

MINUTES GOLDEN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING AUGUST 30,2005

7:30 PM Meeting called to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Roll was taken: Present: Terry Wiegand, Helen Lefler, Avery Wilson, Steve Marciniak, Bill Kolenda, Brad Whitney, Leo Terryn. Absent: Carl Fuehring. Also Present: Jake Welpley, Zoning Administrator.

New Business regarding a pre-application presentation for a PUD housing project on 18th Ave. For Mr. Pranger was first on the agenda. Mr. Pranger has already split the 40 acres on 18th Ave into 25 and 15 acres. Pranger has split the 25 acres already and would like to split the 15 acres into approximately 12 more building parcels. A security gate and fence is planned for installation. 8 of the acres will vary in size from 7/8 of an acre to a little over one acre. The land is zoned as RR and the commission encourages the lot sizes to be at least one full acre. The Commission would like to look over the plan for a while and make suggestions before Pranger goes any further. Pranger has no problem with increasing the lot sizes to one acre.

The rest of the meeting will be dedicated to the discussion of wind turbines. Lefler thanked everyone for coming to the meeting as the commission has been encouraging attendance for a long time. She sited a editorial in the journal submitted by Marilyn Marciniak and Roger Wiegand also asking people to attend the meetings and keep up on happenings in their communities. Wes Sleightmaker, who owns Wind Energy Systems Engineering as a consultant, has been working in wind developments for 5 years, offered to help answer any questions and offer his opinion. Ted Kushna, of 529 Clymer Pentwater, Questioned when Sleighmakers first work began, tax credits, and decibels. Sleighmakers first project he was working with was back in 1999. They had 15 turbines the size of the ones in Traverse City and 12 the size of the ones in Mackinaw. The developers will move on, but they only develop and someone else actually owns the project. Most of the projects get a large financial benefit from a Federal Production Tax Credit which has been renewed through the new energy bill until 2007. The tax credit value will start out at about

1.9 tenths per kilowatt hour and increase every year about 2% so at the end of 10 years it will be about 2.3 cents a k/h. C corps are the only ones that can use the take credit. Without the tax credit the cost will go up. Most of the new turbines at about 1000ft are at 45dbas, maximum. Mike Carey, 48th Ave Mears, questioned what he thought was the best setback. Sleighmaker, felt that the standard setback minimum is 1000ft. Everett Horton, 1251 6th St. Pentwater, questioned if Sleighmakers firm had ever done an environmental impact study on the effects of bees. Sleighmaker felt that bees don't fly at the height of turbines as the smallest turbine blades are about 100 ft off the ground.

Elaine Oomen, Weare Township, wondered how many of Sleighmakers projects have been in residential areas. Sleighmaker stated that in the beginning the projects were in rural areas but have become closer to areas with small towns near them.

Travis Veine, 2166 N. 40 Ave, stated that developers are looking at areas with small setbacks and wondered why they would want to put turbines 130-150 ft from property lines. Sleighmaker stated that the farther away the turbines are from one another the less they would impact the effects of each other and that is when setbacks come in. Faith Douds, 44th Ave Mears, questioned any information with the turbines vibrating the ground and scaring the wildlife. Sleighmaker, stated that the low frequency noise is no longer a problem with the new turbines and that the vibrations are very minimal. Dave Roseman, questioned sound when you have several turbines in an area. Sleighmaker, said that there are companies that can map out the placement of turbines to decrease the turbines sound together. Carol Bornum, Lake Rd. questioned the general size of the turbines. Sleighmaker stated that the companies would sell a 400 ft machine right now. Dawn Deal, questioned if the turbines are considered farming Ag or and Industry. Sleighmaker stated that it was both, as it is useful to farms but also an industry selling energy. The turbines pivot with the wind and hold hundreds of gallons of hydraulic oil and has its own containing unit. Helen Lefler questioned off shore windmills with Lake Michigan. Also are there any studies on neighboring property values. Sleighmaker stated that he didn't feel anyone would deal with the lake anytime soon. The DOE has done a study and found that the property values have stayed the same or slightly increased.

After Sleighmaker left, the public was able to pose questions to the board. Travis Veine, questioned the law on tower setbacks in section 13 relating to turbines, which turned out to be strictly for wireless towers. Dawn Deal, spoke next requesting updating the ordinance on turbines to protect the community and tourist industry and asking for a moratorium of 1 year so a citizen group can meet and discuss and study. Everett Horton discussed quality of life. He felt that most people live here because they like the view and scenery and low traffic and that turbines would effect that. Ted Kushna, discussed the importance of a bonds to protect the township. He feels that the turbines in themselves are not very productive. He was glad to see that the township is researching this matter. He feels allowing something that just benefits a few at the risk of the environmental impact of everyone else is short-sighted. Jim Kidd, questioned if the money that is supposed to come in from the turbines is going to go to the schools and community or if this is just going to benefit a few farmers. Jean Timmers, 469 Lakeshore Mears, referred to the National Geographic website on farming your fuel and doubling the land for farming. She would like to see more farming and using the land rather than putting more stuff on it.

Helen Lefler stated that she has been to Mackinaw to see the towers. She stated that there will be

a tour in October to see the towers. She encouraged everyone and the board to go see the turbines before that make any judgements on the matter. Lefler stated that the Zoning Ordinance is in constant change and can always be improved and that is what they are working on. She stated that there was a request made by citizens to appoint a committee of taxpayers to research and study the matter and for a request for moratorium. Lefler stated that the Planning Commission was appointed for just that matter. She felt that the request for moratorium is an excellent idea. The board will need to discuss with there legal council the length of the moratorium.

Jake Whelpley then discussed the idea of Purchase of Development Rights. Whelpley found that there are only 3 entities that are approved for PDRs and 2 are down by Detroit the other is Peninsula Township but that the ordinance is catching on.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.