

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
October 10, 2023

The special meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:02 PM at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present

Shawn Martinie
Bill Maschewske
Travis Vugteveen
Lydia Brown
Steve Young
Michelle Gillespie

Absent

One Position Vacant

Also present was contracted Township Planner Gregory Ransford. The attendance sheet is not attached as no members of the public were present.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Shawn Martinie and seconded by Lydia Brown to approve the meeting agenda as amended to add review of the “Draft Resolution in Opposition to Local Preemption on Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities” under New Business.
The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Adopting of Previous Minutes

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to approve as written the minutes of the September 12, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.
The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Master Planning

Gregory Ransford summarized the comments from Township Attorney Ron Bultje’s review of the Master Land Use Plan. It was noted that none of the comments required revisions. Bill Maschewske and Chairperson Martinie questioned Attorney Bultje’s comments regarding the amount of both Commercial and Residential planned areas on the Land Use Plan Map. It was noted that at the current rate of Commercial development, there was adequate planned Commercial property for many years. Additionally, there are numerous 10-to-20-acre parcels within the planned Medium Density Residential area.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding Medium Density Residential Goals, second bullet. The conclusion was to leave the wording unchanged from the latest draft dated 9/19/23.

During discussion of Chapter 5, it was suggested and agreed to put Zoning District classifications in parenthesis following the various Master Plan classifications of Commercial areas, using the references currently found in the Table on page 36 of the text. The suggestion was then extended to all chapters and was accepted.

There were no more comments regarding the latest draft Master Plan text.

Chairperson Martinie requested comments regarding the proposed draft Land Use Plan Map associated with the draft Master Plan. Chairperson Martinie noted that two parcels appeared to be deleted from Planned Commercial immediately to the West of the Southern Grand Marina. Planner Ransford will make this revision and forward the revised map to the Chairperson and Secretary for review.

It was agreed that another meeting was not necessary to review and approve the minor revisions needed to the text and map of the draft Master Land Use Plan.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to make the above noted edits to the draft Master Land Use Plan and then send the text and map to the Township Board for their review.

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

New Business

At this time, the Draft Resolution in Opposition to Local Preemption on Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities distributed by Gregory Ransford was reviewed (copy attached). The State is initiating legislation to preempt local authority to regulate Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities in an attempt to expedite the construction of these facilities. Following review and discussion, the Planning Commission decided that “Whereas Number 4” of the sample resolution prepared by the Michigan Township Association expressed the Planning Commission concerns. “Whereas Number 4” reads as follows: “A township would be unable to determine the number, location, size, setback requirements, site plan approval, fire protection and emergency plan, volume levels, construction traffic routes, decommissioning plan or any other criteria for such solar, wind or large-scale battery facilities.” Travis Vugteveen is to communicate this position of the Planning Commission to the Township Board at the October 11, 2023 Township Board meeting.

Old Business – None

Pay Bills

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Lydia Brown to pay salaries for the October 10, 2023 Planning Commission meeting (6 members present, one position vacant). The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:05 PM.

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary
Robinson Township Planning Commission

Attachment: Draft Resolution in Opposition to Local Preemption on Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities prepared by Michigan Township Association



(<https://michigantownships.org>)

Draft Resolution In Opposition To Local Preemption On Utility-Scale Renewable Energy Facilities

Welcome, Bonnie

Legislation preempting local authority on the location and permitting of utility-scale wind and solar facilities is expected to be introduced the week of Oct. 9, with an anticipated committee hearing on Wednesday, Oct. 11 in the House. MTA urges members to contact their state legislators as soon as possible on the legislation that would move the permitting of utility-scale renewable energy facilities from the local level to the Michigan Public Service Commission. We need your help to ensure that communities and Michiganders keep their voice on these important local decisions. Please contact your state representative (<https://www.house.mi.gov/#findarepresentative>) and senator (<https://senate.michigan.gov/>) as soon as possible to ask them to ensure townships retain their role in the process.



In addition to your personal outreach to your legislators, MTA has created a sample resolution township boards may wish to adopt and forward to your state elected officials. If you do adopt a resolution, please include specific issues or concerns that are relevant to your township (i.e., number of existing facilities, contaminated areas, etc.).

FOR DOWNLOAD: Draft resolution in opposition to local preemption on utility-scale renewable energy facilities (<https://michigantownships.org/wp-content/uploads//Draft-resolution-in-Opposition-to-Local-Preemption-on-Utility-scale-renewable-energy-facilities.docx>) (.doc Word document)

Township Name

Date

Resolution Number

In Opposition to legislation to preempt local control for the siting and permitting of utility-scale renewable facilities including solar, wind and large-scale battery storage facilities

Whereas Executive Directive 2010-10 proposes to achieve 100% carbon neutrality in the state by 2050; and

Whereas To meet the energy goals and to expand renewable energy projects in Michigan, Gov. Whitmer has proposed the Michigan Public Service Commission be the sole authority for the siting and permitting of utility-scale renewable projects, allowing these projects to be expedited; and

Whereas By transferring this sole authority to the Michigan Public Service Commission, local authority will be preempted; and

Whereas A township would be unable to determine the number, location, size, setback requirements, site plan approval, fire protection and emergency plan, volume levels, construction traffic routes, decommissioning plan or any other criteria for such solar, wind or large-scale battery facilities; and

Whereas A township ordinance, rule, policy or requirement currently in place for solar, wind and large-scale solar facilities would be null and void; and

Whereas All other energy facilities regulated by Michigan Public Service Commission must adhere to local zoning requirements; and

Whereas The Michigan Townships Association opposes legislation that eliminates local government authority on the siting and permitting of said facilities that will be located in those communities for 20-50 years;

Therefore, Be It Resolved That _____ Township opposes legislation that would preempt local control in the siting and permitting of large-scale renewable energy facilities including solar, wind and large-scale battery storage facilities.

MTA Headquarters

512 Westshire Dr. Lansing, MI 48917

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A Mailing Address

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Township Name

Date

Resolution Number in

Opposition to legislation to preempt local control for the siting and permitting of utility-scale renewable facilities including solar, wind and large-scale battery storage facilities

- Whereas Executive Directive 2010-10 proposes to achieve 100% carbon neutrality in the state by 2050; and
- Whereas To meet the energy goals and to expand renewable energy projects in Michigan, Gov. Whitmer has proposed the Michigan Public Service Commission be the sole authority for the siting and permitting of utility-scale renewable projects, allowing these projects to be expedited; and
- Whereas By transferring this sole authority to the Michigan Public Service Commission, local authority will be preempted; and
- Whereas A township would be unable to determine the number, location, size, setback requirements, site plan approval, fire protection and emergency plan, volume levels, construction traffic routes, decommissioning plan or any other criteria for such solar, wind or large-scale battery facilities; and
- Whereas A township ordinance, rule, policy or requirement currently in place for solar, wind and large-scale solar facilities would be null and void; and
- Whereas All other energy facilities regulated by Michigan Public Service Commission must adhere to local zoning requirements; and
- Whereas The Michigan Townships Association opposes legislation that eliminates local government authority on the siting and permitting of said facilities that will be located in those communities for 20-50 years;

Therefore, Be It Resolved

That [redacted] Township opposes legislation that would preempt local control in the siting and permitting of large-scale renewable energy facilities including solar, wind and large-scale battery storage facilities.