

Montrose Township

Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 3, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Present: Morrie Fikes, Don Pollard, Bill Stroup, Dave Badgley, Harry Powell, Tom Tithof

Absent: Jim Ingram

Staff Present: Bill McIlmurray - Building Official

Meeting Minutes –

A **Motion** was made by Don Pollard, to accept the meeting minutes from the 2/3/2022 as presented. Support for the motion was given by Bill Stroup. 6-0 Motion carried.

Citizen Comments: None

New Business- Parcel # 13-14-300-006

Public Hearing – Home Occupation Request – Tara Whitmire 12170 Marshall Road, Montrose, MI is requesting a Home Occupation that would allow for a photography studio located within the primary residence. Chris Zelinski 12179 Marshall Road stated that this would be an asset to the community and he would like to recommend that the board accepts the request. Ms. Hollenbeck 13170 Marshall Road stated that having this business does not cause any problems and as a neighbor, you don't even realize the business is there. Katrina Burtrum 12024 W. Vienna Road stated she supports the request as well. A Motion to approve the home occupation was made by Don Pollard, and support for the motion was given by Tom Tithof. Motion carried 6-0

Public Hearing – Genesee County Water & Waste services requesting re-zoning of parcel #13-15-200-001 from RF – Residential Farm to I-2 Heavy Industrial. The proposed zoning change would allow the property owner to construct a new sewage digestion facility. John O'Brien from Genesee County Water & Waste Services 4610 Beecher Road, Flint, MI 48532 presented the plan to the Board telling them how the treatment plant has been updated about every 10 years to meet the need or comply with State regulations. He explained how the process works in order to return the water to the river. John O'Brien said that the other portions of the area they own are already earmarked for future expansion so that is why they would like to have this parcel rezoned. D. Pollard asked questions about the methane gas smell and if the smell would be controlled. J. O'Brien said that they can reduce the smell but they cannot guarantee there would be no odor. There are no digestors at the location now if approved they would use the gas generated to run their plant or they would sell the extra energy. There was a question about if they would need a torch if they made energy, they would need what is called a flare so that if there was a problem with storage, they would have a way to release the gas. D. Badgley asked why they want to build this digester. J. O'Brien shared the reasoning behind the request is all due to PFAS. If we extract water from Lake Huron there is

