

# Rutland Charter Township Planning Commission Meeting

Wednesday May 1, 2024 at 7pm

## Roll Call Members Present:

Larry Haywood, Steve Pachulski, Dan King

## Roll Call Members Not Present, Excused:

Marti Mayack and Brenda Bellmore

## Others Present:

Stacey Graham, Nickie Haight, Gene Hall, Les Raymond

## Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Haywood, seconded by Pachulski, to approve the agenda for May 1, 2024. All ayes. Motion passes.

## Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Pachulski, seconded by Haywood to accept the March 6, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Roll Call Vote: Haywood: Yes, King- Yes, Pachulski - Yes. Motion passes.

## General Public Comment:

Les Raymond requested lowering the minimum acreage in the Country Residential (CR) District to one acre.

**Guests:** None

## Zoning Administrator's Report:

Graham has provided her report to the PC. Some items will be covered under New and Old Business but she goes over the others.

- 1) There is a neighborhood off of McCann Road that has 10 homes on it. Since it has more than 8 homes, the road is required, by ordinance, to be paved, and it is not. Graham says it was missed in the past somehow and wants to know what the PC thinks she should do about it.
  - Haywood prefers gravel and points out that it would be a large expense to those 10 home owners to pay for pavement.
  - Pachulski asked how Graham found out about this issue. She observed that it looked like a lot of houses so she looked into it with Assessor Dennis McKelvey. One of the 10 homeowners complained about gravel getting kicked up into her yard from ATVs, she would like it to be paved. Graham was waiting to speak with the PC before she approached the other 9 home owners.
  - Pachulski says Graham should talk to Attorney Rolfe about this. He is worried about the township's liability since there is an ordinance and it is not being followed. Especially since one of those homeowners has asked for it to be paved.
  - King wants to know how this neighborhood was originally set up. He asks about the deed and land division and how this happened in the first place.

Graham says she will get more information. And thanks them for their thoughts and suggestions.

- 2) Whispering Waters has updated their site plan and a copy of it is in the PC Member's packets.
- 3) There will be a PC meeting in June because there is a Special Land Use Public Hearing for an auto repair shop in the MU district on Cook Road. Haywood asked if it was already in place. Graham says the owner, Mr. Archer, told the township he was building a pole barn for personal storage and now there is a commercial business and sign. The RCT Building Inspector and the Health Department are asking Mr. Archer to get his business property into compliance. Graham will verify what type of building permit he applied for.
- 4) Robin Hawthorne wanted Graham to tell the PC that Fire Chief Mark Jordan is asking townships to require, in their ordinance, Knox Boxes be installed at any new or remodeled commercial business that has a fire suppression system. He would also like townships to update their open burn permit ordinances. The RCT Board will discuss these at next week's meeting and Graham will let the PC know what they decide.

### **New Business:**

#### **Proposed Text Amendment changing minimum parcel size in Country Residential (CR) District to 1 acre**

Graham tells the PC that Attorney Rolfe emailed her that this text amendment cannot move forward because it is not consistent with the master plan. In order to make this text amendment change, there would need to be changes made to the master plan first. Graham says the PC members can look into the ordinances and decide whether they would recommend making those changes to the master plan in order to move forward with the minimum parcel size change in CR.

Haywood and Pachulski agree that it does not make sense for the acreage in agricultural/open space and CR to not be uniform. Haywood thinks it must have been an oversight if the master plan had not been changed. PC Members discuss farmland preservation and whether the future land use map will need to be changed.

After the discussion leads to other items that may need to be changed on the master plan, the PC members agree it might be better to wait until the full commission is there to hear all sides and opinions.

Motion by Pachulski, seconded by Haywood, to table this discussion until the June 5, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting. Roll Call Vote - Haywood - Yes, King - Yes, Pachulski - Yes. Motion Passes.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Discussion on Ground Mounted Solar and Wind Energy for Residential**

Graham says there has not been interest yet in RCT. Barry County is expected to have a Solar and Wind Ordinance in place by mid-May and they will share with it Graham. Planner Rebecca Harvey offered to provide a sample ordinance for RCT to review. Pachulski says the county and township ordinances need to be similar or they will not be valid. He thought there was going to be more community involvement in writing the county ordinance.

### **Open Comments:**

Gene Hall thinks the township should be leaning towards allowing smaller lot sizes in general. He believes smaller lot sizes accommodate more housing. He also says that depending on the size, a Solar and Wind Ordinance written by a local government needs to be similar to the state ordinance or the applicant could go to the state board and side step the township.

Raymond asks if the county is working on a residential or commercial ordinance for wind energy. Pachulski says it is for both. King says that most wind energy equipment would exceed the maximum height requirements in residential districts. Raymond thinks disposing of the turbine blades should be part of the site plan review. He says right now they are burying them and that is not the long term solution. He says it is easy to recycle fiberglass blades and he does not know why they are not doing that.

Raymond asks King if the City of Hastings has a Knox Box requirement and King says they do require them. Raymond thinks it would be a good addition to the site plan review.

### **Adjournment:**

Motion by Pachulski, seconded by Haywood to adjourn at 7:50pm.  
Meeting Adjourned. Submitted by Nickie Haight, Recording Secretary

PROPOSED