

MINUTES OF THE AUGRES TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

December 2nd, 2024

9:00 A.M.

DRAFT

IN ATTENDANCE: Chairman Jesse Young, Patricia Tremble, Donna Wilson and Aurette Gates
Absent: Robert Cotter

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Oxley, Jim Herzog and Becky Woodward.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jesse Young, at 9:00am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL of AGENDA: Motion made by Patricia Tremble to approve the agenda. Motion supported by Donna Wilson. Voice vote. All Ayes. No Nays. One Absent. Agenda approved.

APPROVAL of the MINUTES: Motion made by Tremble to approve the minutes of the November 11th, 2024 Planning Commission meeting. Motion supported by Wilson. Voice vote. All Ayes. No Nays. One Absent. Minutes approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Michael Oxley, 2112 S Dreyer Road spoke as a resident concerned with the blight ordinance being considered by the planning commission. #1, the calling out of construction materials (lumber, bricks, etc) as blight. Much of the township is agricultural and he himself has a lumber pile which has been next to his garage for decades. If a porch step should break, then the lumber pile is where a replacement step would be found. Does not have to means to go out and buy lumber, and feels that farmers in the township would have such supplies in waiting, and to call it blight just does not apply. Going on with the 'junk cars' as blight. Residents may have a second car, waiting for old 'Betsy' to fail. And there are, as PC board member Robert Cotter pointed out, situations where a family member might be in the military. What about boats? Or travel trailers? Again, the question is about requiring a vehicle to be tagged (and insurance). How many residents have funds to pay for such, not to mention farmers with their machinery. Finally, Oxley referred to a resident around the corner from the hall on Manor Road, that person mows the lawn, puts out flags on holidays, yet has a several vehicles and a boat all neatly parked along his property line. Yet this could be designated blight, and be fined if the blight ordinance is adopted. Oxley admitted that he did not have answers, and that this issue is very difficult to apply.

Jim Herzog added that these concerns also apply to farming properties.

Donna Wilson stated that she was born and raised on a farm, and there was no money to buy new stuff. Aurette Gates asked if the issues should be applied to Lakeshore/Residential as compared to farming property. She considered blight a burned-out house, like the one on Swenson Road, whose yard is still not cleaned up since the fire years ago.

Becky Woodward (Swenson Road) was worried that she might have to move, since she had read the blight ordinance, and with untagged vehicles in her yard, and with her kids working in Wisconsin.

BOARD COMMENT: Young introduced Aurette Gates and welcomed her to the Planning Commission board.

OLD BUSINESS:

a) Blight Ordinance review

Tremble motioned that the section in the blight ordinance covering "Dismantled, Junk, Unregistered Vehicles" be removed. Motion supported by Wilson. Voice vote. All Ayes. No Nays. Motion approved. The Dismantled/Junk Car and Unregistered Vehicles issue is discussed in another ordinance.

It was decided to leave the building materials in the blight ordinance. Gates pointed out it was just a definition called out in the first paragraph.

Chairman Jesse Young added that he had reviewed all the handout (ordinances from surrounding communities, big and small) which Tremble had provided, and each one covered building materials.

Tremble, having asked if the board member had any other changes/issues to the proposed blight ordinance. Motion made by Tremble to recommend the Blight Control Ordinance (with suggested changes) to the Township Board for approval/adoption. Motion supported by Wilson. Voice vote. All Ayes. No Nays. One Absent. Motion approved. The Blight Ordinance (when updated with changes) to be given to Clerk Oxley to pass onto the township board members.

b) Junk Cars Ordinance review

Next item is the Dismantled/Junk Car Ordinance, and Unregistered Vehicles. Tremble asked if all board members had the document with her additions and corrections. Donna Wilson stated she had the document originally handed out and has changes and suggestions.

Discussion on definitions (Section 2): Wilson asked about Clerk Oxley's points concerning exceptions to the definition in section 2, with respect to a resident's ability to pay or an owner's military service.

Gates pointed out that the ordinance gives a resident 12 months, a whole year. But not like the situation at corner of Manor and Hale Roads many years ago - that was a junkyard.

Tremble noted that the ordinance needs a definition in black and white. The township, receiving a complaint, may use its discretion. If problems with the ordinance wording arises, changes could be made in the future.

Wilson said she looks at things differently, and has to ask questions and explore options to which Young noted the board wouldn't want it any other way - your voice matters. More than one mind is needed, that is why the Planning Commission has 5 board members

Young noted that the economy is bad and a house may have many family members, each with their own vehicle, so a residence could have five cars in the driveway.

Section 3: Purpose Wilson questioned the wording '...including any new or used parts thereof must be licensed by the state.'

Section 4 Violations Iosco County is mentioned. Tremble had already changed that wording to Arenac County.

Section 6 Penalty (6.3) Gates questioned the township having a location where stored vehicles are to be kept. Tremble explained that a Towing company normally has their own storage yard.

Tremble said those are all the suggested changes she had and asked if Wilson had any others. None. Motion made by Tremble to recommend the Dismantled/Junk Car and Unregistered Vehicles Ordinance (with changes/suggestions) to the Township Board for approval/adoption. Motion supported by Wilson. Voice vote. All Ayes. No Nays. One Absent. Motion approved.

Young moved onto the next agenda item(s) Noise Ordinance and Short-Term Rentals. Commenting that a Short-Term Rental ordinance would take a lot of time to write and even more to enforce (i.e. permitting a certain number of rentals, their use, and daily/weekend checks to see if there are violations).

Gates was concerned with the fine-line of restricting the rights of what a property owner could do with their property.

Tremble, referring to the STR ordinance handed out last month, she had left a lot of things in there which could be struck. Adding that and Air B&B is a Short-Term Rental while a Bed and Breakfast is an overnight/weekend stay with breakfast, already defined in the zoning ordinance. Also noting that our attorney advised staying away from Short Term Rental and Noise ordinances. STR's are being debated the state senate, which may imply changes to our Zoning Ordinance. And Noise can be delegated to laws concerning 'Disturbance of the peace', placing liability on the homeowners not the township.

Motion made by Tremble to table the Noise and Short-Term Rental issues into 2025, pending legislative developments by the state. Motion supported by Gates. Voice vote. All Ayes. No Nays. One Absent. Motion approved.

Next meeting question was referred to the handout (in the agenda packet) showing the 2025 quarterly meeting dates voted upon at the November meeting. Next meeting scheduled on March 3rd at 9:00am.

BOARD COMMENT: Jesse Young thanked everyone who attended, and the board members for the work they do.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT: TIME – 10:15am. Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Tremble. Motion supported by Wilson. Voice vote. All Ayes. No Nays. One Absent. Meeting adjourned at 10:15am.

Minutes approved at the Planning Commission Meeting _____

Jesse Young, Chairman _____

Michael Oxley, Clerk _____