

**PLANNING COMMISSION
ERIE TOWNSHIP
ERIE, MICHIGAN
Regular Meeting & Public Hearing
August 16, 2022**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Bill Jacobs called to order the Regular Meeting of the Erie Township Planning Commission on August 16, 2022 at 7:00 pm at the Township office, Erie Road, Erie, Michigan.

2. ROLL CALL

Bill Jacobs	Present
Dave Cousino	Present
Dr. Larry Guinn	Present
Dan Taylor	Present
Paul Perry	Present
Robert Schwartz	Present
Manny Evola	Present

Also present: Planner-Megan Masson-Mincok, Township Attorney-Tom Graham, Mike Demski and Recording Secretary, Kristine Crammond.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Manny Evola made a motion to approve the agenda. Paul Perry seconded. Motion carried.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Larry Guinn stated his name was spelled incorrectly.

- Dr. Larry Guinn made a motion to approve the July 19, 2022 minutes with corrections. Dan Taylor seconded. Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Diane La Plante 1324 Sterns Road, Erie MI. Diane thanked the Planning Commission for their hard work. She thanked the Planning Commission for bringing on a Planner. Even though budgets are tight it is a good decision to bring in legal.
2. Brenda Vandercook 2812 Erie Road, Erie MI. Brenda referred to the Master Plan stating residents of Erie Township want the community to remain rural. Solar in Industrial only.
3. Ricki Roland 1165 Geiger Road. Ricki stated she has 192 signed signatures from Erie Township residents that are anti solar.
4. Dan Rigado-5034 N. Custer road, Raisinville twp. Dan stated there is a lot of money to be made selling farm land for solar or wind. It is to save for retirement, never for environment. Agricultural is for growing. It is biological. There is nothing biologic in solar. There is someone within Erie township that should not have input and should be recused. Keep solar in Industrial

Budget

- Paul Perry made a motion to approve the budget ending July 31,2022 and place on file. Robert Schwartz seconded. Motion carried.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

Special use - 3949 Luna Pier Road- Station / Truck stop-Parcel 5805-010-002-00

- Dave Cousino made a motion to close the Regular meeting. Paul Perry seconded. Regular meeting closed a 7:10 pm.
- Robert Schwartz made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Dr. Larry Guinn seconded. Public Hearing opened at 7:10 pm.

Mike Demski stated the special use approval request is for a gas station and truck stop with a larger retail store and a restaurant inside. Plans are not done. Not time for a final site plan approval. To meet special use, they will have to abide by standards in Section 11:19.

1. Mike Cousino – 3720 Luna Pier Road. Will there be a center turn lane?
 2. Terry Rollins – 3901 Lakewood Road. Terry expressed concern about potential police calls and noise.
 3. Gary Wilmoth – 3635 Luna Pier Road. Gary asked if there would be a buffer for lights?
 4. Bill Saul –4080 Stein road, LaSalle MI. What is the name of the gas station? Will fireworks or marijuana be sold at the gas station?
 5. Joan Benore – 2811 Erie Road. Will the water ponds be filled in the back?
 6. Brent Levanway - Boss engineering. Spokesperson for the Gas Station. Proposing 5 gas fueling stations in front along with fueling stations in the back for semi-trucks. 7200 square foot build with restaurant, ice cream and soda pop stations, convenience store. They have met with the Drain Commission and Road Commission and Storm Water Management. Working with the waste water treatment plant with the state of Michigan. Currently looking at special use and preliminary site plan approval.
 7. Ali Nasser – 5911 Hartwell, Dearborn, MI. Ali Nasser, owner of building stated he will work with all surrounding neighbors addressing any concerns they have.
 8. Anthony Cicerella – 937 Dean Road, Erie Michigan
Will there be electrical charge stations for cars?
- Paul Perry made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Manny Evola seconded. Public Hearing closed at 7:32 pm.
 - Paul Perry made a motion to open the Regular meeting. Dan Taylor seconded. Regular meeting opened at 7:33 pm.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Review Solar requirements with Planner & Township Attorney
Bill Jacobs welcomed Erie Township attorney Tom Graham. Tom Graham stated Erie Township has been reviewing solar options for quite some time. The current ordinance allows solar as a right in Industrial and potentially in Agricultural-special use. The Planning Commission is considering removing solar from Agricultural special-use to keep in Industrial only. The ordinance conditions could be beefed up in AG – special use. Either way, the ordinance will have to be changed. It would

require a Public Hearing and the Planner would have to write the ordinance accordingly. Currently the Township Board has placed a moratorium on solar.

Bill Jacobs stated the Township Board never asked the Planning Commission to beef-up Ag-Special Use. After having many meetings, the recommendation from the Planning Commission was to allow in solar only in Industrial. It's a matter of what the people of Erie Township want.

Planner Megan asked the Township attorney if Erie Township could be putting itself open to a law suit removing Ag-special use for solar? Tom Graham said if there was always a fear of a law suit ordinance zoning could never be changed. That should not be a decision maker.

Planner Megan stated generally solar looks for at least 100 acres. Currently 80 acres in Industrial is available. Tom Graham stated the Township is not imposing the 100 acres. If 80 acres is available in Industrial that is what is available.

Planner Megan stated Erie residents state the current solar array condition on Dixie Highway is disappointing. Tom Graham stated the solar on Dixie highway currently meets community standards. Any changes to solar can be applied to future changes to the ordinances. Future changes can not apply to existing solar..

Bill Jacobs asked Tom Graham if the township would be required to make more land available for industrial? The current Master Plan shows agricultural land north of the current industrial as potential for future industrial consideration. Tom Graham stated someone may come back with a law suit if the Master Plan shows it as potential Industrial- future use.

- Paul Perry made a motion to instruct the Planner to draft two ordinances regarding solar. One for Industrial districts and one for Special land use in Agricultural zoned districts. Dr. Larry Guinn seconded. Motion carried.

Vote:	Yes to two ordinances
Bill Jacobs	Yes
Robert Schwartz	Yes
Dan Taylor	No
Manny Evola	No
Paul Perry	Yes
Dave Cousino	No
Dr. Larry Guinn	Yes

Jennifer Dusseau – 3131 Morin Point, Erie, Michigan commented on the mailer that was sent out for the Planning Commission meeting.

Mike Cousino – 3720 Luna Pier Road Erie Michigan – stated there is an elected official at the Township that got this ball rolling on solar and can profit from it because he has ground available for solar. Can he vote or is it a conflict of interest? Tom Graham stated he did not believe it was a direct conflict of interest.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Preliminary Site Plan Review-3949 Luna Pier Road- Station/Truckstop

- Paul Perry made a motion to approve the Special Use approval. Dan Taylor seconded. Motion carried.
- Dan Taylor made a motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan. Paul Perry seconded. Motion carried.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Theresa Pobee-Mensah – 2147 Erie Road, Erie Michigan
Concerned about Special Use approval. Solar only in Industrial. Reviewed previous Planning Commission minutes.

Al Landermin – Milan Township
They are picking on small town government. They want conflict and controversy. Be very careful.

Diane La Plante – 1324 Erie Road, Erie Michigan
Thanked the Planning Commission, Tom Graham and the Planner.

11. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS

Doctor Guinn thanked Tom Graham for answering his questions.

12. MEETING DATES

Park Commission	Regular Meeting	Thursday, Sept. 8, 2022	7pm
Township Board	Budget Meeting	Tuesday, Sept 13, 2022	7pm
Planning Commission	Regular Meeting	Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2022	7pm

13. ADJOURNMENT

- Paul Perry made a motion to adjourn. Robert Schwartz seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Kristine Crammond
Recording Secretary

