

**Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes –October 15, 2024**

The meeting of the Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Shen Smith at 11:30 AM at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street, Elk Rapids, MI 49629.

Present: Shen Smith, Emile Sabty, Zach Amos, Tom Crandall, and Gary Pepler.

Absent: Jim Lundy and Matt Soper.

Also Present: Larry Nix, Zoning Administrator and William Derman, Township Attorney.

Audience: Pat and Carol Brady, Salvatore Castronovo and Fire Chief Ken Williamson.

Approval of Agenda: **Motion to approve the October 15, 2024 Agenda.**
Motion/S: Amos/Peppler **Motion Carried.**

Approval of Minutes: **Motion to approve the September 24, 2024 meeting minutes.**
Motion/S: Sabty/Amos **Motion Carried.**

Public Comments: Pat Brady, Williams Drive, addressed the Commission with his views on advocating for the environment. Carol Brady also of Williams Drive, expressed concerns of the rezoning from the previous meeting, passing out a DEQ Final Wetland Inventory map as well as Principals of Governance [Resolution 2021-12] she would like to see practiced. Salvatore Castronovo spoke in regards to EGLE not doing their job.

Township Zoning Administrators Report:

Larry Nix offered his report that a few zoning permits were issued, and that no recorded violations have been presented.

Township Legal Staff Report (Bill Derman)

B. Derman gave an update on the issues in the Township and that John Roth presented an update on the no tip wage proposal at the Township meeting that morning.

Unfinished Business:

- Request from the Zoning Board of Appeals for the Planning Commission to review the Birch Lake non-conforming lots for possible changes to setbacks. Larry Nix has presented new variance standards that may ease the number of variances that are requested. In discussion with the Commission, proposed setbacks were presented of 30' from roadside, 35' from lakeside, and 8' side setbacks. Fire Chief Williamson offered his professional opinion, citing national standards of 10-foot side setbacks per story. Chief Williamson would like the 10-foot side setback to remain. On a lot 50'x105' adjacent to Birch Lake and applying the proposed setback standards, a building envelope would yield 1,100 sq ft. Emile Sabty will research other non-conforming lots to foresee any future issues to consider. Pat Brady brought to the Commission his experience of building and suggests a mean high-water mark on Birch Lake being determined. At this time the commission will pursue an advisory position to include Birch Lake Properties only. Public input is desired and residents will be notified and can attend in person or send correspondence.

- Tool Kit material for discussion regarding affordable housing and undersize lots. Larry Nix commented that the greatest success for the toolkit has been seen in larger cities. This topic is being put off until more information is gathered.
- At the next meeting, Larry will present various methods to implement these suggestions such as an overlay or as a new zoning district. He will also research comments regarding a median high -water level. December 9, at 11:30 a.m. will be the next meeting.
- Chairperson Smith has mentioned the Planning Commission will be meeting on the Second Monday of the month in 2025 to coordinate with the Township Board meetings.

Public Forum: Chairperson Smith has determined we never use the public forum and would like it removed from future agendas.

Motion to remove Public Forum from Agendas.

Motion/S: Smith/Peppler Motion Carried.

Public Comment: Pat Brady thinks leaving the setbacks is the best for his concern of Williams Drive. Carol Brady commented she appreciates the time spent by the Commission and reiterated she would like to see the Principals of Governance followed.

Member Comment: Chairperson Smith would like to leave everything as is and only research doing a median high water level mark. After discussion it was decided to explore the setbacks, notify the involved residents, and wait until the next meeting.

Motion to Close Meeting:

Motion/S: Amos/Peppler Motion Carried.

Adjournment: 1:25 PM

(An audio tape of this Planning Commission Meeting is available at the Township Office