

**MINUTES OF THE BEECHER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
(THE PZC)**

***Thursday, September 29, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
Beecher Village Hall
625 Dixie Highway***

At 7:00 p.m., Chairman Phil Serviss called the meeting to order.

All present joined in the pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL. Members present: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Lohmann, Schuitema, Serviss and Tatgenhorst.

Members absent: Commissioner Machtemes.

Staff present: Administrator Robert Barber and Pete Iosue of Teska Associates.

Guests: Greg Szymanski, Gayle Ahrendt and Ron Kuhlman. Dennis Kennedy, Sr., and Josh Gibson from Beecher Fire Department arrived at 7:14 p.m.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 28, 2016 MEETING.

Commissioner Schuitema made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2016 PZC meeting. Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Lohmann, Schuitema, Serviss and Tatgenhorst.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR AN L.E.D. SIGN IN FRONT OF THE BEECHER FIRE DEPARTMENT, 711 PENFIELD STREET.

Due notice has been published and adjoining property owners were notified by mail. The Beecher Fire District wishes to change out their letter board marquee sign with a digital sign. There is no change to the size of the sign or location. The Fire District wishes to show video quality material using multi-colors.

Commissioner Tatgenhorst made a motion to open the Public Hearing at 7:02 p.m.

Commissioner Bouchard seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Lohmann, Schuitema, Serviss and Tatgenhorst.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Hearn made a motion to continue the Public Hearing after next agenda item, so Fire Department personnel could be present. Commissioner Lohmann seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Lohmann, Schuitema, Serviss and Tatgenhorst.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

WORKSHOP: CONSIDER A MOTION TO CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING ON A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO SOLAR POWER GENERATING SYSTEMS. A copy of the proposed ordinance was provided in the packet for review. The ordinance would allow solar power generating systems on vacant lots as the primary use in industrial districts but only when granted a special use permit by the Village. This would cover the situation in which Dutch American Foods was considering installing solar panels on an adjacent vacant lot but the zoning ordinance did not address this issue. However, the zoning ordinance does cover wind generating systems. This is a pre-emptive ordinance which addresses an issue before it arises.

During the workshop, there was much discussion about the loss of utility tax revenue where power is not purchased through a power company. Concerns were also expressed about the selling to other residents within the Village of excess power that is generated. Administrator Barber stated that there is no assessment value for a lot if solar panels are constructed, therefore concerns were expressed about the loss of property tax revenue. Questions were raised if generated power could be taxed. Concerns were expressed about possibly only allowing power generating systems on roofs and not in vacant lots and perhaps stating size restrictions.

Administrator Barber suggested allowing solar power generating systems only in agricultural districts and not industrial districts.

Pete Iosue from Teska Associates will bring examples of ordinances from other communities to a future PZC meeting and make recommendations to the PZC on how to regulate the solar power generating systems.

The matter was tabled until the PZC could review Pete Iosue's examples of ordinances regarding solar power generating systems.

A public hearing regarding a request for a special use permit for an L.E.D. sign in front of the Beecher Fire Department was continued at 7:16 p.m.

Administrator Barber explained that the proposed sign is very high tech. Dennis Kennedy, Sr. was present to explain the project on behalf of the Beecher Fire Department. Scrolling text will be on 2/3 of the sign, and will include a thermometer. The new sign will be the same size as existing sign, and will utilize the same stand and same electrical hookup. It will have a day/night switch (eye) and it will not be flashing.

Commissioner Schuitema asked if there were restrictions that were made for the library's recent sign request that the PZC was not placing on the Fire Department. Administrator Barber said that there were no special restrictions being placed on this request.

After no public testimony was heard, Commissioner Tatgenhorst made a motion to close the

Public Hearing at 7:22 p.m. Commissioner Schuitema seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Lohmann, Schuitema, Serviss and Tatgenhorst.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION AND FINDING OF FACT TO THE VILLAGE BOARD: REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR AN L.E.D. SIGN IN FRONT OF THE BEECHER FIRE DEPARTMENT, 711 PENFIELD STREET. Commissioner Hearn made a finding of fact and recommendation to the Village Board to approve a request for a special use permit for an L.E.D. sign in front of the Beecher Fire Department, 711 Penfield Street, with the following two conditions: 1) Sign must have day/night switch; 2) No flashing display.

Commissioner Lohmann seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Lohmann, Schuitema, Serviss and Tatgenhorst.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

The Village Board will consider this special use permit for approval at their October 11, 2016 Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS. Administrator Barber introduced Denis Tatgenhorst as the new Code Enforcement official, EMA, and Director of Community Policing. His hours will be Monday through Wednesday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Thursday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mr. Tatgenhorst feels that everything is going well, and he is getting cooperation from the residents he has talked to so far.

Administrator Barber reported that an Australian company has expressed interest in purchasing the vacant lots in The Preserves at Cardinal Creek, and Prairie Crossings South.

Administrator Barber reported that a Florida company has purchased the vacant lots in Nantucket Cove. Olthof Homes has plans to buy those lots in phases and build homes on them. A representative from Olthof Homes came to a recent Village Board meeting asking for four changes to the covenants for Nantucket Cove.

Administrator Barber reported that R.P. Lumber is open at the former Beatty Lumber location on Church Road.

Administrator Barber reported that Lacey's, a gaming café, will be opening in one of the units at 1121 Dixie Highway (formerly Reilly's). The future of the other two units has not yet been made public.

Sit-N-Bull Saloon is open on Gould Street. Sophia's Café and Video Gaming is open on Penfield Street.

President Szymanski stated that the Village is still trying to find funding dollars for a quiet zone.

President Szymanski expressed concerns about the number of gaming establishments that have been contacting him recently.

Administrator Barber provided information about HITS, and their recent purchase of Balmoral Race Track. He explained the high-end events that they plan to hold for jumper horses. They also hope to host non-equestrian events there throughout the year.

Commissioner Lohmann asked about the plans for a Bark Park. Administrator Barber stated that Will County is in the process of constructing one on I-394 in Crete.

Chairman Serviss asked how the Fourth of July Celebration went. Administrator Barber said the event was very successful. There was some damage to the parking lot by the fire station from the rides.

Denis Tatgenhorst will be attending a Fair at Governor's State University on October 17th regarding GSU students needing 20-25 service hours in order to graduate.

Administrator Barber said the boardwalk on Gould Street is waiting on prints in order to put the project up for bids.

The next regularly scheduled meeting for the PZC is Thursday, October 27, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT. Commissioner Bouchard made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Hearn seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Lohmann, Schuitema, Serviss and Tatgenhorst.

NAYS: None.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Patty Meyer
PZC Secretary