



Minutes – Planning Commission

November 21, 2017
7:00 PM
Solon Township Hall

Meeting called by: Chairperson, Ellen Moore @ 7:02 PM

Members present: Babcock, Gunnell, Moore, Myers, Sevey, Sawade, Tilburt

Approval of Minutes: Motion to accept August Minutes as written by Gunnell, second by Sevey, All Ayes, Carried.

Approval of Agenda: All agreed

Non-Agenda Items: Chairperson Moore opened public comment for non-agenda items.

Comment: - Gerald Skelonc – complaint about storage business on White Creek (White Creek Storage) and on 17 Mile near Van’s Plumbing having junk visible from road, needs screening.

Conclusion: Jerry Gross will review sites.

Agenda Item: Chairperson Moore opened public comment for consideration of Medical Marihuana Facilities Proposal.

Comment: - Dave Overhall, grower, caregiver, and advocate on behalf of veterans, from Montcalm County: not passing proposal will continue to drive black market; shouldn’t be allowed for minors under age 21.

- Derrin Lee, local proponent: has a letter from the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan - will be copied and read later by PC members (*included in minutes below.)

- Shawn Levinson, Pierson; supports cause

- John Elm, Rockford: he and wife are caregivers in support of passing; many patients are Veterans.

- Josh Blaaw, Howard City: caregiver in support; has found a safe process for all natural relief; partners with others for investment in optimal facilities in community; travels the state promoting cause but wants it available at home.

- Jason Blaaw, Sparta: need to consider opiate addiction vs. natural healing.

- Gerald Skelonc, Cedar Springs: need to consider changes necessary; regulation and cost to go into business.

Moore: Closed public hearing with reminder that PC recommendation would be decided by Township Board.

Discussion: Clarification that because this is a “package” PC should address both facilities permits and regulation and zoning – what type, how many, and where – as tied together in one discussion; reminder that regulations are tied to State’s statutes; Fees are set by State with a percentage allotted and distributed to the townships. State’s statutes regarding township permitting licensing, violation and penalties.

Moore: Called for a motion to accept proposed ordinance to authorize and regulate medical marihuana facilities, and zoning ordinance amendment as package. So moved by Babcock, Second by Myers, All ayes – Motion carried.

Conclusion: Proposed package referred to Township Board.

Agenda Item: Chairperson Moore opened public comment for consideration of Minimum lot size in AR-2 District Proposal.

Moore/VanAllsburg Proposal Elaboration: PC has worked on Master Plan for 8 months; Review of

marked Master Plan map with sections designated AR1 and AR2 to divide current AR District and which lands are to be rezoned; all references in ordinances will be replaced with whatever is applicable; necessary to follow GAAMPS rules.

- Comment:*
- Gary McIntyre, Cedar Springs: paperwork not available in advance; areas in questions should be AR-1; Sec. 24 & ¼ of Sec. 23 & everything below should be 1 acre.
 - Jerry Gross, Zoning Administrator: remember creeks on property – may not be buildable.
 - Gerald Skelonc, Cedar Springs: presentation would've been better due to affecting a lot of people; appears that most of Township would become 2 acres which is issue for a lot of people; concern that we're leaping into this without more detail about what to leave and what not to leave; concerns re: regulations; has been a topic of discussion for many years and been before the PC before; concerns re: urban sprawl; concern of current owners adhering to new ordinances.
 - Gary McIntyre, Cedar Springs: other townships are trying; will burn up land faster; effect on landowner's property values – will take a hit.
 - Gerald Skelonc, Cedar Springs; Steve Skelonc, Cedar Springs; complaint of paperwork not being available to them prior.

Moore: Closed public hearing.

Discussion: Decision will create "winners" & "losers;" State rules for PUD; "Slash One" encouraging further concentration; areas along highway; availability of land left for 1 acre parcels is very little; rezoning can happen no matter who the owner is; PC may need to look at this more.

Moore: Called for a motion to table at this point. So moved by Swade, Second by Sevey, All ayes – Motion carried.

Conclusion: Mark will check to verify lot lines.

Agenda Item: Review of consideration of Permits for Events in Agricultural Areas – Agricultural Tourism

Discussion: Time needed to review documentation from other townships; include XXSkiing; avoid "pay to hunt" – 'tis a DNR issue; importance of this issue for farmers to make a sustainable income; current Zoning Ordinance already has a foundation for this; regulatory issues, i.e. restroom facilities, parking, people capacity; concerned about restrictions and how to enforce them; Twp has been approached by others re: same matter; preservation of old structures; legal determination of "barn."

