

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL CLAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2003 AT 7:30 P.M.

THE CLAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE CITY OF ALGONAC  
PLANNING COMMISSION MET IN THE CITY OF ALGONAC BOARD ROOM, 805  
ST. CLAIR RIVER, ALGONAC, MI AT 7:30 P.M. FOR A JOINT MEETING.

Roll Call: Present: Chairperson Mark Getman, Vice-Chair Dorothy DeBoyer, Pat Sharrow,  
Chuck Michel, Louise Cooper, Tony Antkowiak, Edward Keller II, John Makuch.

Absent: Sandra O'Conner.

Also present Building Enforcement Official Timothy Wiggle, Clay Township Board Trustee  
Dr. L. Kasperowicz, Clay Residents Mary Jane Hardy and Richard Wagner and several City  
residents.

Mark Thompson, Algonac Chairman, opened a Public hearing for the purpose of hearing  
public comments for/against an Amendment to their Zoning Ordinance. With no public  
comments, the Public hearing was closed City of Algonac Planning Commission.

Chairman Mark Thompson welcomed the Clay Township Planning Commission to the  
meeting.

Members of both Planning Commission Boards were introduced.

According to State Statute it is required to have a joint meeting with the adjacent  
communities to discuss what is occurring in both communities and to work together  
harmoniously as this will be beneficial for all.

Open the joint meeting up for discussion:

John Schuman, City of Algonac Planning Commission: The Planned Development District  
will allow for multiple uses for a single piece of property. Referred to the old Henry's  
Restaurant and the old Farmer Jack Store.

Pat Sharrow: Clay Planning had a proposal for a PD which never materialized.

Chuck Michel: PD requires a lot of acreage.

John Schuman: PD on a single lot ability to increase density where it is appropriate, it can be  
used in many ways, does not require acreage.

Pat Sharrow: Recently amended the business district.

Art Wirgau, City of Algonac Planning Commission: Made major alterations to the Master  
Plan Future Land Use map.

City Clerk Rose Perricone will get a copy of the map to Clay's Planning Commission.

City of Algonac Member: PD zoning has to be requested by our property owners, leaving  
the area open would than not limit it for a use.

City of Algonac Member: Referred to the map not up to date and areas that have to be  
checked out from the assessing standpoint.

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John Makuch: Thank you for inviting us to a joint meeting with your Planning Commission, thought Clay Township was unique, now can see the City's limitations and your boundary issues, interesting to see from a different perspective.

Pat Sharrow: Recent comment from a citizen to Planning Commission re: zoning change to a piece of property from RS to R1 is depriving our children an affordable place to live; Township has four roads that are zoned for 50' lots.

Algonac Planning Commissioner: Any requests for more mobile home parks?

Discussion regarding mobile home parks financial cost to a Township and City tax base, and create an increase in children attending the public schools  
SEMCOG is addressing the issue.

Recent legislature building on lease land, i.e. mobile home parks.

What are the biggest challenges you see coming right now to the Township?

State owns 65% of the land in the Township that will never be developed.  
Don't want M-29 looking like a 23 Mile Road business district.

John Makuch: Planning Commission has a job to try to balance the commercial, business, industrial, residential areas according to the people living along the waterfront, rural, Harsens Island residents and those people living between the rural area and waterfront.

Chairman Mark Getman: Residents living along M-29 on the north side is zoned commercial.

John Schuman, City of Algonac: Recent property in Clay Township sold, questioned the zoning of this area.

Chairman Mark Getman: zoned C-3, stressed the fact people buy property without checking with the Township to see what it can be used for, referred to the Folkert Road property and the zoning issue.

Ed Keller II, Clay Township Planning Commission: Share with us what is the City of Algonac's vision for the river view area?

Planning Commission Member displayed a sketch of what the City is proposing to do with the Riverfront, decrease road lanes from five to three lanes through the downtown area, creating parking spaces along this area for people to stop and view the River, open the park up wider, create a more friendly atmosphere, put in an attractive streetscape to soften the look and make it more presentable to people driving through. Turnkey may possibly take over the old Farmer Jack lease, divide the building into four business sections with living quarters above, façade is being worked on right now.

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Dorothy DeBoyer, Clay Township Planning Commission: Shops would draw the people and more likely to stop and park, sad to see the City of Algonac as it is right now, your plans look great what you have planned to do.

John Schuman: The demographics have not changed; lot depends on if Turn Key hangs in there and does good, economy is soft, right now the River Park is the big thing, don't have anything to offer at this point.

Chairman Mark Thompson, City of Algonac Planning Commission: Never going to be a downtown thriving district, need a theme or some attraction to make the people shop there.

Edward Keller II: Can see lots of potential for the City such as a mini Frankenmuth.

Chairman Mark Getman, Clay Planning Commission: Only three more block units in the Strip Mall for a business, Aco Hardware will take the remainder component.

Pat Sharrow: People do not shop in Algonac, hit stores on their way home from work, need to attract some of those people back here, residents above the stores would be a wonderful idea, freighters draw people here to see.

Discussed the lease owner of the Algonac Mall (formerly where Farmer Jack was) and how uncooperative they were, things could change down the road as lease owners sell out.

Algonac Planning Commission Member and Chamber of Commerce member: Visitors to the area stopped at the Chamber office and wanted ideas what to do, we could not meet their demands, did not want to just watch the freighters and the ferry, need attractions.

Dorothy DeBoyer: Attended classes in Port Huron and the trend now is people are desiring to shop locally and not travel to the malls.

John Makuch: Plan is good, try to get into some of that River side parking, if you can do your cutout that might be a little incentive for people stopping, City of St. Clair Park activities go on and the people like to observe, i.e. dive practices.

Chuck Michel: Spoke very favorable of Turn Key Developers.

John Schuman, Algonac Planning Commission: Harbor Club captures a good summertime audience, we need a theme, alternative idea was possibly relocating the District Court from the Marine City location to the City, professional offices would follow, lunch restaurants for the professional people.

Dorothy DeBoyer: What is the status of the Henry Restaurant?

John Schuman: Potential buyer interest in demolishing the building and building condo or houses of some nature.

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Edward Keller II: Future concept of the City's park and riverfront is a really good stepping stone, need to find the right mix with the shopping center.

John Schuman: It is not all about bringing people in from the outside, need businesses that can thrive from both the residents and the tourism, limited amount of resources not an easy task; City Manager Grady Holmes has guided us through this and had good ideas. Another issue need to consider the children in the City and Township, very little activities for them, skate park added some activity, a decision regarding the Algonac Lion's Club has not yet been determined what it is going to be used for.

Pat Sharrow: Have the facilities to keep the children active, deficit is the lack of parental guidance, parents have to get involved, don't need more buildings.

City of Algonac Planning Commission Member (Jim): City needs to make the decision of the Lion's Club, many opportunities there, theme ideas, etc.

Tony Antkowiak, Clay Township Planning Commission: Reiterated the reasons he and his wife moved here, small town community, a gem on a beautiful lake and delta; asset would be a business and to be able to live above it, good potential to develop.

Tim Wiggle, Clay Township Zoning Enforcement Official: Complimented both Planning Commissions for the time you people put in for your community, commend and a pleasure to work with the Boards.

Informed the Boards, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be issuing new flood maps, raising the elevations 1-1/2', FEMA will be holding a public hearing on April 22, 2003, and time is not definite yet.

Chairman Mark Thompson thanked the Clay Township Planning Commission for joining us tonight and for your comments. If there are no more comments from the Planning Commission we will adjourn the Joint Meeting at this time.

Special meeting of the Clay Township Planning Commission adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Valerie J. Kulba  
Recording Secretary