

MINUTES OF VERGENNES TOWNSHIP BOARD
July 20, 1998

The regular meeting of the Vergennes Township Board was called to order by Marsha Wilcox at 7:10 p.m. in the Vergennes Township Hall.

Members Present:	Marsha Wilcox	-	Supervisor
	Jean Hoffman	-	Treasurer
	Mari Stone	-	Clerk
	Sue Geiger-Hessler	-	Trustee

Absent:	Mark Weber	-	Trustee
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A motion was made by Hoffman and seconded by Stone to approve the minutes of the June 15, 1998 regular meeting. Geiger-Hessler noted that under Citizen's Comments there was no mention of the question regarding railroad crossing on McPherson. Wilcox indicated that she had called Mid Michigan Railroad and it was to be looked into by them. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was given by Hoffman and accepted as read. A motion was made by Hoffman and seconded by Stone to approve the bills including Williams & Works invoice for Comprehensive Plan project. Comments concerned attorney's fees and Road Commission payment. Motion carried. Drafts 2820 through 2863 were issued.

Zoning Officer Report. There had been a resolution to five of the seven issues reported in July.

Unfinished Business:

1. **Conservation Easement Ordinance.** This is part of Planning Commission's work. To date, no recommendation from them to the Board.
2. Geiger-Hessler stated that approval of bills from last month's meeting included payments to Galaxy Signs and Awards (\$164.47) and Lowell Area Schools (\$114.00) and that she had information that indicated that it is unlawful to use township monies for awards, celebrations, etc. Hoffman noted it was a past practice. Geiger-Hessler to get a copy of the statute to the Board. Geiger-Hessler donated a personal check towards replacing the cost of these line items back to the township.

New Business:

1. **Consideration of FR District Dock, Stair, and Boardwalk Ordinance.** Planning Commission has been working on the language for several months, and had held a Public Hearing in June. The Natural Rivers Division of the DNR had requested that the Township address the lack of dock and stair specifications in our ordinance. Township researched publication of the Natural River Act, and sought input from DNR Natural Rivers Administrator, Steve Sutton. The resulting ordinance is close to that of state regulations. Since the "impound/backwater" area is unique to most natural rivers in the state, there is no state language to address riparian access for this area. Sutton suggested defining that area and having alternative regulations for it. Geiger-Hessler made a

motion to table the issue to allow time for each Board member to read the ordinance thoroughly. Motion seconded by Hoffman. Motion approved.

2. **Discussion - Day Care Facilities in RA, R-1, R-2 as SEUP's in Ordinance.** No recommendation from the Planning Commission at this time. Discussion tabled.
3. **Amendment to Building Permit/Occupancy Permit Ordinance Requirements.** A Public Hearing held by the Planning Commission had received no comments. The Planning Commission recommended adoption of the amendment to correct the current ordinance language. A Motion was made by Stone and seconded by Hoffman to amend the Building Permit/Occupancy Permit Ordinance certification of occupancy to state: "to be issued by the building inspector" as required by state law rather than "zoning administrator". Motion carried unanimously.
4. **Preliminary Approval for Foreman Farms.** Planning commission recommended preliminary approval of the Foreman Farms site condo project. Motion made by Stone to approve Foreman Farms site condo project contingent on (1) performance of all issues noted on 7/6/98 letter from Township engineer (2) Master Deed to reflect that the water/sewer system will belong to the Township of Lowell; (3) settling all Road Commission issues; and (4) language review of Master Deed and approval of such by Township attorney, Township engineer and Lowell Township engineer. Motion seconded by Geiger-Hessler. Motion approved.
5. **Adoption of Township Investment Policy.** Purpose of policy is to indicate how Township funds will be invested; safety of funds; diversity of saving of funds. Policy needs to be adopted to comply with state law and be in place by September 1998. Township auditor has reviewed the policy created by Hoffman. After adoption, letters will be mailed to the establishments used for investing Township monies including Investment Policy indicating that they need to comply with the Township Policy or the Township will withdraw funds. Geiger-Hessler made a motion to adopt the Township Investment Policy. Seconded by Stone. Motion carried.
6. **Clerk's Software Programs Change.** Township has used Workhorse software since 1992. These programs run Township accounting; payroll; voter registration; and cemetery package. Most other governmental software packages that are available are geared more for larger townships. Workhorse has an annual support fee of \$750.00. Our Town Software is a new package being offered by half of the team who developed Workhorse. Introductory offer of \$799 for switch to Our Town with no annual fee or support needed. Geiger-Hessler made a motion to table decision until after Stone attends a workshop conference to learn more about the new package. Hoffman seconded motion. Motion approved.
7. **Request by Sheldon's - 12970 Hillcrest - Accessory Building to be Built Before Home is Built.** Residents request to use their own insurance company for issuance of bond approved. Motion made by Stone and seconded by Hoffman to approve building permit for accessory building to be built before home is built at 12970 Hillcrest with the purchase of a \$5,000 bond (renewable annually) and the issuance of a building permit for home at the same time as the accessory building after review by zoning administrator to determine cost of permit. Motion carried.

Citizens Comments:

Mr. and Mrs. Miller, on Covered Bridge Rd., commented to the board concerning the situation on their property. (2 homes on one parcel). They had received a letter from Township attorney indicating they were in violation of Township Ordinance and needed to remove building in violation within thirty days. In 1996, a building permit was taken out for a new home to be constructed on the same parcel as the old home. There was no written agreement, only a "Gentlemen's Agreement" with former supervisor, Cook, that the old home would be removed upon completion of new home. Wilcox will initiate a meeting between the Millers, Cook and herself to discuss the issue.

Discussion regarding cost of obtaining a variance for building permit.

Question about data transfer if software is changed.

Request for ordinance at the library. Stone indicated that there will be two copies at the Lowell Library as soon as the reprint is available.

Discussion on the issue of allowable setbacks of accessory buildings. Questioned as to the ordinance being "reasonable." It was determined that ordinance in 1978 did not allow accessory buildings in front of property. Zoning Board hopefully to finish review of ordinance within next three months.

Schreur siblings raised the question of Larry Marvel's driveway setback. They were given a copy of the Township Attorney's opinion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,