

## **Exeter Township Planning Commission Minutes September 6, 2022**

Exeter Township Planning Commission chairperson, David Schafer, called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** Present: Roger Bezek, Phillip Bruck, William Gay, and David Schafer  
Excused: Kyle Preston, Robert Post, Amee Runyon  
Guests: Lucie Fortin, planner Mannik & Smith Group,

### **Correction / Approval of Agenda:**

The Planning Commission members reviewed the printed meeting agenda. There were no corrections or additions. The agenda was accepted as presented.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

The April 53, 2022 Exeter Township Planning Commission meeting minutes were emailed to all members. Review and approval of these minutes were tabled at the following May Planning Commission meeting.

- ❖ **Motion: William Gay, 2<sup>nd</sup> David Schafer:** The April 3, 2022 Planning Commission minutes were approved as presented.

**Motion Carried.**

The August 9, 2022 Planning Commission meeting minutes were E-mailed to all Planning Commission members. The following corrections were made.

- In the opening sentence, the term "vice-chairman" should be "member".
- Anne Kleinow name should be removed as she is not on the planning commission

- ❖ **Motion: David Schafer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Phillip Bruck:** The August 9, 2022 Planning Commission minutes were approved as corrected

**Motion Carried.**

**First Public Comment:**

NOTE: There were 14 townships residents present at the meeting.

Julie Murphy 12155 Finzel Rd Carleton, MI.

Mrs. Murphy would like to be put on the agenda for this month's Exeter Township Board meeting. She would like to request the township place a 1 (one) year moratorium on any large scale (commercial) Solar Energy installations. She also read from the current Exeter Township Master Plan (page 16) that our goal is to "maintain agricultural land" and to "preserve agricultural land". She would also encourage that a minimum 500 foot setback from all property lines be set for all large scale Solar Energy systems.

Lucie Fortin (Exeter Township planner) commented that Raisinville Township has used a common set-back distance by property classification and has a 500 foot set-back from any residence (as part of the site plan process).

Mrs. Murphy also wanted it "on the record" that any board or committee member who has land proposed for large scale Solar Energy systems be not allowed to vote on approving such projects.

Mr. Jay Murphy 12155 Finzel Rd. Carleton, MI.

Echoed the sentiments of his wife (Julie Murphy). Also voice concerns that large scale Solar Energy installations would become a source of weeds (spread), control of intrusive "varmints" and lack of (or establishment of) proper screening. He would also like to see no cellular communication towers be allowed to be built inside a Solar Energy system.

Kim Montri

Expresses concern about noise levels with both Solar and Wind Energy (Conversion) systems. Also concern about "AG land" being rezoned to allow any large scale energy system to be built.

Amy (Lafabver) Murphy 12500 Finzel Rd Carleton, MI.

Stated she was "totally against" large scale Solar energy installations as she feels they are both a local nuisance visually "ugly".

Ken Murphy 12021 Finzel Rd Carleton, MI.

Wanted to know where a copy of current township ordinance could be obtained or viewed. He was told copies can be provided by the township office until the Exeter Township web page is upgrade is completed and operational.

Fred Monteleone

Thanked all the township residents who showed up for this meeting. He recounted his recent experience (and his related health concerns) living near a large scale Wind Energy system located in the thumb of Michigan. Read from a statement to voice his opposition to the proposed (unconfirmed) commercial size Solar Energy system to be located on Finzel Road. Further commented that large scale Solar Energy systems reduce to amount of farmland for beginning farmers, lead to home / property devaluations, and elimination of the “rural character” within the township. He further commented that the loss of families (from moving away from Solar Energy installations) would have an impact agricultural business and rural life.

At this time, Mr. Monteleone to conclude his comments as he had gone beyond the two minutes allowed for individual public comment. Mr. Monteleone was allowed to conclude his comments by stating the “damage to the local community” far outweighed the benefits to a handful of landowners.

### **Old Business:**

1). Planning Commission members reviewed with Lucie Fortin, (Exeter Township planner) the DRAFT amendments and changes (dated 8/30/2022) to the current Exeter Township Solar Energy and Wind Turbine energy generating ordinance.

Planning commission members found one correction in Paragraph T (in the new proposed language) so the sentence reads “Under this plan, all structures, concrete, piping, facilities, and other project related material above...*and below*...grade and any structure shall be removed and taken offsite for disposal.”

Lucie Fortin referenced the updated Michigan State University (MSU) guide to WECS Zoning. She recommended adding “for off-site electric generation” (commercial scale) regulations within the proposed WECS zoning ordinance. Planning commission members asked about the current needs of establishing large scale WECS and discussed the potential scope of encompassing multiple townships and counties.

Lucie referenced proposed language currently under consideration by Frenchtown Township. Planning commission members discussed using a ratio of 1.5 times the height, at the highest point of the turbine blades, as a minimum fall and blade throw area for each tower. For example an allowed tower whose max height measuring 300 feet would require 450 feet in each direction or a 900 foot diameter circle for each tower installation site.

Lucie will compose some proposed language to regulated large scale (commercial size) WECS to discuss at the October planning commission meeting.

**New Business:**

None

**Second Public Comment:**

1). The next scheduled meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission will be held on Tuesday October 4, 2022 at 7:00 pm in the Exeter Township Hall.

2). Mr. Jay Murphy thanked the planning commission for the through discussion concerning the proposed ordinances.

2). Anne Kleinow suggested a resident survey be sent out to collect their input and comments on Solar and Wind energy system installations.

❖ **Motion: William Gay, 2<sup>nd</sup> Roger Bezek:** To adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried.**  
The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted, \_\_\_\_\_  
Roger Bezek, Secretary  
Exeter Township Planning Commission

