



**Birch Run Township Planning Commission**  
**Special Meeting Minutes**  
*September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024*  
11935 Silver Creek Dr., Birch Run, Michigan 48415

**Call to Order of Meeting:**

Chairman C.J. Norris called the September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Birch Run Township Planning Commission (PC) to order at 19:00 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Members Present:**

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

Member Keith Jewell was absent.

Motion by Marr seconded by Sheridan to excuse Keith Jewell from the meeting.  
Motion PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

**Others Present:**

Twenty-five (25) people were in the audience. Also present were Gretchen Nielsen, Zoning Administrator; Riley Kiessling, Recording Secretary.

**Agenda:**

Motion by Sheridan seconded by Marr to approve the September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Special Meeting Agenda as presented.  
Motion PASSED by unanimous voice vote.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Minutes to be approved at the next regular meeting:

- August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Special Discussion Meeting
- August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Regular Meeting

**Election of Officers:**

To be done at the first meeting of 2025.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items: 19:01 – 19:10**

Public Comment was held.

**Public Hearing(s):**

**Mini/RV Storage @ 11250 Dixie Hwy (PID#: 05-10-6-20-1005-001): 19:11 – 19:36**

*Staff Comments:*

An overview of the received application was given by the Zoning Administrator (ZA), noting that the proper notice requirements for the public hearing had been met to proceed with the Public Hearing. The ZA mentioned that the applicant had been given an opportunity to respond to the review letter provided by ROWE but had declined. Some of the major items included the plans for Stormwater Drainage, Sewage, and a review of the other proposed utilities. The Fire Chief would require 2 Fire Hydrants with the development, in addition to being able to navigate around the parked vehicles.

*PC Comments:*

The PC noted that the ROWE review letter was a lot thicker and showed a lot of un-addressed criteria from the Zoning Ordinance for the applicant to see to. The PC inquired after what security measures & systems would be used on the property, as well as considered the need for a deceleration lane like the one required for the Township Fire Hall.

*Applicant Comments:*

The applicant presented their proposal, and asked questions of the PC to see what they would like to see on the project and what they should be moving forward with.

*Public Comments:*

A couple of members of the public gave their comments on the use, all generally opposed to the project. Sherry Hollerback submitted a letter to the Planning Commission in addition to her public comment.

*Motion(s):*

Motion by Sheridan seconded by Marr to postpone any further action on the proposed RV Lot at 11250 Dixie Hwy (PID#: 05-10-6-20-1005-001) until the many and various issues presented by the ROWE review were addressed.

Yeas: Marr, Sheridan, Norris, Munson, Musial

Nays:

Absent: Jewell

Motion PASSED by majority roll call vote.

**Short-Term Rental (STR) Ordinance: 19:41 – 20:07**

*Staff Comments:*

The ZA gave an overview of the Ordinance for the public and PC, noting that the requirements for the Public Hearing had been met. Copies of the Ordinance had been made available at the Township office.

*PC Comments:*

The PC noted that they had been working on the STR ordinance for several months.

*Public Comments:*

Several members of the public made comments or posed questions to the PC on the ordinance. There were several concerns about the # of available permits to get, the # of permits that could be owned by a singular entity, the actual permitting process, the requirement for security cameras, and what will be done by those who already operate STR's but are late to get one of the available licenses, among other things.

*Motion:*

Motion by Marr seconded by Sheridan to recommend approval of the Amendments to Article 14 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding Short-Term Rentals, as presented, to the Township Board.

Yeas: Munson, Sheridan, Marr, Norris, Musial,

Nays: None

Absent: Jewell

Motion PASSED by majority roll call vote.

**Parking in the Setbacks & Non-Conforming Ordinance: 20:09 – 20:12**

*Staff Comments:*

The ZA gave an overview of the ordinance to the public and PC, noting that the Public Hearing Requirements had been met. She mentioned that the currently used and occupied homes in the C-1 district are very hamstrung as the Zoning Ordinance sits right now, which would be solved with this amendment. The proposed changes include adding language to the footnotes of Table 9-4 of the Zoning Ordinance by changing note #9 and adding note #10.

*PC Comments:*

The PC noted that they had similarly been working on this amendment for several months.

*Public Comments:*

None

*Motion*

Motion by Sheridan seconded by Marr to recommend approval of the proposed changes to Table 9-4 of the Zoning Ordinance, as presented, to the Township Board.

Yeas: Marr, Musial, Norris, Sheridan, Munson,

Nays: None

Absent: Jewell

Motion PASSED by majority roll call vote.

**Event Barn Ordinance: 20:14 – 20:15**

The ZA gave an overview of the changes made from the previous meeting, such as adding lines 1 and 2 to Section 14.24 of the Zoning Ordinance. The PC noted that there was not much else to discuss at this point, and they were happy with the proposal.

*Motion*

Motion by Marr seconded by Musial to recommend approval of the proposed changes to the Event Barn Ordinance by adding lines 1 and 2 to Section 14.24 (Event Barns) of the Zoning Ordinance, as presented, to the Township Board.

Yeas: Sheridan, Marr, Norris, Musial, Munson,

Nays: None

Absent: Jewell

Motion PASSED by majority roll call vote.

**Compatible Renewable Energy Ordinance (CREO): 20:17 – 20:37**

*Staff Comments:*

The ZA gave an overview of the changes made to the Ordinance from the last PC meeting. She noted that the public hearing requirements had been met, with the notice being published in the paper. The changes to the Ordinance included taking out "utility scale" for battery storage definitions, adding landscaping plan requirements.

*PC Comments:*

Discussion from the PC included what #'s to add to Section IV, Battery Storage Subsections i & ii for acre requirements and % of lot requirements, requiring a fire flow testing of water utilities so that surrounding houses will have water pressure in cases of a fire, cost recovery programs & hazmat cleanup, asking the attorney to see if we can require retention ponds for drainage, and add in the same decommissioning requirements from the Solar and Wind provisions of the ordinance.

After discussion, the ZA mentioned that she will clean up the ordinance from the noted modifications and would have the attorney review it, then have the PC look at it one more time at their October meeting before approval.

*Public Comments:*

None

*Motion:*

No motion was made at this public hearing.

**New Business:**

None

**Old Business:**

None

**Public Comment:** 20:41 – 20:43

Public Comment was held.

**Other:**

None

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Sheridan seconded by Marr to adjourn at 20:45

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by:

*Recording Secretary, Riley Kiessling*

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Mike Musial

Planning Commission Secretary

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