

MONTCALM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

April 15, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call:

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m. with Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Richard Palmer (Chair), Karon Baird (Vice Chair), Richelle Lentz (Secretary), Christine Foley (Twp Board Liaison), Bob Hemmes, Recording Secretary-Barb Prah. There is a quorum.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion to Approve Agenda as written by C. Foley, **Second** by K. Baird. No discussion. Aye-All; Nay-None; Abstain-None. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM February 18, 2025 Meeting:

Motion To Approve Minutes from the February 18, 2025 Special Meeting by C. Foley; **Supported** by R. Lentz. No discussion. Aye-R. Palmer, R. Lentz, C. Foley, B. Hemmes; Nay-None; Abstain-K. Baird (not present). **Motion carried.**

- Amend December 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes

R. Palmer stated that the meeting minutes had an incorrect date (October 14, 2025) for the October meeting of this year. Correct date should be October 21, 2025.

Motion to Amend December 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes to correctly reflect the date of October 21, 2025 by K. Baird; **Supported by** R. Lentz. Discussion: C. Foley indicated that the website does indicate the correct date. Aye-All; Nay-None; Abstain-None. **Motion carried.**

COMMENTS FROM ZONING ADMINISTRATOR:

M. Nelson brought forward a Site Plan submitted by the Three Seasons Family Campground with \$800.00 fee and would like to make it a four seasons campground. M. Nelson would like this request heard at the May PC meeting, if necessary. This was just submitted and he has not had time to talk to them about it. The property is zoned commercial. They did submit a request for a meeting, but did not submit the Application.

Discussion about changes they would like to make. They would like to expand the existing RV site to put down 17 parking pads and include sewer/septic with a drain field and water hookups.

The campground already has a Special Use Permit. Board discussion concerning what is the appropriate procedure for this request. An Application for Site Plan Review will need to be submitted before a special meeting could be scheduled to address the request, which M. Nelson will have to take to Three Seasons to complete/submit.

When reviewing, site plan reviews are required, it would be for this request.

M. Nelson also advised that Corrigan Oil on Vining has submitted a Site Plan that they would like to build an additional building on their property, which will be within the requirements. Corrigan is zoned commercial and would not require a review.

Further discussion as to Campground, whether the use changes/updates should be reviewed using 4.3 (Site Plan Review). Since adding parking spaces and road, a Site Plan Review may be necessary. Minor changes are subject to Zoning Administrator approval and should be clearly specified in writing and completed records written.

Suggestion to take this to the ZBA at meeting on 4-16-25, as to whether they need a Site Plan Review. PC does not interpret whether this is a "major" or "minor" change/update. R. Lentz will take this to the ZBA meeting for review. R. Palmer would recommend that the ZBA review the zoning ordinance relevant for this. R. Palmer also stated his recollection is that M. Nelson (Zoning Administrator) has authority to review site plans for one or two-family residences, all others must have Site Plan Review.

COMMENTS FROM PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

R. Lentz stated she has not had a lot of time to go through the changes under items in "Old Business" discussion. She hopes to make some time to work on this soon and make progress.

C. Foley stated the new website will be going active within the next 30 days with the .gov information. Need to make sure all documents are on the new website before shutting down old website. She asked for anyone to advise if they notice anything that is missing and she will make changes. There is discussion about providing .gov emails for township members and the cost for this. Possible emails to be included are for Twp Board members, PC Board and ZBA Board chairs, Zoning Administrator and Fire Chief.

R. Palmer reports that at the Twp Board Meeting, the Zoning Ordinance amendments to (1) Footnote #6 of Table 3-4 and, (2) to the Definitions Article in Table 3-2 and to enact a new Section 7.26 concerning Commercial Energy Storage Facilities were all adopted by votes of 5-0. C. Foley indicated they are published.

PUBLIC COMMENT CONCERNING NEW BUSINESS ITEM:

No comments.

NEW BUSINESS:

Zoning Ordinance Amendments concerning Section 7.24 (Commercial Wind Energy Conversion Facilities) and Section 7.25 (Solar Farms) Penalty increase

R. Palmer indicated that this increase is to be consistent with provision of the new 7.26 Commercial Energy Storage Facilities. Draft of Ordinance (prepared by R. Palmer with information from Twp Atty, and he reviewed and approved it) was drafted and given to

PC members. Twp Atty recommended approval of this for the reason that violations of those sections could cause massive damage for those particular commercial use of various energy facilities.