Moore: Questions for potential applicant, Tim/Sue Hans: their intentions mostly wedding requests, are mindful of disruptions for neighborhood but haven't contacted them yet.

Concerns: Bob Ellick, Supervisor: sees potential problems including final costing to the township for regulation and enforcement; time for township officials to handle enforcement and complaints; needs for PC to proceed carefully. Jerry Gross, Zoning Administrator: structural engineer will be necessary.

Conclusion: PC needs to start list but Mark will start a draft with a broad variety.

Open Discussion for Non-Agenda Items

1. *Correspondence received* – No

2. *Planning Commission Members* - Sawade/Sevey: Re: clarification White Creek Storage issue – Zoning; screening definition is being building so is "screened;" current violation due to hi-los; Jerry Gross: continuing communication with Tom Reed due to contingency of engineer approval not received and Mr. Reed proceeding without it.

3. *Members of the Audience* – Bob Ellick, Supervisor: re: Section 27, Production Builder should have no bearing on decision. Gerald Skelonc, Cedar Springs: re: land use – changes should be across the board with no regard to anyone in particular.

4. *Report of Township Board Representative – No*

5. *Report of Board of Appeals Representative - John Tilburt: Holding organizational meeting Nov. 29th.*

6. *Report of Zoning Administrator – No*

7. *Planning Consultant Report – No*

New Business: Next meeting, Wednesday, December 27th. Will review large lot zoning and event issue.

Moore: Motion to adjourn. So moved by Gunnell, Second by Babcock. All Ayes – motion carried.



EPILEPSY
FOUNDATION

November 20, 2017

Planning Commission of the Township of Solon and Solon Township Board
Solon Township Hall
15185 Algoma Ave., NE
Cedar Springs, MI 49319

Dear Planning Commission of the Township of Solon and Solon Township Board:

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation and our Michigan affiliate, Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, we urge you to support allowing medical marijuana (medical cannabis) facilities to be licensed to operate in the Township. These facilities will be accountable to the state as part of the medical cannabis program that is in the process of implementation in Michigan. The Epilepsy Foundation is supportive of comprehensive, state-regulated medical cannabis programs, as this is the only way to ensure people living with epilepsy who are not able to gain seizure control with currently available FDA-approved therapies, are able to access safe and reliable cannabis therapies.

The Epilepsy Foundation is the leading national voluntary health organization that speaks on behalf of at least 3.4 million Americans with epilepsy and seizures, including 108,900 in Michigan. We foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through research programs, educational activities, advocacy, and direct services. Epilepsy is a medical condition that produces seizures affecting a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime. There is no "one size fits all" treatment for epilepsy, and more than one third of people living with epilepsy suffer from drug-resistant or intractable seizures. Many more live with significant side-effects, despite available treatments. This is why some people living with uncontrolled seizures turn to medical cannabis when other options have failed.

The Epilepsy Foundation is committed to supporting physician-directed care, and to exploring and advocating for all potential treatment options for epilepsy, including medical cannabis. People with uncontrolled seizures live with the continual risk of serious injuries and loss of life. If a patient and their health care providers feel that the potential benefits of medical cannabis outweigh the risks, then families need to have that legal option. Nothing should stand in the way of patients gaining access to this potentially lifesaving treatment.

Currently, the majority of states have enacted laws that allow access to medical cannabis. In states where medical use of cannabis is legal as a treatment option for epilepsy and there is safe and reliable access through a state-regulated program, a number of people living with epilepsy report beneficial effects, including a decrease in seizure activity. The Epilepsy Foundation supports state regulated cultivation, production and dispensing of medical cannabis to ensure safe and legal access to this treatment option. Comprehensive licensing requirements are critical to the development of an effective and meaningful medical cannabis program. Through state-

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regulated licensing, patients can be more assured of safety in the growing and manufacturing processes and product consistency, which are critical aspects to any medical therapy.

We are hopeful that you will support allowing a dispensary in the Township to help facilitate the promise of access to safe and reliable medical cannabis as a treatment for epilepsy for those who truly need it in Michigan. Please do not hesitate to contact Angela Ostrom, Chief Legal Officer and Vice President Public Policy at our national office at 301-918-3766 or aostrom@efa.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

Brianna Romines, MPA
President
Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan

Philip M. Gattone, M.Ed.
President & CEO
Epilepsy Foundation