

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes February 18, 2020

The Empire Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Trent Larson at 8:00 PM.

Present were: Trent Larson, Jared Sachs, Bob Bjerke, Jane Kansier, Charles Seipel, and liaison Jamie Elvestad. Tom Kaldunski arrived at 8:20 PM.

The Planning Commission reviewed copies of ordinances related to snowmobiles in public right of way from three different cities in the south metro area. It was reported that there have been concerns regarding snowmobile use along public street right of way in the MXR District. The Township does not currently have an ordinance to regulate snowmobile use in the public right of way. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that if there is a push by residents to regulate snowmobile use, they may consider looking further into such an ordinance.

It was reported that the City of Apple Valley is being sued for restrictions that are in place through its ordinance relating to the location of sexual offenders. The Township's attorney will be at the March 3rd Planning Commission Meeting to discuss the pros and cons of adopting a similar ordinance in Empire Township.

Jane Kaniser reported that there has been an application for an IUP by a company wishing to install a new 45' telecommunications utility pole in the public right of way. State law does not allow cities and townships to prohibit construction of these types of poles in the public right of way, however it can be regulated through the IUP. It was noted that indemnification of the Township should be included in the IUP as the Township should not need to incur any liability as a result of this project.

Jane will work on updating the ROW Ordinance to cover these types of structures so that the Township will have more say in where these structures are placed in the future.

The status of the landscaping plans for the Feely solar arrays was discussed. Not many trees have been planted along the buffer and the solar companies have a long way to go to fulfill what was stated in the landscaping agreement. This should be closely monitored in the spring to make sure the proper tree screening is being installed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.