

**Planning Commission Meeting**  
**Bridgewater Township**  
**Official Minutes**  
**Wednesday, February 24, 2016**

- ❖ John Klockeman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Members present were John Klockeman, Bruce Morlan, Jim Braun, Kathleen Doran-Norton, Ray Larson, Jeff Stremcha, Larry Alderks, Kurt Schrader, , and Frances Boehning.
- ❖ New members were sworn in including; Larry Alderks, Kurt Schrader, and Frances Boehning
- ❖ Ray Larson made a motion to approve the agenda, Jeff Stremcha seconded, all approved.
- ❖ Jeff Stremcha made a motion to approve the minutes from January 20, 2016, Bruce Morlan seconded, all approved.
- ❖ The Open Forum was opened and the following comments heard:
  - Kathleen Doran-Norton noted that a card was sent out residents requesting input and comments on proposed zoning changes in Rice County.
  - A resident expressed concern that Rice County will enact changes that will hinder small famers.
  - Public hearing closed at 7:13pm.
- ❖ Public Hearing – 7:14pm – Public hearing on Residential Accessory Structures Amendment.
  - This ordinance was started as a result of complaints from a structure built in a sub-division in 2015. .
  - Questions were answered regarding questions about the language in the ordinance.
  - The ordinance needs to be updated in E.4 to read “200 square feet” in place of “120 square feet”.
  - A request was made for clarification regarding zoning in Rice County versus Bridgewater Township.
  - A request was made for clarification regarding the definition of “Accessory Building”.
  - A request was made for clarification that the principle building is the residents dwelling.
  - A request was made to update Article II section 10 C to read “it shall be considered a part of the building” in place of “it shall be made structurally a part of the building”.
  - Following a discussion on setbacks; a request was made to add in a setback of 10 feet or the height of the side wall – whichever is greater.
  - Public Hearing closed 7:39pm.
  - Larry Alderks made a motion to approve the Residential Accessory Structures Amendment with the following changes:
    - Article II Section 10 E 2 – set back to be the greater of 10 feet or the height of the side wall.
    - Article II Section 10 E 4 – change 120 square feet to 200 square feet.
    - Article II section 10 C - “it shall be considered a part of the building” in place of “it shall be made structurally a part of the building”.
    - Article II Section 10 A – change “necessary” to “accessory”.
  - Jeff Stremcha seconded the motion, approval by John Klockemen, Bruce Morlan, Ray Larson, Jeff Stremch, Larry Alderks, and Frances Boehning, denied by Kurt Schrader.
- ❖ Old Business –
  - Community Solar Gardens – Discussion on proposed ordinance.
    - Reviewed the terms and definitions added to the ordinance.
    - Under Roof Mounted RSES – A question for clarification on the 1-3 feet clearance around the edge. A request was made to change the language to read “a minimum of 3 feet clearance around the edge”.
    - Under Roof Mounted RSES – requested clarification from Carolyn Braun on “1-5 feet above the roof surface”.

- A request was made to expand the definition of RSES to include the possibility of residents to sell back excess energy to the utility company.
- A question was asked regarding CSES and USSS why the systems are not to exceed 20 feet in height. A discussion was held regarding the significance of 20 feet.
- Per Kevin Larson – St. Olaf is considering adding a solar array next to the wind turbine in Bridgewater Township. Research will be need to determine if St.Olaf can place a solar array in the urban researve. Jim Braun will respond to Kevin Larson regarding if the area is in the urban researve.
- A question was made regarding 3 E Free Standing RSES – review “flush-mounted with the roof” – this should be moved up to number 2 – Roof Mounted RSES.
- A discussion was held regarding CSES number 7 “must manage storm water”.
- A question regarding CSES was raised. Why do we limit the size to 1MW – this is Rice County limit.
- Bruce Morlan requested limiting the size to 75% coverage over a 6 acre area in place of the 1mw limit. Also requested looking into any other ordinances that speak to site coverage.
- A discussion was held regarding does this ordinance work if Rice County does not allow solar arrays in the urban reserve.
- Request for clarification on General Standards 2e. – it matches General Standards number 4. Do we need both?
- The ordinance will go to public hearing in March.

➤ Road Frontage Requirements with Extended Driveways

- Jim Braun reviewed the current issues with old properties surrounded by farm land. The current standard width is 150 feet.
- A suggestion was made to increase the minimum lot width to 250 feet.
- Staff will write multiple drafts looking at different option and present at the March meeting.

❖ New Business

➤ Restriction of Mining in Highly Sensitive Area in the Township.

- A suggestion was made to have SMC, Hazelton, and DeGroot come in and talk about mining.
- A suggestion was made to have affected residents attend the meeting also.
- Noted that there are 13 gravel pits – three operational and ten old ones that need to be cleaned up and reclaimed.
- SMC is currently not in compliance – Jim Braun is working with SMC, Don Redmond, and OMG – a meeting will take place in mid-March – the issue is that cells are not being closed properly prior to new cells opening. In addition, the land next to a roadway has washed out and needs to be repaired.

➤ Update Planning Commission By-Laws.

- Changes requested as follows:
  - Under Meeting Dates and Times Purpose – “The Planning Commission meeting should be held on the **last Wednesday of the month** before the Town Board meeting to allow time for preparation of documents for Board approval.
  - Under Public Hearings Purpose number 4. – add “a list of names and addresses of the public attending will be kept”. Also, remove the comma in “Allow everyone interested an opportunity to speak”.
  - Under Public Hearings Purpose number 8. – add “of those present” after “Seek majority viewpoint”.
  - Under Application Requirements Applications number 1 – add in request for pictures or drawings when appropriate to the legal description.

- A request was made to have a projector system in order that the Commissions can look at Beacon during the meeting.
- Request was made to move “Meeting Rules” to between “Meeting Dates” and “Public Hearing”
- Under “Agenda Items” – a request was made to get materials to commissioners 72 hours in advance of the meeting.
- A request was made to have the Planning Commissioners indemnified under the M.A.T. liability coverage.

❖ Bruce Morlan made a motion to adjourn, Kurt Schrader seconded, all approved. – 9:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frances Boehning  
Bridgewater Township Clerk.