

**Bridgeton Township Planning Commission**  
**Minutes April 8, 2024**

Meeting called to order by Mr. Howes at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: McClintock present, Dore present, Howes present, Clough present, Hawkey present  
Alternate: Hinton present

Approval of Agenda: K. Clough made a motion to approve the agenda. D. Hawkey 2nd:  
Motion carried

Approval of Minutes: K. Clough made a motion to approve the minutes of March 12, 2024. D.  
Hawkey 2nd: Motion Carried

Public Comment on agenda items: No comments

Secretary report/communications: No communications received by secretary

Reports:

Township Board: B. Dore reported that Adam Mercer attended the last board meeting. He is currently running for Newaygo County sheriff opposing Bob Mendam. He shared a message with the board. The board clarified upcoming brining and paving projects in Bridgeton Twn. There was approval of funds to support river patrol this summer. Clerks' pay was increased by \$500 due to the increase in duties with changes in election law. The sexton position was not renewed for the Bridgeton Cemetery

Zoning: B. Kolk, Zoning Administrator supplied a written report of activity for March 2024 (see attached)-Mr Kolk noted that he spoke with the property owner at the NW corner of Warner of 104th. The owner gave a vague intent for the commercially zoned parcel. Mr. Kolk forwarded the situation to Cliff Bloom, attorney, for consultation as no permits were requested for the tree clearing at the property.

Old Business:

Brooks Forbearance: See attached Zoning Administrators report. Mr. Kolk spoke to Mr. Brooks that the Township is trying to work with him, but he is not close to compliance.

New Business:

Discussion on articles of the Zoning Report: specific sites were reviewed and Mr. Kolk responded to questions from commission members.

Review of Bridgeton Township Zoning Ordinance Section 3.02 Clearing of Land: Mr. Howes reported that he had reached out to Ryan Coffey, (MSU extension office) to gain further information on this language. Mr. Coffey questioned that the term land clearing in the ordinance was not explicitly defined so there would be wide room for legal questions to the meaning/intent of the term (logging, brush clearing, mowing, plowing, etc). Mr. Howes reported that the language was used to address suburban areas where the clearing of land/cutting of trees would

further reduce trees that were already limited, unlike a rural community that would have an abundance of trees. Mr. Howes shared that Mr. Coffey offered two options to consider: strike the language from the ordinance as it is not clear or spend the time, community discussion and legal fees to clarify the language. Commission members offered different scenarios to consider/explore when a property owner should be required to request permission/permit to use their property as they wish. Examples included issues that would be related to run-off, erosion, water drainage.

K. Clough made a motion to refer the language of the Zoning Ordinances Section 3.02 Clearing of Land to the Township Board without guidance to obtain recommendations on striking the language of working to further define the meaning of the language. D. McClintock 2nd: Motion carried.

Public Comment on non-agenda items: An email was submitted to commission members that Jodi Bunce had sent to Bridgeton Township Board members regarding the rezoning of property number 62-21-02-400-037 at the NW corner of Warner and 104th St. (See attached). Ms. Bunce questioned that the property had not been reclassified as commercial as of 3/12/24 when it had been rezoned from residential to commercial on 4/12/21. Ms. Bunce stated at the meeting that she was working with Supervisor Janice Barhhard on this issue. Ms. Bunce also asked for the Planning Commission to please consider protecting the natural resources of trees and water in our community when considering zoning issues.

Other: None

Adjourn: K. Clough made a motion to adjourn the meeting: B. Dore 2nd: Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted: DeAnn McClintock Bridgeton Township Secretary