no PFAS but once the water goes into people's homes and touches anything with PFAS that all ends up at the treatment plant. The PFAS is heavier than water so it settles on the top. They meet the requirements at this time but in the future, as the regulations continue, they will not be able to meet them, they will need to digest the sludge. J. O'Brien explained that PFAS are widely used, long-lasting chemicals, components that break down very slowly over time and are found in almost everything, food wrappers, clothing, beds, and other everyday items. D. Badgley asked about the odor. J. O'Brien stated that we are a wastewater treatment plant, the material coming in does have foul odors but their digester would actually reduce the smell, not eliminate but reduce. T. Tithof asked if the township could be compensated for them using this land for this purpose as of right now there is no way they can do that. A letter was read by Morrie Fikes that was sent to the Planning Commission from Tim & Cheryl Bellil. M. Fikes did not want to continue to read the letter due to its accusatory nature and things he felt were not true or proven. The rest of the letter was read by Supervisor Mark Emmendorfer. Joe Boettger 12272 McKinley Road, asked to have all property taxes for residents within ¼ mile of this development have their land taxes frozen. Board members do not have the authority to freeze taxes, he suggests it be written into the language of the approval. Dustin Miller 13200 Marshall Road, addressed the board and stated that there was a digester recently added to the city or township of Lowell and they had issue with the odor immediately. He feels the truth wasn't told that the smell would not increase. Yvonne Beers from North Royalton, OH who owns vacant land on McKinley Road stated her concern about the smell and the sound of the generators. She asks that Genesee County Water & Waste services add to the aesthetics of the property, she asks for setbacks and maybe some nice landscaping to help it not look so bad because she feels it will eventually be approved. Jeff Byers stated that this plant would add significant sulfur into the air and when you burn PFAS it goes into the air so it will not go into the ground, it will go into the air and cause everyone to get cancer. Ernest Root 12403 Marshall Road, says when they have sludged the farms it stinks and the sound of the generators is very loud he feels we have become a dumping ground. Jim Norris 8512 Farrand Rd he feels they should build the generator on another parcel not close to residents. Wayne Bush 8225 Farrand Rd, asked if the county-owned the property between Farrand & Kee-Wah-Din, if they do why can't they put the expansion there? Brad Thorsby 12278 Marshall Rd, suggested that Marshall Road becomes a permanent buffer. He feels with the rezoning to I-2 they could put anything they want even another dump. Nick Stanley 12204 Marshall Road asked how big the proposed tank would be and if they would consider building by the powerlines. Jim Monk 12514 Marshall Rd, disagrees with the rezoning and he does not feel the digester will help with the odor. He also feels if the rezoning gets approved it would be up to the Board to help him get what he deserves for his house. John Carter 11145 Duffield Road, he questioned who on the Planning Commission was elected. They are not elected but appointed. Morrie Fikes explained that they are only able to approve or deny the request and that recommendation goes to the Township Board who then makes the decision to approve or deny the rezoning. Jim Battig 12250 Marshall Road, shared that he moved here August 2019 and has spent a lot of time and money on his property, and feels it wouldn't be a good idea to expand the waste water treatment plant. Don Holland 12316 Marshall Road, asked the planning commission if they have been up to the landfill recently and if they think it is loud. Joseph Morgan 12406 Marshall Rd, is opposed to the expansion because he does not want to see this from his front door. Dan Pelso 8524

Farrand Rd, is concerned about the air quality and pollution. He has a well and worries about what will end up in the groundwater. He stated he will sell his house if this gets approved. Donna Mehrman 12171 Marshall Road, stated that she moved to the country because that's where she wants to be and this zoning change will bring down the property value. She was questioning why they own the property and if they were planning to expand all along. M. Fikes said that if they have needed to expand every 10 years then yes, they probably knew they would need to expand due to the regulations. Richard Lowery 13058 Marshall Road, he lives straight across from the plant. He feels like the lights will cause a problem and also the flame. Keith Perior 12456 Marshall Road, says that if the zoning change is approved, they will need to reclass the road for heavy trucks. He opposes the change. M. Fikes closed the public hearing for the re-zoning of parcel # 13-15-200-001. Harry Powell asked about the location and he feels they are putting it here to cut their costs but that does not benefit our community. M. Fikes asked J. O'Brien if he needed permits to use the methane gas and Mr. O'Brien said they would need to be approved through the State of Michigan. M. Fikes asked if there was a reason they would not stay on the Northside of Farrand Road. Mr. O'Brien said that the parcel is for future expansion. It was suggested that they build the digester next to the plant where the solids are already stored. At this point, they wanted to keep that area for other future expansions. M. Fikes questioned Mr. O'Brien on whether or not they would need variances if it was re-zoned and he said yes, they would. D. Badgley made a **Motion** to deny the re-zoning request for parcel # 13-15-200-001 because it does not benefit our community. Support was given by D. Pollard. Roll call – Bill Stroup (y), Dave Badgley (y), Harry Powell (y), T. Tithof (n), Don Pollard (y), Morrie Fikes (y). Motion carried.

Public Hearing – Re-zoning of parcel#13-15-200-006, application has been withdrawn by the applicant.

Site Plan Review Approval – Construction of a wastewater facility on parcel# 13-15-200-001, application withdrawn by the applicant.

Old Business -

None

Other Business:

Citizens Comments: Yvonne Beers North Royalton, OH thanked the board for their time and attention.

Adjournment:

A **Motion** was made by B. Stroup to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Support was given by D. Pollard. Motion carried 5 - 0.

The next regular scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, April 7, 2022.

Respectfully,

P. Coomer
Acting Secretary