

**Ganges Township Planning Commission**  
**Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes for September 24, 2019**  
**Ganges Township Hall**  
**119th Avenue and 64th Street**  
**Fennville, MI, Allegan County**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair **DeZwaan** called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Roll Call: Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** — Present

Secretary: Phil **Badra** — Present

Vice-Chair: Charlie **Hancock** — Present

Commissioner: Dale **Pierson** — Present

Commission Trustee: Barry **Gooding** — Present

Zoning Administrator: Tasha **Smalley** — Present

**II. Additions to the agenda and adoption**

A motion was made by **Gooding** to accept the agenda, as presented. The motion was seconded by **Pierson**.  
Motion passed.

**III. General Public Comment**

Julie **Cowie** - 876 ½ Blue Star Hwy representing Rural Gig, a local wireless broadband internet LLC. Rural Gig wants to provide a reliable and dependable option to local internet providers like Frontier and Comcast, who are not currently interested in expanding their coverage areas into the rural communities. She is interested in some text amendments to allow commercial wireless communication towers of less than 75' tall and/or eliminating the Special Land Use (SLU) requirements for Commercial towers. **Cowie** provide a memo and maps that delineated her request.

**Badra** referred to the new Small Cell Tower Act PA 365 of 2018 which became effective in March 2019 which allows small wireless communication facilities to be placed on utility poles in the road Right Of Way (ROW), by right. **Hancock** asked what towers rural gig has currently. **Cowie** stated that there is a main tower at 111<sup>th</sup> and 68<sup>th</sup>, another 50' tower at 70<sup>th</sup> and 107<sup>th</sup>, and the tower at Scenic View Dairy Farm at 115<sup>th</sup> and 62<sup>nd</sup> St. **Cowie**

explained that they were currently trying to add a tower less than 75' tall to extend the line of sight to the Orchard Trail Subdivision in Ganges Township.

**Pierson** asked how far the coverage area is from each tower. **Cowie** explained that if you have line of site from one of the receiver/transmitter locations you can receive service. Additional smaller towers could extend the coverage areas even farther. Plus, equipment can be mounted on existing structures, even trees. The main tower also has battery backup and a generator on site so electric outages do not effect service.

#### **IV. Correspondence and upcoming meetings/seminars**

**DeZwaan** has a PC letter to: Township Board Re: Craycraft Rezoning  
Ken Craycraft Re: Rezoning 3.6 acres in the SW corner of his parcel to Commercial Use

#### **V. Public Hearing**

Public Hearing was opened at 7:05 PM ~~7:25PM~~.

##### a. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment and Updates

**DeZwaan** explained that the main purpose of these text amendments was to update the Adult/Child Care definitions, update the Micro-Brewery/ BrewPub definitions, create a Solar Farm Ordinance, Remove Conditional Rezoning, add a Food Truck Definition and provisions for their Use (especially at breweries and wineries), address some ROW concerns, and update some of Tables of Uses. Grammar, punctuation, spelling and formatting issues, as well as updating the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (MDEGLE) references in the Zoning Ordinance, formerly known as the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), were also addressed as part of this update.

Public Hearing was closed at 7:30PM.

#### **VI.Approval of August 27, 2019 minutes**

A motion was made by **Badra** to approve the August 27, 2019 regular meeting minutes, with corrections. **Pierson** seconded the motion. Motion passed

#### **VII.Old Business – None**

#### **VIII.New Business**

##### a. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment and Updates

**DeZwaan** and the other PC members have reviewed the Township Attorney's suggestions to their proposed text amendments and have implemented them, to the most part. **Badra** asked if any of the members had any other concerns that they want to address, other than **Cowie's** request. **Pierson** got confirmation that the PC does want to allow to Food Trucks as Accessory Uses at Wineries and Breweries. **Pierson** also asked if the PC members agreed with the Attorney's recommendation that the financial resources for decommissioning a Solar Farm be recalculated every 5 years. The PC agreed that would not be necessary. **Hancock** also asked for clarification on the extra provision for the food trucks as accessory uses, specifically that they would not need to be removed at the end of an event.

Regarding **Cowie's** request to amend the current text to allow Wireless Service Providers to install towers under 75'; by eliminating the text ...wholly owned by federally licensed amateur radio operator... or allowing larger towers without a SLU is too complex to resolve in one night. To be able to address **Cowie's** request the PC will need more time to research the issue and come up with a viable decision. Even then, a Site Plan would need to be submitted for approval of any new towers and another public hearing would be required for the text changes.

**Pierson** moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the Ganges Township Board approve the currently proposed text amendments at their next meeting.

Motion was seconded by **Badra**. Motion passed by roll call vote.

**DeZwaan** — Yes  
**Badra** — Yes  
**Pierson** — Yes  
**Hancock** — Yes  
**Gooding** — Yes

## **IX. Administrative Updates**

Township Board-

**Gooding** reported that at the last Township Board meeting, on September 10th, the Board approved the contract for the PC/ZBA Recording Secretary. They are also working on updating the Fireworks Ordinance. A new 6' chain-link fence is being installed to keep people from sneaking into Pier Cove Park afterhours. The Township granted the Metallurgical High Vacuum Corp application for an industrial facilities tax exemption certificate. The Township also approved Rezoning the portion of Craycraft's property.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)-

**Pierson** reported that the ZBA had not met since April 22, 2019; but will have 2-3 requests on the Agenda for October

Zoning Administrator – None

**X.Future Meetings Dates**

The future dates of the PC meetings are October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 and November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**XI.General Public Comment**

Cowie thanked the PC members for their time

**XII.Adjournment**

Motion was made by **Gooding** and supported by **Hancock**, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Adjourned at 8:36PM.

*Respectfully Submitted*

*Jennifer Goodrich*

*Ganges Township Recording Secretary*