

*Approved by: _____
Larry Grunn, *Chairperson*

Date: _____

**MARION TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 22, 2022 - 7:30PM**

PC MEMBERS PRESENT: LARRY GRUNN - *CHAIRPERSON*
JIM ANDERSON - *VICE CHAIRPERSON*
CHERYL RANGE - *SECRETARY*
BOB HANVEY
BRUCE POWELSON

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: SANDY DONOVAN
BOB HANVEY
TAMMY BEAL
DAN LOWE
LES ANDERSEN
SCOTT LLOYD

MEMBERS ABSENT: GREG DURBIN - *BOARD OF TRUSTEE*

OTHERS PRESENT: DAVID HAMANN - *MARION TWP. ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*
ZACK MICHELS - *PLANNER W/ CARLISLE WORTMAN*
ALISSA STARLING - *PLANNER W/ CARLISLE WORTMAN*
SARAH MILLS - *UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S GRAHAM SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE*
MADELEINE KROL - *UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S GRAHAM SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE*

CALL TO ORDER

Larry Grunn called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Bruce Powelson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Jim Andersen seconded. **MOTION CARRIED**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jim Andersen made a motion to approve the October 25, 2022 Planning Commission minutes. Cheryl Range seconded.
MOTION CARRIED

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Les Anderson stated that he wanted to clarify that the Andersen Farm is not being considered for future Solar Farms projects at this time and they currently do not have any of their land leased for Solar Farms.

**NEW BUSINESS:
SOLAR FARM AND PDR PRESENTATION**

Larry Grunn shared some information about the Solar Farm field trip that took place a few months back.

DRAFT

Larry Grunn introduced Sarah Mills and Madeleine Krol with the University of Michigan's Graham Sustainability Institute. Sara Mills explained that she is here to discuss pros and cons of Solar Farms and what that could look like in Marion Township. Dave Hamann explained the process of creating ordinance language for Solar Farms and currently the Planning Commissioners is working with Carlisle Wortman to create language to regulate and manage future Solar Farms. Sara explained how Solar Energy is growing in popularity and is something that every Municipality should be discussing and preparing for.

They showed where some of the larger-scaled Solar Farms are located and they also showed the 200,000 parcels that are currently being studied for future Solar Farms. Consumers Energy will need about 40-56,000 acres by 2040 and DTE will need 30,000-44,000 acres within 10 years for Solar Farms. Solar farms can be on 5–10-acre parcels or 1200+ acre parcels. The perfect location for a Solar Farm is near transmission lines and where substations already exist. Renewable energy creates opportunities for farmers and land owners, to earn additional income. However, this could also pose a threat to farmland and our local food systems.

NEW BUSINESS: PDR ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

Zach Michels (Township Planner with Carlisle Wortman) said that there are several things Townships have to consider when planning for Purchase of Development Rights. Like what type of land do they want to preserve. Who is going to prepare the figures on costs and what type of property should have a PDR.

Jim Anderson says that he likes the Scio Township and Webster Township's ordinance language. Jim suggested doing a combination of the two.

Joanne Haas resides at 10785 Fleming Road. Ellie Steyskal resides at 8875 Owosso Road. Both residents made a comment on this topic.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: REVIEW DRAFT OF KENNELS AND SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR DECEMBER 20, 2022

Jim Anderson liked the draft language on Kennels and thinks it is ready for a public hearing. Jim Anderson made a motion to set a Public Hearing for the Marion Township Kennel Ordinance on December 20, 2022 at 7:30pm. Larry Grunn seconded. **MOTION CARRIED**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: TXT# 03-22 SECTION 14 EXCLUDE RESIDENTIAL AND SET PUBLIC HEARING

Dave Hamann explained that this language should not regulate parking in non-residential areas and prohibit people from parking on private or public roads. Jim Anderson made a motion to set a public hearing for TXT #03-22 Section 14 excluding residential areas on December 20, 2022 at 7:30pm. Bruce Powelson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED**

SPECIAL ORDERS:

• ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Cheryl Range made a motion to nominate Larry Grunn for Planning Commission Chairman. Bruce Powelson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED**

Jim Anderson made a motion to nominate Cheryl Range for Planning Commission Secretary. Bruce Powelson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED**

Bruce Powelson made a motion to nominate Jim Anderson for Planning Commission Vice Chairman. Larry Grunn seconded. **MOTION CARRIED**

• BUDGET REVIEW

Bob Hanvey stated that the Planning Enabling Act suggests that the Planning Commission should create their own budget. Jim Anderson requested the budget for the current 2022-2023 fiscal year. Bob passed the current budget numbers for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, to the Commissioners.

DRAFT

Jim Anderson stated that he would work on an amended budget for the current fiscal year and will also come up with budget numbers for the following fiscal year. He will have this information available for the December 20, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dave Hamann stated that the Township Attorney and the Livingston County Planning Department will have their review on our Solar Ordinance, for the next Planning Commission meeting on December 20, 2022.

Zach stated that John Enos and John Gormley have met and have agreed to work on the Zoning Ordinance language.

Bob Hanvey passed out the documents regarding the Witkowski wedding barn case. The judge stated that The Right to Farm Act and GAAMPS allow "farm-to-table" events and weddings are now included in that.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Sara Porter resides at 9204 Sober Road and commented on Solar Farms.

Zach explained that Townships are not allowed to be exclusionary. They cannot exclude something that is an "expressed need." We have to offer the use of Solar Farms somewhere in the community or the State will eventually regulate and permit this regardless of what the Township wants. Creating areas for Solar Farms gives the Township the ability to regulate the entire process, from start to finish.

Several residents commented on Solar Farms and believe that the Township should prohibit all residents from allowing the use of Solar Farms on their property.

ADJOURNMENT

Larry Grunn motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:50pm. Bruce Powelson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.**