

Jonesfield Township
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes for July 09, 2018

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Approved", written over a horizontal line.

- Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm
- Members present (Bluemer, Keenan, Siler, Nock) M. Kenny – Abs.
- Pledge
- Vote to approve minutes from previous meeting – 05/09/18
 - J. Siler – moved
 - K. Nock – support
 - Motion carried
- Vote to approve minutes from public hearing – 06/27/18
 - M Keenan – moved
 - J. Siler – support
 - Motion carried
- Additions to agenda – Member Siler suggested Jim Gray visit a couple properties one on S. Meridian Rd. between M-46 & Ederer, and one on N. Meridian Rd. between M-46 and O’Hara Rd. for violations -
- Public comment:
 - **Opposed** –health & safety of residents. Can find negative to positive on internet. Dow Chemical said there would be no health hazards. Concerned we didn’t have zero flicker. Non participating neighbors can’t use their property, town not growing, wants a stronger ordinance, she would like noise at 35db, farther setbacks, not to impede neighbors. There was discussion between her and board regarding noise and flicker
 - wanted to discuss the number of turbines allowed per section.
 - moved to Merrill for small community feel. Wouldn’t have moved to Merrill if known turbines could be coming. Doesn’t like the look of turbines. Easements concerns and wondering why DTE wants small properties. Ordinance not restrictive enough. Useless to build on property adjacent. Should use full time of moratorium to work on ordinance. Don’t submit.
 - reduce property values, and an eyesore.
 - turbines are not green or environmentally friendly. Not economical with high cost and only 15 year lifespan for turbine. Contracts can change if sold to another company.
 - believes landowners signed based on past ordinance. Property lines is only thing she has on land with no structure. Wants setbacks to property lines not structures. DTE should have met with everyone at one time to present same contact instead individual homes. Asked board table any decision to pass ordinance on the twp board. With new ordinance would have to build 900’ away from property line instead of 15’.
 - setback from the village to allow for town expansion.
 - people who don’t want them have more to lose by turbines being allowed. Believes the board’s mind is already made up.
 - feels as though people didn’t know about meetings, etc. or more people opposed. Only the people getting money from the turbines want them.

- most people voting for the 20% alternative energy live in cities and they don't have to look at them. Should add to ordinance a limit to the number of turbines allowed per section.
- does not like 500' setback from property lines. Talked with participating landowners in Gratiot and they are okay with them but not excited. Does not like 500' setback from ditches, there are 80 gals of oil in a turbine head if one should happen to fall. Believes that non-participating property line setback should be 1000'. Technology is always changing and DTE may want to put even more in a section. This decision will direct the future of Merrill. Some families have said they will move if turbines are allowed.
- **Support** - we are more restrictive than Wheeler. Good revenue. Without the turbines, the money that the township needs to run will have to fall back on landowners. Restrictions from ditches should be less as it may force the turbines into the middle of the field.
- bothered that people who want them aren't standing up. Hard to write an ordinance for future when no one knows what will be happening in 5-10years. Turbines don't bother him. Reads Gratiot Co. papers and sees no negative news about them. Don't get caught up in the myths. Would like commission to reevaluate setbacks from drainage ditches.
- commend time planning commission put into ordinance. Some have complained about crop dusters not spraying near turbines. She saw some herself on River Rd. Contracts are precise about decommission, and landowners continued to be paid for up to three years. Looks are each person's perception. Worked on school board for 42 years and student decline has always been a problem. Bad Axe can't spend enough of the revenue.

R. Bluemer – people of Michigan voted to have 20% alternative energy by 2020, that is why these companies are searching for land.

S. Kehoe (DTE) ordinance is not perfect for DTE either. Why DTE includes small properties. In the past it was commented that only the properties getting the turbines benefit. DTE chose to give everyone opportunity to benefit. Each individual needs to make their own choice if the contract works for them.

- Public comment closed and discussion continues among the board about setbacks.
- M. Keenan makes a motion to table vote to send May 29, 2018 ordinance draft to township board for further discussion and also due to being one board member short.
 - K. Nock supports
 - Motion carried. No date set for next discussion meeting
- Solar ordinance open to public comment
 - No comments from public
- Motion by J. Siler to send April 2, 2018 draft solar ordinance to township board for approval and adoption.
 - M. Keenan – support
 - Roll call vote: J. Siler – yes, K. Nock – yes, M. Keenan – yes, R. Bluemer – yes, M. Kenny – abs.
- New Business – None
- Old Business – Continue 5 year review of zoning ordinance will be in October.

- Extended public comment:
 - Questions of Planning Commission's position on medical marijuana
 - Local governments can vote yes or no, or opt out of any action. Opting out is the same as choosing no.
 - Village made same decision to opt out.
- Date and time for next general meeting will be Oct. 8, 2018 at 7:00 pm
- Motion by J. Siler to adjourn
 - Support by M. Keenan
 - Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

