, Brad Fisher, Charles Seipel-Teng, and liaison Jamie Elvestad.

Jared Sachs read the notices for the two scheduled public hearings.

Public Hearing #1- A Hearing to Consider Amendment to Empire Township Ordinance NO. 515-G, the Empire Township Fee Schedule. It was reported that the proposed amendments to Ordinance 515-G include the increase of user fees and damage deposits for the rental of the Public Works Building for events that involve alcohol, the incorporation of water and sewer user and hookup fees into the fee schedule, the addition of a fee for rewiring water meter readers, the increase of the water base charge from \$36.00 to \$40.00 per quarter, and the incorporation of a fee for parking in the public right-of-way violations. Discussion was held on the fees for driveway escrow. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that the current escrow fees are sufficient.

Public Hearing #2- A Hearing to Consider Amendment to Empire Township Ord. 510-H, Public Utility Ordinance. It was reported that the proposed amendments to Ordinance 510-H include the removal of language about specific fees for setting water and sewer connection charges and user fees and replacing that language with languages that references the Township's Fee Schedule Ordinance.

No comments on the proposed ordinance amendments were received from the public.

Trent Larson made a motion to close the public hearings. Tom Kaldunski seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Tom Kaldunski made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed amendments to Ordinance 515-G and 510-H. Jared Sachs seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Brad Fisher provided information on the public right-of-way for Biscayne Ave., south of Highway 66. The information indicated that from 210th Street to Vermillion River Trail, there is not a dedicated right-of-way, except for 33' from the section line on the west side of the southern-most parcel. The Township has a prescriptive easement over the remaining properties to maintain the roadway, utilities, and drainage (including ditches). A 66' ROW that is centered on the section line was extended over this entire stretch of Biscayne Avenue as an exercise to determine if the Township standard ROW width would extend beyond the existing prescriptive

easements. Mr. Fisher indicated that the existing prescriptive easements appear to be nearly identical to the proposed future dedicated ROW illustrated and is sufficient to accommodate future upgrades to the Township road as increased demand occurs, due to residential development in the area.

At some point, the County may need additional ROW if Biscayne Ave. were to become a four-lane County Road. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that this issue is decades away and would be handled by the County purchasing the additional ROW at that time.

It was noted that new plats south of the end of Biscayne seem to account for the extension of Biscayne to the south in the future as a County roadway by dedicating what appears to be planning for a 150' ROW width.

It was reported that the Township has received an application for the vacancy on the Planning Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.