

Buchanan Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
March 27, 2013

CALL TO ORDER

The regular March 27, 2013 meeting of the Buchanan Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Stephanie Wagner-Hemminger at 7:06 pm.

Members Present: Stephanie Wagner-Hemminger (Chair), Janet Dehring, Eric Hageman, John Pitz, and Dennis Wentworth.

Members Absent: Timothy Gray (Vice Chair) and Kimberly Scarpone.

Others Present: Planner Brian Wegener, Williams & Works; two (2) township residents; no members of the press; Buchanan Township Building Official Chris Fuchs; Buchanan Township Ordinance Officer Joseph Kring; and Recording Secretary Cathy Ganus.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited by those in attendance.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER

Wagner-Hemminger introduced new planning commission member Eric Hageman.

ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the December 19, 2012 meeting was approved as presented.

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS

Township resident Mario Palmisano recited the Wikipedia definition of agri-tourism. He went on to state that he feels that section F – accessory structures already address agri-tourism.

CORRESPONDENCE

Bertrand Township Planning Commission – Receipt of letter regarding update of Bertrand Township Master Plan

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Beekeeping and Zoning Ordinance Amendments Pertaining to Agri-Tourism Establishments

Wagner-Hemminger turned the meeting over to Brian Wegener from Williams & Works. Wegener went over the draft ordinance pertaining to agri-tourism.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

Beekeeping and Zoning Ordinance Amendments Pertaining to Agri-Tourism Establishments (continued)

Discussion ensued regarding whether agri-tourism was needed in the ordinance. Wentworth expressed his displeasure, citing he feels this would make it more cumbersome for a small business to have to obtain a special land use permit. Hageman questioned Wegener as to the rationale for the special land use permit. Wegener stated that if you were to look at what is currently permitted as a special land use permit, he does not see these uses to be any different than those already stated. Pitz questioned whether the Township can regulate business in one area and not another.

Kring advised that if someone were to approach the Township about opening a wine-tasting room or a microbrewery, the Township would have to deny the request because currently if the use is not listed as permissible in the ordinance then it is not allowed. This would be the mechanism in which to say yes. He has researched other municipalities within the State of Michigan and all handle this type of issue with a special land use permit.

The draft ordinance was then reviewed. Item two on page two, the first sentence would be struck through ____ acres and. Item two shall then read "The agri-tourism establishment ..." Item three, the last sentence should include "shall be located at least 50 feet from property lines." Item four, the first and second sentence should be struck. Item four should begin with sentence "The Township may require submittal ..."

Motion by Wagner-Hemminger, second by Dehring, to set a public hearing on the zoning ordinance amendment for agri-tourism for April 24, 2013 at 7:00 pm. Roll call vote showed the following: Dehring, yes; Wagner-Hemminger, yes; Hageman, yes; Wentworth, no; and Pitz, yes. Motion carried (4-1).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 pm.

Cathy A. Ganus
Recording Secretary