

**Planning Commission Meeting  
Bridgewater Township  
Official Minutes  
Wednesday, March 30, 2016**

- ❖ John Klockeman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Members present were John Klockeman, Bruce Morlan, Jim Braun, Carolyn Braun, Kathleen Doran-Norton, Jeff Stremcha, Larry Alderks, Kurt Schrader, and Frances Boehning.
- ❖ Jeff Stremcha made a motion to approve the agenda, Kurt Schrader seconded, all approved.
- ❖ Larry Alderks made a motion to approve the minutes from February 24, 2016, Bruce Morlan seconded, all approved.
- ❖ The Open Forum was opened and closed at 7:06 as there were no comments.
- ❖ Public Hearing – 7:08pm – Public hearing on Timothy Lloyd Variance request.
  - Jim Braun reviewed the history of the property.
  - Following a conversation with John Ophaug, it was learned that the property is a lot of record and that a driveway easement has been in place since 1974. There is one building right with the possibility of a second if certain conditions are met.
  - Timothy Lloyd spoke to the expectation of the lot being buildable when it was purchased in 1974.
  - Tracy Kochendorfer (a neighbor to Lloyds), commented on the existence of the easement driveway and concern if more than one house were to be added to the lot as the driveway would not hold up under excess use.
  - Public Hearing closed 7:23pm.
  - A Commissioner requested clarification on how many building sites were being requested by the Lloyds – answer = The Lloyds are requesting one building site.
  - The driveway easement is 33 feet wide.
  - Bruce Morlan made a motion to approve the one building site with the understanding that the driveway easement is 33 feet wide, Jeff Stremcha seconded, all approved.
  - The basis for this approval is that the parcel is a lot of record with Rice County since 1974.
- ❖ Public Hearing – 7:40pm – Public hearing on Amending Zoning Ordinance Standards related to the Shoreland Ordinance.
  - Carolyn Braun reviewed the rationale for amending the Shoreland Ordinance. The changes were requested by the DNR to ensure that we match the state. Bridgewater Township will not be allowed to move forward with the Central Pond flood mitigation project until this ordinance is passed.
  - Carolyn Braun mentioned that the draft was also sent to the state for review, they will be getting back to her within the next couple weeks.
  - Public Hearing was closed at 7:47pm.
  - Carolyn Braun reviewed the changes requested by the state.
  - Jeff Stremcha made a motion to approve the amendments to the Shoreland Ordinance, Larry Alderks seconded, all approved.
- ❖ Public Hearing – 7:52pm – Public hearing on Amending Zoning Ordinance Standards related to Solar Energy Systems.
  - Kevin Larson – St Olaf College Assistant Director of Facilities, had a question on page 3 section D regarding Community Solar Energy Systems – question on whether Community Solar is permitted in the Urban Reserve or if it needs a C.U.P.
  - Carolyn Braun provided the answer – she stated that Community Solar would need a C.U.P. and would need to meet general standards.

- Garard O. had a comment regarding the fact that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission had granted permission to co-locate 1 MW farms to create a larger entity.
- Kathleen Doran-Norton noted that her roof mounted solar array was not in compliance with Section 127 D 2a – “Solar energy systems must have 1-3 feet of clearance around all edges to facilitate emergency responder services” – Carolyn Braun will look into this to see if it is necessary.
- Public Hearing closed at 8:03pm.
- Bruce Morlan had a question on the possibility of a co-located Community Solar Garden in the ARD. Would our code work for the PCARD? – Dundas would need to update their ordinance to include solar.
- Jeff Stremcha had a question on where the 1MW limit came from – The limit was agreed upon by the Public Utilities and Excel.
- Question was asked if Rice County allows solar gardens in the Urban Reserve – Answer – Solar gardens up to 1MW are allowed.
- Question was asked if Solar Gardens are allowed in Rural Residential – Answer – Solar gardens are not permitted in Rural Residential.
- Request was made for clarification on “Solar Energy Systems” on page 1. A request was made to move to a more general definition.
- A change in wording was requested on page 1 “Solar Thermal System” – change “water” to “a conductive material”.
- A change in wording was requested on page 1 “Utility Scale Solar System” (USSS) to add “as permitted by the Minnesota State Utilities Commission”
- A request was made on page 2 to move 3. e. up to the section “Roof Mounted RSES” and add it as 2. c.
- A change was requested on page 3 section 128 D. 4 to remove “and between”.
- A change was requested on page 3 section 128 D. 7 to add “consistent with this ordinance” to the end of the sentence.
- A question was raised regarding the need for security fencing around the solar arrays. A request was made to add a section on page 4 to read “site needs to be secured by the C.U.P. process”.
- On page 3 section D6, Bruce Morlan would like to note that with improved technology in the future, 1 MW may not be a good limiting factor.
- A change was requested on page 4 letter C – correct the last line to read “A cash escrow or letter of credit equal to 125% of the cost will be required to ensure decommissioning”. This should be added to both Community Solar Gardens and Utility Solar.
- A change was requested on page 4 number 1 to “Minnesota State Building Code”.
- A change was requested on page 4 number 2 to “Local Electrical Code”.
- Jeff Stremcha made a motion to approve the Solar Ordinance with changes, Bruce Morlan seconded, all approved.

❖ Old Business –

- None

❖ New Business

- Discuss adding standards for highly sensitive areas.
  - Discussion on what the standards would apply to, would it cover activities beyond mining?
  - Reviewed water sensitivity maps
  - Carolyn Braun will work on creating something for the next meeting.

❖ Misc.

- Regulations for Agricultural Structures.
  - Jim Braun reviewed the need to have agricultural buildings inspected.
  - Jim Braun suggested that the township create a compliance list that would need to be followed. He will present suggestions at the next Planning Meeting.
- Dundas Planning Commission Members for the PCARD
  - Larry Alderks requested a plan to rotate members.
- M.A.T. Lobby Day
  - Bruce Morlan will be attending the M.A.T. Lobby Day
    - A request was made to talk to the Senators regarding the Local Control Bill and the Buffer Strips Bill – Kathleen Doran-Norton will email him any information that she has.

❖ Larry Alderks made a motion to adjourn, John Klockeman seconded, all approved. – 9:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frances Boehning  
Bridgewater Township Clerk.