

**Greenvale Township Planning Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, January 4, 2024**

**Present:** Ken Malecha (Chair); Commissioners Scott Norkunas, Joyce Moore, Victor Volkert, Steve Wickelgren and Jane Dilley, Town Clerk

**Others Present:** Charles Anderson, Gregory Langer, Andy Anderson, Mary Collins, Perry Collins, Bruce Paulson, Tony Rowan, Linus Langer, Mary Langer

**Guests:** none

Chairman Malecha asked the audience to join in the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00pm.

**Opening Statement:** Malecha stated the Planning Commission (“PC”) is an appointed body that makes recommendations on planning and zoning issues to the Town Board. These recommendations are advisory only. The elected Town Board members make the final decisions on matters brought before the PC. The sole topic for tonight’s meeting is to continue work on the township’s ordinances to bring them into compliance with the provisions of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The audience was reminded this is a public meeting, not a Public Hearing. Meetings are open to the public to observe. Audience comments are limited to topics being discussed. Malecha reminded the audience to sign the attendance sheet and silence their electronic devices.

**Agenda:** The sole purpose of this meeting is to review a draft of portions of the revisions to the township’s ordinance manual. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Volkert, seconded by Moore. Motion carried 5 – 0.

**Minutes:** No minutes were reviewed at this meeting.

**Citizen Comments:** No citizen comments were heard at this Special Meeting.

**New Business:** Malecha distributed hard copies of the latest redlined version of the ordinance manual received from Bolton & Menk. An updated draft is on the website. Jenni Faulkner wrote a memo on prohibited vs permitted uses – Section 5.04 E which

Malecha distributed and asked the PC members to hold this until their review got to that section.

Under Section 2. Purpose Norkunas noted that one of the purposes of the ordinance manual revisions is to comply with the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan, so that was added to the list.

When visiting with a couple members of the public, it was requested under the section addressing the transfer of development rights that language be added to add the goal of preserving agricultural land. Malecha explained that the preamble covers all chapters of the ordinance, and if added to every provision it would probably add fifty pages to the document.

The term building eligibility will be replaced with building development right throughout the manual, resulting in changes in the Definitions section. This revised term is in line with the State of Minnesota.

The current ordinance manual lists three zoning districts: agricultural preservation, Shoreland and Floodplain. We really have only one zoning district – agriculture, with overlays for Shoreland and Floodplain. The ordinance manual has been updated accordingly.

Section 4.04 Nonconforming Uses and Structures incorporates language regarding nonconforming land uses for nonagricultural businesses, which is currently an amendment to the ordinance.

Changes were made to permit one nonresident employee for home occupations.

Temporary dwellings conforms to state definitions. Temporary health care dwellings are for the caretaker, not the person in need of care.

No changes to housing density are being made, continuing to conform with the Comprehensive Plan, which is one dwelling per quarter/quarter section. Clustering is permitted but not to exceed 4 dwellings on a quarter/quarter section.

The PC discussed the memo from Bolton & Menk about a proposed language change in 5.04 E. from “if a use is not listed as permitted, it shall be prohibited” to “uses not listed

as permitted or conditional in the A - Agricultural District may be allowed with an Interim Use Permit.” This is a change recommended by Bolton & Menk.

PC members are encouraged to continue reading over the manual and if items need to be corrected, please notify the Chair or the Clerk. Another draft will be produced based on items discussed tonight, so it will be ready for the Public Hearing on Monday, January 8, 2024.

Malecha asked if there were any comments from the audience. None.

Moore then shared with the PC members research with EPA she did on issues with solar. Decommissioned solar panels are considered hazardous waste and it’s being shipped to Oklahoma and Colorado. The Comprehensive Plan permits, and we need to follow with it, commercial solar under a Conditional Use Permit. This gives the PC and the Board the chance to adapt to changes in technology. Concerns about decommissioning. Escrow requirements? Dilley remarked that our neighbors in Waterford Township have some commercial solar arrays so there is experience nearby. We share the same law firm for township attorneys. We have resources available to navigate this.

Wickelgren used the example of electric vehicles being good for the environment because of emissions. But now its been found that the carbon footprint is actually greater due to the manufacturing of the vehicle.

The PC will start work on a fee schedule in February after the ordinance manual is finalized and published.

Wickelgren made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Volkert seconded. Motion carried 5 – 0.

APPROVED – January 11, 2024

Prepared by:



Ken Malecha, Chair



Jane Dilley, Town Clerk