

**Pennfield Charter Township**

**Planning Commission Meeting**

**Minutes of May 2, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm at Pennfield Middle School Cafeteria. Members present were Paul Anderson, Jon Bartlett, Brad Messenger, Jack Pooler, Elaine Walter, Jay Weiss and Curtis Whitaker. A quorum was met.

Others present: Pennfield Township Supervisor Rob Behnke, Township Attorney John Macfarlane, Township Engineer Randy Ramsey, Township Planner Russ Wicklund, Recording Secretary Sandra Cummings, and four citizens.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Brad Messenger made a motion, seconded by Jack Pooler, to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of April 4, 2011. The motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

No old business to address.

**NEW BUSINESS**

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**a) Wellhead Protection Ordinance**

Randy Ramsey led a discussion regarding the importance of protecting Pennfield Township's water supply. The township is accomplishing this goal by (1) Amending Appendix B of the Township Zoning Ordinance by creating a "Wellhead Protection Overlay District", and (2) Amending the Township Code of Ordinances in order to prohibit certain activities within the delineated Wellhead Protection Area. The proposed Wellhead Protection Overlay District map was displayed, and it was noted that 50% of the township is located within the Wellhead Protection Area. In addition to the township's own well sites, it was noted that the City of

Battle Creek has numerous wells located in the Verona Well field area, which borders Pennfield, and will benefit from our Wellhead protection planning also.

A major topic of the discussion involved the impending increase in commercial activities which will be prompted by the future development of the Wal-mart Superstore. The proposed Amendments shall place some restrictions on the type of activities that will be allowed to come into the Wellhead Protection District. Activities that could pose a

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danger to the water supply may not be allowed, along with restrictions on the types and quantities of contaminants that may be stored by commercial enterprises. Spill containment plans and other safety practices will need to be followed. It was pointed out that businesses may have "Reporting Requirements" which will need to be monitored, as it pertains to hazardous materials they may have stored on site.

Another topic of discussion involved the importance of residential properties adhering to the safety practice of properly capping abandoned water wells and following safe disposal methods for contaminants such as motor oil. Residential properties will continue to be required to hook up to municipal water supplies when a private well fails, providing they are within the maximum distance of 200 feet from a public water supply.

The proposed Ordinance Amendments will again be addressed at the June Planning Commission meeting.

### **b) Medical Marijuana**

The Board members, along with township Attorney John Macfarlane and township Planner Russ Wicklund, discussed the Medical Marijuana Moratorium. The current Moratorium expires September 8, 2011. It was pointed out that numerous townships throughout Michigan have already adopted some Ordinances regulating activities related to growing and administering Medical Marijuana.

Major issues of discussion included: Limiting Zoning Areas for dispensaries; limiting the number of dispensaries and the number of caregivers and patients at a dispensary at any given time; limiting the distance of a dispensary from Schools, Churches and Day Cares; limiting hours of operation and "nuisance devices" such as ambient lighting for the purpose of a growing operation; and making sure that these operations are located in a secured facility. The Board discussed advantages of getting an Ordinance in place which will set some limits on these activities. The Board and Attorney Macfarlane and Planner Russ Wicklund will continue to work toward this goal.

### **Board Members Comments**

Several members thanked Attorney Macfarlane and Mr. Wicklund for their efforts.

Paul Anderson mentioned that there will be a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on May 9, 2011, to consider the Wal-Mart Sign Variance.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be June 6, 2011, 6:30 pm, at the Pennfield Middle School Cafeteria.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Brad Messenger made a motion, seconded by Curtis Whitaker to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm. Motion carried.

Sandra Cummings, Recording Secretary