

**CHARLESTON TOWNSHIP**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held at the Township Hall on December 9, 2008.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Art Samson, Walter Kohnke, Joan Orman, Don Kramer, and Sue Balkema. Absent: Karen Wagar and Phil Larson. Also in attendance: Pat Reardon.

CALL TO ORDER: Samson called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led in the Pledge to the Flag.

**ADOPTION OF PROPOSED AGENDA AND MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Kohnke/Kramer to adopt the agenda. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Kohnke/Kramer to accept the minutes of the April 15, 2008 meeting as written. Motion carried.

Samson distributed copies of the new Michigan Planning and Enabling Act and a memorandum from Attorney Rolfe regarding the same. He also distributed copies of the proposed Planning Commission Ordinance and the Planning Commission By-laws to be reviewed for consideration at the January 2009 meeting.

**WIND TURBINE ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT:**

Samson led a discussion considering the approach to take in developing a Wind Turbine Ordinance. The commission decided to limit the proposed ordinance to residential or private wind powered systems since wind availability in Charleston Township is classified as "marginal" and that fact combined with the large area required for a commercial system make the Township unfavorable for a development of that nature. Members had a sample ordinance from the Michigan Department of Labor and copies of several wind energy ordinances from various other townships to review. At Samson's recommendation, the commission decided to work with the Golden Township ordinance modifying it as necessary.

It was determined the proposed ordinance should have a statement of purpose with the following recommended:  
*The purpose of this section is to recognize the concern for the conservation of energy resources and to recognize the desire of residents of Charleston Township to contribute to such conservation with the installation of privately owned devises for the generation of electricity for their own use.*

Members determined that the definition of terms used in the ordinance was necessary and placement of those definitions should be in Article III Section 3.1 of the Charleston Township Zoning Ordinance. Definitions a. through p. found in the Golden Township Ordinance were reviewed resulting in the deletion of d, l, o, and p.

Discussion was started on private wind powered systems with members deciding the systems will be considered a special use in all zoning districts. Questions arose regarding property set-back requirements and the need for liability insurance that commission members hope to be better able to address after attending the MSU seminar. Discussion will continue at the January commission meeting.

**MEMBERS TIME:**

Members attending the MSU Wind Energy Siting and Policy Issues seminar on December 10 decided to meet at the Township hall at 4:45p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm upon the motion of Kohnke/Balkema.

Prepared 12-11-08  
S. Balkema, secretary