Provisions and the scheduling of a Public Hearing concerning such Amendments

Motion to schedule a public hearing for May 20, 2025 meeting at 7:00 p.m. on the proposed Amendments to the Penalty Provisions of Zoning Ordinance Sections 7.24 and 7.25 in accordance with the proposed Ordinance by R. Palmer. **Second** by C. Foley. Discussion, this is a Special Meeting to be held at the beginning of regular meeting. Notice to be published in newspaper and posted.

Roll Call Vote: B. Hemmes-yes, K. Baird-yes, R. Lentz-yes, C. Foley-yes, R. Palmer-yes. Unanimous approval. **Motion passes.**

R. Palmer will prepare the Notice and submit to C. Foley. He will also prepare a Resolution and review with Twp Atty for use at the hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENT CONCERNING OLD BUSINESS ITEMS:

No comments.

OLD BUSINESS:

Master Plan Amendments

R. Lentz stated that she has been given K. Baird's changes to update and has no chance to make them. She will have them ready for May meeting.

Township Zoning and Planning Maps:

R. Lentz stated that she sent the update to the assessor. The new amendments will be updated, but need to wait.

Future Development vs. Master Plan:

K. Baird stated she went through the Master Plan, Future Development section. She is satisfied with the way it is written and there is no need to change/add anything.

Commercial Zoning Districts:

R. Palmer shared additional specifics. As to 2-7 of Master Plan addressing future commercial development. Survey taken does not appear to be strongly support by public and would like to continue with rural character of township and compatible with surrounding property. In 3-3 we have two commercial zoning districts. All in Montcalm Twp is currently zoned C2. Currently, sexually oriented businesses are permitted in C2 but not C1. He would suggest those would not be appropriate in residential areas or frontage of commercial property on main artery (M91). Recommendation to rezone commercial property from C2 to C1 regarding the entire properties in Section 9 on the west side and east side of M91, north of Turk Lake, and on the northeast on the corner

on Colby Road. These are all surrounded by residential property. Second request is the depth of 300' from the highway right-of-way be rezoned to C1 of the commercial properties on M91 in Section 27, 28, 33 and 34.

Further discussion regarding permit of use in C2, what is allowed and what may be allowed in C1 on the M91 frontage. Also notice must be given, per the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, for rezoning of specific pieces of property. Notification must be given to the owner of the property as well as the owners or residents of property surrounding within 300', unless there are 11 or more adjacent properties, then it is not required.

Discussion of ZBA members: B. Hemmes talked about the changes being discussed should be moved to be put on a map, and does not like splitting a parcel to two zonings. R. Lentz stated the new digital maps have some things that are incorrect based on the maps in the back. She does agree with B. Hemmes to not split zoning.

Members also discussed that mini-storage should be C2. K. Baird stated that the Master Plan indicates we should have limited commercial property. B. Hemmes says banks do look at property differently and ZBA must be cautious about changing, and questions the notification to adjoining property owners/residents.

ZBA members discussed about what can be allowed in C1 and C2 to help decide how to go ahead with rezoning. R. Lentz suggested creating a C3 zoning district to designate limited properties/areas. This needs to be discussed with Twp Atty for drafting language. Consensus to change property from C2 to C1 and creating a C3. M. Nelson added that you cannot change what is current and that anything new needing a site plan, you can control.

Recommendation to hold off until next month meeting until consultation with Twp Atty regarding adding a C3. This will be added under "Old Business" at next meeting. Discussion about sexually oriented businesses are not allowed in C1, only in C2. Not willing to rezone frontage on M91 corridor to C1, but investigate possibility about a specific use.

PC Board will work toward rezoning from C2 to C1 in Turk Lake area. Discussion about which properties are included in this. R. Palmer will review with Twp Atty and PC Board will discuss that further at next meeting.

Zoning Districts in the Turk Lake Area:

The current map is incorrect in that the purple and red should be R3 medium density (light green). Only need corrections in the map.

PUBLIC COMMENT CONCERNING ALL MATTERS:

No comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

R. Lentz **motioned to adjourn. Second** by K. Baird. No discussion. Aye-K. Baird, R. Lentz, C. Foley, R. Palmer; Nay-B. Hemmes (stated this was too much fun). Abstain-None. **Motion carried.**

Adjournment at 8:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Prah, Recording Secretary