

ATHENS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of March 19, 2015

Athens Township Government Center

1. *Pledge of Allegiance:* The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. *Roll Call:* The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Lyle Reynolds. Members present were Jake Carpenter, Dan Woodfill, Marlys Balfany, Lyle Reynolds, Cindy Anderson, Craig Bjorklund and Dave Henderson. Also present was Jim Braun, Staff Member. Cindy Reynolds was the only guest on hand.
3. *Minutes of February 19, 2015:* A motion was made to approve the minutes as submitted by Dave Henderson, seconded by Cindy Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.
4. *Open Forum:* No one was on hand for the Open Forum portion of the meeting.
5. *Public Hearings:* None
6. *Old Business: Comprehensive Plan discussion on density and schedule for completion of the document.*

Jim Braun started the discussion by explaining that he and several other people had gotten a wrong impression on the desire of the Board of Supervisors at their last meeting to stay at two per forty in density. It was found later that it was only a statement of one or two members. During the discussion Jim Braun told the Commission that the Board of Supervisors were not all in favor of two per forty. Dave Henderson said "you polled the Board and MATS would not like that" Jim Braun replied that "I don't give a ___ about what MATS thinks of polling, which may have given the Commission the idea that he indeed polled the Board which is not the case, Jim Braun knew where every Board Member stood by working with them on a day to day basis except for Lyle Reynolds. Carolyn Braun in discussions with Chairman Palmer told her that there would be a list of density options for the Planning Commission to discuss. (See Options List enclosed).

The Commission went over the “options list” and discussed each option. Chairman Reynolds asked each member of the Commission to declare which option they had the most comfort supporting. They are as follows:

Option One: Two dwelling units per 40 acres (same as existing township standards; transfer of development rights to contiguous parcels in common ownership only. In favor – Dave Henderson.

Option Four: Four dwelling units per 40 acres; transfer of development rights to contiguous or noncontiguous parcels in common ownership; maximum cluster of 8 dwelling units on 40 acres; no density bonuses. In favor – Craig Bjorklund, Jake Carpenter and Cindy Anderson.

Option Four (Same as above) and Option Three: Four Dwelling units per forty acres; no transfer of development rights; dwellings must be built in wooded areas along an existing Township Road; no density bonuses. In favor – Marlys Balfany, Lyle Reynolds and Dan Woodfill. Note: In this case all the Commissioners gave their reasons that they were torn between the two options for different reasons.

In further discussions the Commission favored leaving the two per forty option in the ordinance because of the lot sizes and the option of not platting and infrastructure which saves time and costs. (This option maybe necessary if Isanti County does not allow larger than three acre lots in subdivisions) In the tow per forty option lot sizes are larger.

All this information will be given to Carolyn Braun and will be put in draft form for the next Planning Commission meeting. No action necessary.

7. *New Business: Future Ordinance discussions – Solar arrays/solar gardens:* Jim Braun started the discussion by saying that the Federal and State Governments are requiring the power companies to resource a certain percentage of the power they provide from green sources such as solar. The companies are under a time restraint to come into compliance.

Jim went on to say that in Bridgewater Township, he has seen a number of proposals for solar arrays and solar gardens. These areas are large areas of collectors (one proposal is 157 acres of solar panels) This will be financed by the customers of the company, in this case it is Excel Energy) The customers purchase panels in the solar farm and get credits on the regular electric bill at their dwellings. Doing it this way cuts the cost of the homeowner installing a solar unit on their parcels. In the solar farms there is financing available to purchase the panels.

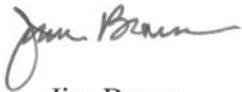
A lot of jurisdictions are putting ordinances in place to assure that after the leases are up that the junk panels are removed. The leases are usually for forty years.

Another requirement is that the panels are placed so that weeds can be controlled beneath the panels and there is proper wind protection on the structures.

In next few months we will be providing the Commission with ordinance that other jurisdiction have adopted for solar energy.

8. *Miscellaneous:* Jim Braun told the Commission that John Krall is requesting a use permit for having outside rummage sales and possibly flea markets at 24510 Ulysses Court Northeast, Isanti, MN. This will be set for hearing in the next month or two. No action necessary.
9. *Adjournment:* Being that there was no further business a motion was made by Dan Woodfill to adjourn the meeting seconded by Dave Henderson. Motion carried unanimously at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jim Braun
Recorder Pro-Tem

Enclosure