

final

Douglass Township Planning Commission  
3521 W. McBrides Rd  
Stanton, MI 48888  
989-762-8014

Special Meeting Minutes  
September 20, 2023  
7:00 pm

**Called to order:** 7pm by Chairman Rick Baldwin

**Pledge Of Allegiance** recited

**Roll Call**

- Present: Rick Baldwin, Kathy Craig, Jon Bailey, Mike Swan, Matt Moorman, Eric Tester, Melissa Bannen.
- Absent: none

**Approval of agenda items:**

- Eric Tester made motion to approve agenda as written, seconded by Mike Swan. Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion carries.

**Approval of Minutes from July 12, 2023 public hearing:**

- Matt Moorman made the motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Jon Bailey. Ayes: 7 nays: 0 Motion carries.

**Approval of Minutes from July 12, 2023 regular meeting:**

- Matt Moorman questioned if we have any answers on some of the public comments from the meeting regarding accountability of building issues. Eric reported that he brought it up at the board meeting and the board is aware of it.
- Eric Tester made motion to approve minutes as written, seconded by Melissa Bannen. Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion carries.

**Public Comments on agenda items**

- Opened at 7:05 pm

Citizen	Comments
Ben Reynolds	Regarding revamping ordinances: nonconforming homes-we need a 50 ft lot to build a home, his is 47 ft and 2 others are under 50 ft. If a house burned down, they could not rebuild w/o variance. Wonders about grandfathering in those homes/lots, possibly other lakes too.
Caryl Hackett	Regarding the rezoning request being considered: is concerned about land use on local streets. That property is surrounded by residential zoned property. She is worried about what business might go in there in the future if Scott sells. Reports that we have fought to preserve ag land and lake use. Thinks that the tattoo parlor and the Inn are the only

	<p>commercially zoned properties.          *Rick explained there was a nonconforming use granted near there previously.</p>
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- Public comment closed at 7:14 pm.

**New Business**

**Zoning request Hillman Rd: Planning commission discussion:**

- Kathy Craig reported that Cindy Shick had spoken to attorney and provided an update on rezoning and variance issues on this request. The appropriate rezoning would be general business because it addresses signs. The PC can approve conditional rezoning based on specifics requested by Scott Carr (applicant), and contingent upon the ZBA granting needed variance(s). PC can proceed to public hearing on this if it so desires. Mike Swan asked Scott Carr if he asked to buy any property from the neighbors. Carr has not, preferring to proceed with variance. He reports 1/20th of an acre is the variance issue. Carr was asked if there was lake access there. There is none. Carr reports he is fine with the conditional rezoning, as he wants to put up a sign and bring in some work. He reports it is a buried cable type business and is planning to use for storage of trenchers, trucks, and put up a sign. Matt Morrman feels future land use is appropriate. Carr reports he is planning to keep all trees currently on property. Eric Tester asked if it sold, would it stay that way or go back to current zoning? Kathy Craig reported that the conditional rezoning stays with property.
- Melissa Bannen made motion to to move forward with conditional rezoning on property located at 585 Hillman Rd, Stanton, MI 48888 from residential to general business for storage and sign, contingent on ZBA granting variance(s) and to schedule a public hearing for Oct. 25, 2023 at 6:00 pm (prior to regular PC meeting), seconded by Kathy Craig. Ayes: 7 Nays: 0. Motion carries.

**Zoning Board of Appeals- variance issues**

- Rick Baldwin provided an update on members of ZBA. Sara Beechy is chair, Ben Reynolds is alternate, and Rick Baldwin is PC representative. They are 1 person short. Eric Tester reported that the board is addressing that tomorrow night. There is also a ZBA meeting tomorrow night. Rick reports that there have been 11 variances in 4 years on building a pole barn on vacant property.

**List of common inquiries to be created, possibly including the following topics:**

- Height of pole barns
- Granny houses
- Types of siding
- Tiny homes (occupancy restrictions from health department)
- Motor homes
- Cabins
- Camping
- Noise ordinance
- Lake properties-better description of if front or back yard is lake side

Further discussion involved lake properties and people owning additional lots for storage and wanting to build pole barns for storage on them. Matt reports the lake is looking into this.

**Review of local townships' resolutions regarding state control of zoning**

- Eric Tester presented a resolution to recommend to the township board regarding the state trying to take control of local zoning on sand and gravel pits, vacation homes, wind and solar projects. The board is going to discuss tomorrow night, as the legislature is meeting before its next regular meeting.
- Jon Bailey made motion to support the resolution, seconded by Matt Moorman. Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion carries.

**Committee Reports**

Eric Tester Board Liaison

- We have completed what the board asked us to (wind and solar), and has no current issues for us.

Dave Kelsey Zoning Administrator

- Did not have report, but will bring it to the next meeting.
- Discussion on who is accountable for building issues, and what can the PC do to help. There was discussion regarding an issue at one of the lakes in which a homeowner built on other people’s property. PC members discussed requiring more money for applications, surveys, and follow up after permits are granted.

**Old Business**

No old business

**Public Comments**

Opened at 8:40 pm

Citizen	Comments
Scott Carr	Other counties have more strict ordinances. We have a lot of gray areas and needs to be yes/no. Recommends INgham county as model.
Linda Reynolds	Is there a checklist for the ZBA or PC to follow? There should be a list of what needs to be done, surveys, etc. If PC does changes, maybe have them all done at one public hearing.
Sara Beechy	SHared that the ZBA is requiring more information on a current zoning permit.

- Closed at 8:57 pm

**Further commission discussion**

PC recommends putting together a list of items for review of ordinances.

**Next meeting date** Oct. 25, 2023 7 pm immediately following public hearing

**Adjourn**

Mike Swan made motion to adjourn, seconded by Mike Swan. AYes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Kathy Craig  
 Douglass Township Planning Commission Secretary

