

Mikado Township Planning Commission SPECIAL Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2024

Present: Steve Stevens, Carrie Mullins, Steve Sanderson, Bill Spunar

Absent: none

Guests: Supervisor Anne Harmon, Craig Ostby

Call to Order: 6:04 PM

Pledge

The PC looked at the three options in relation to Public Act 233 that was passed by the state legislature. Our three choices were to set up a Compatible Renewable Energy Ordinance, enhance our current Solar Energy Ordinance to meet the “workable” requirement set by the state, or do nothing. Please note that all of this is in regards to large utility scale or commercial Solar Energy Facilities; we did not change the requirements for accessory solar.

Motion made by Spunar to adopt a Workable Solar Energy Ordinance (SEO), seconded by Sanderson. The Ayes were unanimous, motion passes.

We then began to compare and discuss several documents. We reviewed PA 233 and the accompanying memorandum from the Michigan Public Service Commission. We looked at recommended instruction and documentation from the Michigan Township Association, and reviewed a Workable SEO from Montrose.

We liked Montrose’s SEO and took to incorporating key points from it, PA 233 and instruction from MTA into ours to make it more compatible with PA 233 and still protect the Township and its residents. For Utility Scale/Commercial Solar Facilities, we added Escrow and Fee, Applicant Information, we changed our setbacks to meet PA 233, Lot Coverage, Site Plan Requirements, Special Land Use Criteria, Signage, and we enhanced our Lighting criteria to include dark sky-friendly lighting. We expanded the section on Wiring to include electrical systems within the facility. We discussed Noise levels and enhanced our Battery Storage section. We added a section for Local, State and Federal Permits, Site Access, Emergency Shutdown Procedures and potential electromagnetic Interference. We added a Maintenance Plan requirement, Insurance, Emergency Services, Complaint Resolution, and Transfer or Sale of the facility. We also included a Continuing Compliance and Enforcement Escrow Deposit plan and added a Host Community Agreement to help ensure that our fire department and emergency response team can respond to the emergency needs of a large scale solar or battery facility. We also added a few definitions to further enhance our SEO.

We also generated a few questions for Lawyer Freel.

1. Are we required to allow Utility Scale/Commercial Solar Energy Facilities in more than just the Agricultural-Residential (A-R) zoning districts? For example: Commercial (C), Forest-Recreational (F-R), Resource Conservation (RC)
2. Are #20, #21, and #22 placed appropriately within the ordinance? Do they fit better elsewhere?
3. With #36, the Host Community Agreement, can we skip #2 of PA 233's section 227?

The PC also wants Mullins to address the Township Board and recommend a resolution in regards to PILT.

The next step is to get this off to the lawyer. Once we hear back from the lawyer, we will then setup a Public Hearing, at which, the PC will approve the wording for recommendation for adoption to the Township Board.

Public Comment: None.

Motion to adjourn by Spunar, seconded by Sanderson, the Ayes have it, motion passes.

Adjournment: 8:46 PM

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 3, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Mikado Civic Center