

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission

August 30, 2017

Avon Township Hall (16881 Queens Road, Avon)

**Call to Order:** Chairman Gondringer called to order the regular meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission at 7:30 PM in the Main Chamber of the Town Hall.

**Pledge:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Roll Call:** Present – LeRoy Gondringer, Gerry Kremers, Ken Mergen, and Stephen Saupe. Also in attendance: Will Huston, Kelly Martini.

**Approval of Agenda:** Mergen moved to approve the agenda as presented. Kremers second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Minutes:** One typographical correction was made in the minutes from the previous meeting (Duane misspelled). Mergen moved to approve the minutes from the July 26, 2017 meeting as corrected. Kremers second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Hearings:** none

## **Scheduled Business:**

1. **IUP/CUP Policy** – The Township is exploring the possibility of having Stearns County handle Conditional Use (CUP) and Interim Use (IUP) permit requests. Ms. Angie Berg, Stearns County Environmental Services, was present to answer questions. Ms. Berg stated that when the new ordinance was adopted many townships had control of zoning. Now, approximately 20 out of 35 have a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the County to handle aspects of zoning. She said that if the County takes over responsibilities for Township CUP/IUP's, then residents would submit an application to the County and the County would handle everything. The fee would be \$500 and she thought it might increase in 2019. The County would hold public hearings. The hearings would be published in the *Cold Spring Record* and held the third week of the month. The Town would be notified by the County at least 10 days prior to the public hearing; Town officials could learn about the permit sooner if we subscribe to and monitor the County website where the applications are posted as soon as they are initially processed. Some Towns have turned over to the County responsibility for the "hard stuff" while keeping easier permits to complete. Ms. Berg provided a list of permits that the Town could decide to keep or not. The Township would continue to handle variances from the road.

Advantages of having the County handle CUP/IUP requests include: the County is more qualified because they handle these on a regular basis and the staff has more experience, there would only be one stop for residents especially since the County also handles building permits, the County would in most cases issue the permit more quickly than if processed by the Town, the County would handle recording the documents, residents throughout the County would have a more consistent experience in obtaining CUP/IUP's, and neighbors might be less likely to get upset at Town Board members if permits are denied. Disadvantages include: permits would be more expensive for residents, publication would be in the *Cold Spring Record* rather than the official Town paper (*Enterprise*), the Township would lose control over the CUP/IUP process, and it will be more difficult to monitor upcoming permit requests to insure that the Town has input to the County.

Gondringer moved to recommend to the Supervisors to turn over to Stearns County the handling of CUP & IUP permits, effective upon completion of a MOU, because County staff have more experience, it would be faster for residents, it would provide a more uniform experience for County residents, and it would streamline the permitting process for residents and be less confusing. Mergen second. Three in favor. One (Kremers) opposed. Motion carried.

2. **Policy on Memorials, etc.** – There was a long discussion about how the Town should formally recognize service to the Town, births, deaths, and other special occasions. Mergen moved to recommend to the Supervisors that the Town should send a card to Town officials (Supervisors, Planning Commission) and employees (including Election Judges) in the event of a special occasion (*i.e.*, birth, death, illness), but not send flowers at Town expense. Gondringer second. Three in favor. One opposed (Kremers). Motion carried. Town officials were welcomed to personally contribute for flowers or other gift.

Mergen moved to recommend to the Supervisors to award a commemorative plaque to Town officials (Supervisors or Planning Commission members) upon the completion of their service if it equals or exceeds 10 years. Kremers second. All in favor. Motion carried. A possible design for a plaque was discussed.

3. **Term Expirations** – To update the website, the terms of PC members were clarified. Subsequent research by Martini and Saupe determined that the terms are: Gondringer 2015-2018; Kremers 2015-2018; Mergen 2016-2019; and Saupe 2017-2020. The term for the Huston's replacement is 2017-2020.
4. **Road Improvement Grant** – The Planning Commission recommends applying for funds to resurface Norway Road to insure safety of motorists who are detoured off I-94 in the event of road closures. The width and tonnage of the road would be increased. We should use our previous application as the basis for this one.
5. **Enterprise** – suggested topics include: brief obituaries of former Township officials Brian Brix and Marcy Heinen, alerting Town officials if brush needs to be trimmed, noxious weed control, the solar garden proposal, coming together as a community during emergencies, and snow and plowing regulations.
6. **Parking Lot** – It was noted that the Town Hall parking lot is in need of maintenance.
7. **Nuisance Vehicles & Mobile Home Complaints** – The PC generally agreed that the Township should consider an ordinance against parking excessive vehicles in residential areas (R1, R5) and the rural townsite.

**Other & Old Business:** *none*

**Announcements/Reports:**

1. Ingestion Meeting – no report; no one from the PC attended the recent meeting.
2. Voting Update – the County will replace voting equipment for the 2018 elections. The cost to the Town will be approximately \$1500 per year with an additional \$700 for each electronic poll book.
3. The Joint Planning Commission approved a Certificate of Compliance for Mitchell.
4. The County approved the rezoning request by Daniel & Marie Bullert.
5. Maintenance will need to be done on the native planting and rain garden.

6. An updated zoning map was received from the County.

**Adjournment:** Mergen moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 PM. Kremers second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is September 26, 2017 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephen G. Saupe Clerk

Clerk signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval:**

\_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Planning Commission Chair – signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Planning Commission Chair – print