



**Birch Run Township Planning Commission**  
**Special Discussion Meeting Minutes**  
*August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024*  
11935 Silver Creek Dr., Birch Run, Michigan 48415

**Call to Order of Meeting:**

Mike Marr called the August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Special Discussion Meeting of the Birch Run Township Planning Commission (PC) to order at 18:14.

**Members Present:**

Mike Marr, Vice-Chair; Mike Musial, Secretary; Fred Sheridan, Keith Jewell, Members. There is one vacancy on the Planning Commission.

Chair C.J. Norris, and member Ed Munson were absent.

**Others Present:**

Zero (0) people were in the audience. Also present were Gretchen Nielsen, Zoning Administrator; Riley Kiessling, Recording Secretary.

**Agenda:**

No Agenda was approved for the meeting.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Yet to be approved:

- July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

**Election of Officers:**

To be done at the first meeting of 2025.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items:**

Public Comment was held and made available.

**Public Hearing(s):**

None

**New Business:**

None

**Old Business:**

The Special Discussion meeting began with overviewing and listing some of the projects the PC wants to work on, such as discussing RV Storage, preparing for Public Hearings for the Short-Term Rental Ordinance, Certified Renewable Energy Ordinance (CREO) with special detail given to the Battery Storage portion, Event Barn Ordinance, and Parking in the Setbacks. The PC also noted that they would like to put some work into cleaning up the Marijuana Ordinance.

**Event Barn Ordinance:**

Discussion included creating a minimum lot size to host an event barn, tentatively set at 5 acres, and creating a minimum distance from lot lines and/or building to building on the use property. The minimum distance was tentatively set at 200 feet from any occupied dwelling other than an occupied dwelling on the event barn parcel.

**Short Term Rental (STR) Ordinance:**

Discussion included what zoning districts the PC wanted to include STR's in, tentatively set for the A-1, R-1 & R-2 Districts. The PC looked at how they would like to determine the limit on the number of STR's, such as by percentage of housing, and tentatively set the limit number at 20. Other discussion included how many STR's per owner/operator, including a requirement to give the right to inspect and an indemnification clause for the township, as well as keeping a list of STR's and/or list of those staying at STR's.

Further, the generic penalties for township code infractions were carried over to this ordinance, and concerns were raised as to how to enforce it. Pending it continues, Township staff will need to create or update existing application forms to include information for a Short-Term Rental. The application would be for an STR Zoning Permit.

**Certified Renewable Energy Ordinance (CREO):**

The discussion on the Birch Run Township CREO was organized by discussing Solar, Wind, and then some talk on Battery Storage operations. It was determined to use the term "Small-Scale" to refer to any solar and wind operation under the specified criteria from the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), and anything at or above that criteria would be "Large-Scale". Table 9-2 would be edited to include lines 7, 8, and 9 to include the large-scale wind and solar, and utility scale battery storage.

Adding in glare standards and post construction studies for solar were discussed, potential sound studies, too. Making sure there was an insurance section of any application was included and creating a formal complaint resolution process for the public. The PC wanted to look at bonding/road repair agreements and would check with the SCRC and MDOT, as well as Tuscola & Sanilac County Road Commissions. A decommissioning requirement (plan) was determined to be very important and would look at fleshing that out more. Requirements for Wind operation post-construction studies to ensure compliance with applicable plans and ordinances were mentioned.

On the battery storage section, the NFPA 855 would be consulted along with the Township Fire Chief. Possible Fire Training Reimbursement from the battery storage operation was discussed, too.

**Other:**

None

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Sheridan seconded by Jewell to adjourn at 20:40.  
Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by:  
*Recording Secretary, Riley Kiessling*

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Mike Musial  
Planning Commission Secretary