

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission

September 28, 2022

Avon Township Hall (16881 Queens Road, Avon)

**Call to Order:** Chair Lori Yurczyk called to order the meeting of the Avon Township Planning Commission (PC) at 7:00 PM in the Main Chamber of the Town Hall. The meeting, like all Town meetings, was also available via Zoom at the following URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8325486945> (PIN: AvonTown).

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

**Roll Call:** Present – Craig Blonigen, Rich Sanoski, Stephen Saupe, Andrew Wensmann, and Lori Yurczyk (*Chair*). Also present: Richard Bresnahan, Paul Buttweiler, LeRoy Gondringer, and Kelly Martini.

**Approval of Agenda:** The date of road inspection (Oct 29, 8 AM) was added to ‘Upcoming Meetings.’ Sanoski moved to approve the agenda as presented. Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Minutes:** Wensmann moved to approve the minutes from the August 31, 2022 meeting as presented. Sanoski second. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Hearings:** Proposed Solar System at the Avon Township Hall. At 7:10 PM, Yurczyk opened a public forum to solicit feedback on a proposal to construct a 59kW solar system at the Avon Township Hall site using ARPA funds. Supervisor Bresnahan provided an overview of the project. He indicated that the project was motivated by ARPA fund availability and the need for an electrical backup system in the event of an emergency. RealSolar has provided quotes for various systems. The most likely one the Town would purchase that includes battery backup would cost the Township approximately \$ 109,159 after rebates and credits. The system is estimated to pay for itself in 8 years and over the lifetime is estimated to generate \$ 169,031K. The Township prefers to avoid using Chinese-produced components. Mr. Lee Larkey inquired about the impact of electromagnetic pulses on the system. He also recommended purchasing adequate spare replacement parts. Mr. Larkey suggested that used aircraft batteries might be an option. Sanoski moved to close the public forum. Saupe second. All in favor. Motion carried.

The system would meet two Township needs (make money, provide electrical backup in an emergency). It was suggested that the system should meet the same standard as commercial systems in the Township/County (*i.e.*, shrubs should be planted as a screening). There was a question whether the batteries would be adequate for emergencies. After discussion, Blonigen moved to recommend to the Supervisors to proceed with gathering additional information and quotes especially in regard to batteries and a backup generator. Wensmann second. All in favor. Motion carried. Then, Wensmann moved to recommend to the Supervisors to proceed with the solar project. Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried.

## **Business:**

1. **Stodolka Rezoning Inquiry** – Mr. Mike Stodolka appeared at the meeting to inquire about the possibility of rezoning property at 36627 160<sup>th</sup> Ave. (PID 03.00844.0000) from A40 to R5. He would like to split a parcel to construct a residence. The property has one-half building credit associated with it. Mr. Stodolka was advised that he had three options: (a) purchase enough land from an adjacent landowner to attach to the property; (b) purchase and transfer the necessary building credit from a neighbor; and (c) request the County to rezone the property to R5. In the latter situation, the County will require a recommendation from the Township. Mr. Stodolka was informed that the Township doesn't generally support spot zoning (*i.e.*, R5 parcel in the middle of A40 zoning district) so it was unlikely he would receive a favorable recommendation from the Supervisors. The PC suggested that his best option(s) would likely be to contact

neighbors to purchase the building credit or additional land.

2. **Gertken/Novel Solar Garden Update** – Novel has applied for a Construction Site Permit (CSP) for the solar garden on the Gertken property. The County is waiting for feedback from the Township to confirm that Novel has met the conditions of the IUP. The Township is waiting to receive from Novel the escrow money and landscape fee. Once received, these are among the final remaining conditions of the IUP. The company also requested a formal letter confirming the receipt of an extension of the IUP. They may require another extension, depending upon how much of the project needs to be completed. The Clerk will contact the company to see if there is a new vegetation plan.
3. **Noise Abatement Wall** – Mr. Frank Wohletz appeared at the meeting to inquire about the process to receive Township support for a noise abatement wall along I-94. He stated that ever since the wall was erected on the north (City) side, the noise levels on the southside have markedly increased. A MNDOT study suggests that there is no statistically significant increase, however, Mr. Wohletz suggested that perhaps the study was incomplete and didn't include wind direction. He said it was hard to even talk to someone when walking along Upper Spunk Lake Road. He has created a petition and plans to circulate it to residents in the area. Once signed, he will present it to the Township for possible action. The Clerk has identified a MNDOT grant source. It will require 10% contribution from the Township which could be nearly \$200,000. It was recommended to recruit a committee to study the issue, make recommendations, and apply for grant funding.
4. **Aquatic Invasive Species Grant** – a grant program is available through the County. No specific projects for funding were identified. Blonigen will contact Joe Lang, Pelican Lake, to see if he or the lake association have some possible ideas.
5. **Climate Grant** – a grant program is available through the MPCA. Planting cover crops was a suggestion for funding. No other potential projects for funding were identified.
6. **Rezoning Form Review** – We should consider updating the form to include the new County comprehensive guidelines (*i.e.*, pillars). No action taken.

#### Reports/Announcements:

- **Broadband News** – information about broadband is available at <https://www.mntownships.org/news/broadband-news>).
- **Nob Hill Road Driveway/Road Vacation** – the resident on Nob Hill who requested a driveway access to Nob Hill reports that an existing agreement requires properties along the undeveloped road to the west of his property (PID 03.01106.0001) to jointly maintain this road. The resident will likely not need the driveway access to the Nob Hill cul-de-sac.
- **360<sup>th</sup> Street** – a resident blocked the road with sale items (tractor, forage box). Wensmann moved to recommend to the Supervisors to send the resident a letter to stop. Blonigen second. All in favor. Motion carried. It is unusual that there are three narrow parallel strips of property along the south side of this road. There was a discussion about the possibility of vacating this road.

**Next Meeting:** The next PC meeting is September 28 at 7:00 PM. *See #1 for the Zoom log-in.*

**Other Meetings:** Other Upcoming Meetings/Events (*see 'Call to Order' for the Zoom log-in*):

- Supervisor's meeting, October 3, 2022

- Road Inspection – October 29, 2022; 8:00 AM

**Adjournment:** Blonigen moved to adjourn the meeting at about 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephen G. Saupe, Clerk

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**date:** September 30, 2022

**Approval:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lori Yurczyk, *Planning Commission Chair – signature*

**date:** \_\_\_\_\_