

FRENCHTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
November 18, 2021

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

Roll call: Paul Thoma Hillary Venier Fred Calkins Dennis Staelgraeve

Via Zoom: Brian Dotson (non-voting)

Absent: Chris Collins Don Abrams

Also present: Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planning Consultant  
Mark Mathe, Mannik & Smith Group, Township Engineer Representative  
Natalie Askar, Planning Commission Recording Secretary  
Ned Birkey, MSU Extension Educator Emeritus, Spartan Ag

0 interested citizens in person

0 interested citizens via Zoom

A quorum being present, Chairman Paul Thoma called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. This meeting was held under the Open Meetings Act.

**Item No. 1 Agenda Approval.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Dennis Staelgraeve

Supported By: Fred Calkins

A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented.

MUC

**Item No. 2 Minutes of November 11, 2021, Meeting.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Dennis Staelgraeve

Supported By: Hillary Venier

A motion was made to approve the minutes for the November 11, 2021, Planning Commission meeting as presented.

MUC

**Item No. 3 Review and Discussion: Zoning Ordinance Article 200 Section 4.46 Solar Energy Systems**

Ned, Birkey, MSU Extension Educator Emeritus, presented new information on Solar Energy Systems to the Commission.

Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planner, explained the Township's proposed Ordinance in relation to the new information provided by Mr. Birkey. He also presented options to the Commission.

The Commission discussed.

**Motion**

Moved By: Hillary Venier

Supported By: Dennis Staelgraeve

A motion was made to have the Township Planner add wording to the proposed Zoning Ordinance, Article 200, section 4.46 on Solar Energy Systems regarding:

1. An exemption for solar energy systems that power small independent solar devices (such as a light, sign, lawn ornament, etc.) be added to Section 4.46.2
2. Language that any vegetation management plan is not intended to exclude, and may allow for, dual use installations where a solar energy system may be co-located over paved vehicle parking lots, as well as encourages dual use land management and conservation practices compatible with the principal use (including, but not limited to: pollinator habitats, conservation cover, forage for grazing) be added to Section 4.46.3.

and recommend to the Board the adoption of the Zoning Ordinance amendment with those revisions.

Roll Call:           Thoma – Yes,                    Staelgraeve – Yes,  
                          Calkins – Yes,                    Venier – Yes.

MUC  
4 - Yes votes, 0 - No votes

**Item No. 4 Review and Discussion: Frenchtown Zoning Ordinance Articles 4 starting at section 4.27 - Revision.**

The Commission briefly revisited sections 4.22 – Gun Range Outdoor and 4.26 – Hotel/Motels.

Mario Ortega, McKenna Associates, Township Planner, presented the proposed changes to Article 4 starting at section 4.27 Indoor Self-Storage.

The Commission reviewed and discussed:

Article 4 – Use Standards. The sections reviewed are as follows:

- 4.27 Indoor Self-Storage
- 4.28 Resource Reclamation Facility
- 4.29 Manufactured Housing
- 4.30 Marina
- 4.31 Mineral Mining

Article 8 - Definitions

**Item No. 5 Old Business.**

There was no old business discussed.

**Item No. 6 New Business.**

There were no citizens present or via Zoom with questions, comments, or concerns to the Planning Commission.

Chairman Paul Thoma reminded the Board that we will be meeting again December 2, 2021, to continue reviewing the proposed Zoning Ordinance.

**Item No. 7 Administrative Reviews Update/Chairperson.**

- ZBA Report from Fred Calkins, Planning Commission Liaison  
Nothing to report since last meeting.
- Planning Commission December Agenda and report from Paul Thoma, Planning Commission Chair
  - Avalon Townhomes – **REZONING**
  - Chick-Fil-A – **FINAL SITE PLAN**
  - Monroe Storage Units – **TENTATIVE SITE PLAN**
  - Jonna Properties – Frenchtown Plaza – **SPECIAL USE**
  - Jonna Properties – Frenchtown Plaza – **TENTATIVE SITE PLAN**

**Item No. 8 Adjournment.**

**Motion**

Moved By: Fred Calkins

Supported By: Hillary Venier

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

MUC