

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

Agenda

**PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE – HEIGHT STANDARDS FOR SINGLE FAMILY
AND TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS**

Consideration to amend Sections 2.20 Definitions, 42.30 Developmental Standards, and 50.30 Residential Dwelling Standards of the Township Zoning Ordinance in order to adopt height standards for single-family and two-family dwellings, for recommendation to the Township Board.

PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE – SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Consideration to adopt Article 60 – Solar Energy Systems to permit and regulate Solar Energy Systems in the Township, for recommendation to the Township Board.

A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held Thursday, September 14, 2023, commencing at approximately 6:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Township Hall, 7275 West Main Street.

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT: Phil Doorlag, Chair
Deb Everett
Zak Ford, Board Liaison
Scot Jefferies
Micki Maxwell, Vice Chair
Scott Makohn
Alistair Smith

Also present: Iris Lubbert, Planning Director, Jim Porter, Township Attorney, LeeAnna Harris, Zoning Administrator, and Martha Coash, Recording Secretary.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Doorlag called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and invited those present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Hearing no requests for changes to the agenda, the Chair asked for a motion.

Mr. Ford **made a motion** to approve the Agenda as presented. Ms. Everett **seconded the motion**. The **motion was approved** unanimously.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Approval of Minutes: August 24, 2023

Approval of Minutes: August 29, 2023

Chairperson Doorlag asked for additions, deletions, or corrections to the Minutes of the Meeting of August 24, 2023 or to the Minutes of the Meeting of August 29, 2023.

Hearing none, he asked for a motion.

Mr. Ford **made a motion** to approve both the Minutes of the Meeting of August 24, 2023 and the Minutes of the Meeting of August 29, 2023 as presented. Mr. Jefferies **seconded the motion**. The **motion was approved** unanimously.

Chairperson Doorlag moved to the next agenda item.

PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE – HEIGHT STANDARDS FOR SINGLE FAMILY AND TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS

Consideration to amend Sections 2.20 Definitions, 42.30 Developmental Standards, and 50.30 Residential Dwelling Standards of the Township Zoning Ordinance in order to adopt height standards for single-family and two-family dwellings, for recommendation to the Township Board.

Ms. Lubbert noted while constructing the recently adopted Airport Ordinance, Staff became aware that the Township Ordinance does not set height limitations for a majority of single-family and two-family dwellings. To ensure the intent of the airport ordinance can be fully executed, height standards for all single-family and two-family dwellings are needed.

She said based on research of neighboring communities and discussions with the Planning Committee, staff recommended adopting a maximum height of 35 feet for single-family and two-family dwellings. Ms. Lubbert indicated this height is consistent with the height standards of neighboring communities: Texas Township, Alamo Township, Almena Township and Portage. In addition to proposing the adoption of a maximum height, clarifying and expanding on the definition of Height for how to determine the height of a structure, was also being recommended.

She noted the changes requested when Commissioners reviewed the draft at the last meeting had been made.

In response to a question from Mr. Ford regarding the item that addresses raising the natural grade used to measure dwelling height, Ms. Lubbert said it was a safety measure to ensure that the measurement from the base to the top of the

structure does not exceed the height maximum due to artificially raising the area where the foundation will be placed.

The group was satisfied with the final draft and Chairperson Doorlag asked for a motion.

Ms. Everett **made a motion** to recommend approval to the Township Board the proposed amendments to Sections 2.20 Definitions, 42.30 Developmental Standards, and 50.30 Residential Dwelling Standards of the Township Zoning Ordinance in order to adopt height standards for single-family and two-family dwellings. Mr. Smith **seconded the motion**. The **motion was approved unanimously**.

Chairperson Doorlag moved to the next agenda item.

PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE – SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS
Consideration to adopt Article 60 – Solar Energy Systems to permit and regulate Solar Energy Systems in the Township, for recommendation to the Township Board.

Ms. Lubbert indicated the Township currently has no comprehensive general ordinance or zoning ordinance provisions to appropriately address the development of commercial Solar Energy Systems within the Township. Given the industries need to quickly develop such infrastructure, it is imperative to develop appropriate general and zoning ordinance provisions to ensure the development of Solar Energy Systems within the Township are done in a manner consistent with the adopted Master Land Use Plans of the Township and to ensure compatibility with other existing developments. Based on research and discussions with the Planning Commission, Legal and Planning staff were recommending adoption of Article 60 to address Solar Energy Systems within the community and to recommend it to the Township Board.

She noted the Legal staff was responsible for most of the work developing this ordinance, and provided illustrations of the wide variety of installation types possible for both private and businesses.

She walked through the general format of the proposed ordinance. During the course of her review, Commissioners noted two minor amendments to be made: one typographical error and striking “wildlife friendly fencing” from the definitions section.

Ms. Maxwell thanked Attorney Porter for quickly developing this ordinance and providing Commissioners with the information needed to consider it beforehand.

Mr. Ford **made a motion** to recommend adoption Article 60: Solar Energy Systems to the Township Board as proposed. Ms. Maxwell **seconded the motion**. The **motion was approved unanimously**.

OTHER UPDATES AND BUSINESS

The group welcomed new Commissioner Scott Makohn, who indicated he was pleased to join the Commission.

Mr. Ford reported the Township Board followed the Commission's recommendations on the items referred to them at recent meetings, including the required 63-day comment period for public consideration of the final draft of the Housing Plan, and the Commission's denial of a conditional rezoning request.

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business to consider, Chairperson Doorlag adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:19 p.m.

Minutes prepared:
September 15, 2023

Minutes approved:
October 26, 2023