

MINUTES
Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission
Monday, May 11, 2009
7:00 p.m.

ARTICLE 1. Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Members Present: Hammond, Lewis, Logue, McCarthy,
McDonald, Pennington, Robinson, Sperla, Waalkes
Members Absent: None.
Others Present: Township Planning Director Peterson, Recording
Secretary Hern and Members of the Public.

ARTICLE 2. Chairman Robinson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ARTICLE 3. Approval of the Agenda for the May 11, 2009 Planning
Commission Meeting.**
Chairman Robinson requested a motion for the approval of the
May 11, 2009 Agenda.

**Motion was made by Member Waalkes and supported by
Member McCarthy to approve the Agenda as presented.
Motion carried unanimously.**

ARTICLE 4. Approval of the Minutes from the March 23, 2009 Meeting.
Chairman Robinson asked if there were any corrections to the
March 23rd Minutes or requested a motion for approval.

Member McCarthy noted a couple of typos.

**Motion was made by Member McDonald and supported by
Member Sperla to approve the March 23, 2009 Minutes as
corrected. Motion carried unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 5. Case # 08-2966: Cascade Engineering
(PUBLIC HEARING)
Address of Property: 5061 36th Street SE
Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting a Type I Special
Use Permit to install a wind turbine test tower.**

Planning Director Peterson noted the property is located on the
North Side of 36th Street between Patterson and Raleigh Drive, to
the north are Consumers Energy Transmission lines.

The Site Plan was reviewed under the same criteria for Cellular
Towers and Masts so some of the section will not apply under the
Standards since they are specific to cell towers. Applicant is
requesting a 53-foot tower versus a 45-foot tower that is allowed,

Staff believes the Applicant should go through the Special Use process. The other alternative would be a Zoning Variance.

Within the Commissions' packets is information regarding the property and other structures in the area with the Consumers Energy structure on the north property and other poles in the area that are taller than this request.

Staff recommends approval of the Type I Special Use Permit to allow the wind turbine test tower at 5601 36th Street with the condition that they receive approval from the Gerald R. Ford International Airport prior to its construction. Planning Director Peterson noted he did receive a phone call from Roy Hawkins at the airport saying they had no issues with the tower and it has their approval.

Chairman Robinson asked what the maximum height is of the tower and Planning Director Peterson said that at the tallest part of the tower would be 58-feet.

Chuck Buursma, Facility Manager for Cascade Engineering, was present to answer questions.

Member Sperla asked if there would be only one (1) turbine on the tower and Applicant Buursma said there would be two (2) turbines, one on top of each pole, with other turbines on the middle pole connecting the two (2) upright poles.

Member Sperla also asked if the structure would be 58-feet tall as he saw other structures in photos submitted that were 120-feet tall, etc. Applicant Buursma noted that the taller structures belong to Consumers Energy and were noting the height of the other structures in the area as well as the distance between them.

Motion was made by Member McDonald and supported by Member Hammond to open the Public Hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Staff did not receive any letters or phone calls regarding the case.

Motion was made by Member McDonald and supported by Member Sperla to close the Public Hearing. Motion carried unanimously.

Member Logue asked if the turbine is a test for electricity and Joe Maier, Controller for Cascade Engineering, said it is for testing of wind conditions and the engineering of the company's research and development. The turbine will monitor how many kilowatts

go back to Consumers Energy and the research gathered will be applied to wind turbine studies.

Member Sperla asked if Cascade Engineering would be utilizing the energy from the turbine and Applicant Buursma said the turbine is for test purposes only.

Member Lewis asked what the structure would look like, would it be one (1) pole with a turbine, the picture shows two (2) poles with a banner structure between the two (2) poles with more turbines. Applicant Buursma clarified that the structure would consist of the two (2) upright poles, each with a turbine on the top. There will also be turbines on the banner piece that connects the two (2) poles. This design is the cheapest way to put more Energy up without additional costs in poles; therefore, you can have five (5) or six (6) turbines on two (2) poles versus one (1) turbine per pole.

Member Pennington asked how far the structure would be from Consumers Energy and Planning Director Peterson said approximately 200 feet from Consumers' property line.

Motion was made by Member McDonald and supported by Member Waalkes to approve the Applicant's request for a Type I Special Use Permit to install a wind turbine test tower at either 5061 or 5055 36th Street SE.

Member Lewis commented that he supports this project but noted Cascade should investigate an ordinance for these requests in the future. He is curious to know when wind turbines would become a more popular choice of energy. Mr. Maier said there are a few businesses that are currently utilizing them such as Meijer's Corporate Headquarters in Walker has five (5) for their facility. This specific structure, however, is a test structure; there are none on the market currently.

Chairman Robinson asked if the structure Cascade Engineering is proposing is set-up for industrial use testing instead of residential use and Mr. Maier said that is correct. This structure is a test model to see what can be generated from this type of set-up versus other test models and ones currently on the market.

Member Sperla noted this seems to be a temporary use and asked if the Applicant would be opposed to a condition that states the structure would be removed three (3) or four (4) months after their studies are completed? Mr. Maier said that the turbine would be studied over a lengthy period of time and is not temporary, as they will also be testing the structure's endurance.

Chairman Robinson called for the Planning Commissions' vote with **all in favor and none opposed, motion carried.**

ARTICLE 6.

Any Other Business.

Chairman Robinson opened the meeting for any other business. There was no other business of the Planning Commission.

Planning Director Peterson announced that the Planning Commission Meeting scheduled for May 18, 2009 has been cancelled. The next Planning Commission Meeting will be held on Monday, June 1, 2009.

Member Sperla believes the Township will be in need of an ordinance to address wind turbines. Planning Director Peterson said the current ordinance could be amended to include wind turbines.

Member McDonald suggested that Staff provide the language for the ordinance that includes wind turbines and Chairman Robinson asked the language include uses in both the residential and industrial zoning.

Chairman Robinson asked if the Township is seeing any activity regarding new building projects. Planning Director Peterson said that he has heard some talk of developments but the Township has not received any new applications yet.

Member Sperla noted there are three (3) strip developments in the Township that are not finished and construction has ceased. He was curious as to the completion date of these projects and if there is a completion deadline for the projects. Planning Director Peterson said the only deadline for a project is that it must be started within one (1) year of the application's approval, there is no deadline as to a project's completion.

ARTICLE 8.

Adjournment

Chairman Robinson requested a motion for adjournment.

Motion was made by Member Lewis and supported by Member McDonald to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Sperla, Secretary

Lisa Hern, Recording Secretary