

**ELK RAPIDS TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday January 20, 2009

Chairwoman Mischel called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street.

Present: Dorance Amos, Jean Derenzy, William Larson, Jim Lundy, Emile Sabty Shen Smith and Renee Mischel.

Also Present: Leonard Harrett, Zoning Administrator, Larry Nix, Planning Consultant and audience of 3.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Agenda for 1-20-2009 meeting was adopted by consensus.

**Approval of Minutes:** M/S – Lundy/Amos. Minutes for 12-4-2008 meeting were approved unanimously with correction.

**Public Forum:** ~~None.~~ *Mr. P. Brady asked that the Planning Commission allow a “Public Comments” agenda item at the end of meetings. The suggestion was adopted.*

**ZBA Amendment Request:**

A request from the Zoning Board of Appeals, dated December 19, 2008 was reviewed. It involved changing the text of the first paragraph in Zoning Ordinance Section 18.01 that covers the selection process and background of the Board Members. The current text does not reflect the recent Michigan Statute in Act 110 of 2006 Article 6. The ZBA proposed a suggested text reflecting the Statute, and requested the Planning Commission to review and incorporate. A suggestion was made that, in the suggested text, the sentence defining all the Regular Members should appear ahead of the individual member positions text. This was presented in an Alternate Suggested Text as follows:

**Section 18.01 - MEMBERS, APPOINTMENT, TENURE, PER DIEM EXPENSES AND REMOVAL**

There is hereby created a Township Zoning Board of Appeals of seven (7) regular members. All the regular members of the Zoning Board of Appeals shall be selected by the Township Board from among the electors of the unincorporated areas of the Township residing within the zoning jurisdiction of the Township. One of the regular members of the Zoning Board of Appeals shall be a member of the Township Planning Commission appointed by the Township Board. One regular member of the Zoning Board of Appeals may be a member of the Township Board appointed by the Township Board, provided that a regular member of the Zoning Board of Appeals who is also a member of the Township Board shall not serve as Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals; provided, that no elected officer of the Township nor any employee of the Township Board may serve simultaneously as the additional regular member of the Board or as an employee of the Township Zoning Board of Appeals.

With no further discussion the Chair asked for a vote.

M/S – Mischel/Sabty. Move to approve the Alternate Suggested Text to amend Zoning Ordinance Section 18.01 First paragraph, based on the current applicable Michigan Statute.

Vote – Yes to approve. Amos, Derenzy, Larson, Lundy, Sabty, Smith & Mischel.  
Motion passed 7-0-0. Public Hearing will be scheduled for the February 17, 2009 meeting.

**Old Business:**

**Pine Hollow Group Retreat – Preliminary Review & Outline Of Steps**

Mr. R. Clark representing the Pine Hollow Estate, made a slide presentation reviewing the proposed Pine Hollow Group Retreat Special Exception Application. It covered a site plan map of the property, the vicinity and existing zoning maps, pictures of existing structures, and the anticipated application process for the Group Retreat to be followed by the rezoning applications.

Discussed was the applicant's intent in making three cohesive applications within the same process, and not wanting to lose any of the existing basic elements involved in the tri process should one fail. If one or the other is not approved the whole package stays as is. It was realized that the three parts involved in the process will not proceed together; the Retreat Special Exception is handled at the Planning Commission level while rezoning goes through the Planning Commission, County and Township. Accordingly there was consensus to proceed first with the application for the Group Retreat Special Exception, and after it is approved, then move on to the rezoning requests. Because the Group Retreat Special Exception process involves a lengthy review of sections 17.04, 19.07 and 7.06 it was suggested that the first step would involve holding a preliminary review, a sketch plan review, at which time reports from the Planning Consultant and the Zoning Administrator would be helpful in shortening a lengthy review.

Mr. Clark indicated that the applicant wishes to move fast on the process, and then requested that the Planning Commission hold a Special Meeting for the preliminary review then move on to the public hearing soon after.

By consensus, the Chair set the preliminary meeting for Tuesday February 3, 2009 at 6:30 PM

#### Future Planning – Goals & Outline of Steps

The Chair reviewed a memo (copy on file) which dealt with the subject of collecting various studies and surveys that address the Community vision for moving forward into the future. The Planning Consultant will use the input gathered to attempt to prepare a future vision document for review when completed.

#### New Business

Upon review by the Township Board on 1-13-2009, The Zoning Ordinance amendment to include a reference to Environmental Assessment Guidelines when needed was denied. Briefly stated, it was felt that the guidelines would create hardship and are duplication, and that the Zoning Ordinance includes enough language to address this subject.

As there was no further pertinent discussions Chairwoman Mischel adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.

The next scheduled meeting will be on Tuesday February 17, 2009 at 6:30 PM at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street.

E. S. Sabty, Secretary  
1-20-2009

**Minutes Approved 2-17-2009**

Minutes are subject to approval at the next regular Planning Commission Meeting.