

DRAFT

**Eveline Township Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
Eveline Township Hall
8525 Ferry Road
September 8, 2021
7:00 P.M.**

- 1) Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance by Chairman Kelly McGinn in the Township Hall.

Commissioners present: Kelly McGinn, Eric Beishlag, Lorraine Sims, Gary Albring and Prudence Kurtz. Recording Secretary Sandi Whiteford, Tina S., Patrick Quirk, Elizabeth Quirk, John Vrondran, Susan Vrondran, Sara VanHorn, Nancy Ferguson, Susan Parks, John Fratrack, John Iacoangeli - Planner, Chris Henry - Sequanota Club, Ken Carnwarth - Sequanota Association, Richard and Linda Mueller and Gary Forbrig were also present.

- 2) Agenda:** Motion by Commissioner Beishlag, supported by Commissioner Kurtz, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

- 3) Public Comment:** None received.

- 4) Minutes:** Motion by Commissioner Beishlag, supported by Commissioner Kurtz to approve the August 4, 2021, meeting minutes with the addition of the word area to Item 3 line 3, and August 11, 2021 minutes with the addition in item 3 of Commissioner Albring made a motion supported by Commissioner Beishlag to send the design and cost estimates to the Township Board of Trustees. Motion approved. Motion approved.

- 5) Public Hearing: Hungry Ducks**

- I. Chairman McGinn opened the hearing at 7:03 p.m.
- II. Introduction of Changes: Richard Mueller stated that this is the 3rd meeting they have made modifications. They have delayed the opening date to May of 2022. They will accept no more than 17,000 visitors. They would like to be open 6 days a week as the market dictates. Originally, they had planned for 2 trains, they will have one train, 1/8 scale, which will be behind the pavilion and not seen from the road. They are proposing two ponds instead of 3. Proposing a walking path and animal on front side. Farming activities such as live stock and planted crops will cover 75% of the property. They have added ADA cement pathways 5 feet wide. They are talking with 4-H. They have 1920's – 1930's antique farm equipment for display and to educate visitors on use of equipment. Primary income will be from

tours. Some animals will be housed year around. Parking area in setback has been eliminated. They will have 198 parking places, 63 turf for overflow, 31 gravel and 6 ADA handicap. Venetian Kids Day is expected to be the busiest day. There will be a cut out on M-66 at the entrance. There will be a path around the property and a fence to prevent visitors from going on to neighboring property.

III. Public Comment: Chairman McGinn opened public comment at 7:11 p.m. Susan Parks asked who defines Interpretive, how does an amusement park ride fit in Farm Forest? Weekends only has turned into 6 days and off-season events. Fence will not block view from the road. What type of sign are they asking for? Sarah Van Horn of the Charlevoix Chamber of Commerce stated the proposed venture would be a great benefit for residents and visitors while keeping preservation and community sentiments in mind. It would be a sustainable operation.

Greg Stevens expressed concern over the hours of operations without limitations and the impact on the neighbors. Asked how the property could be AG when they plan to charge admission, it can't be anything but commercial.

Nancy Ferguson inquired as to a supplemental application. Stated that she is ok with the museum and petting zoo Mueller's originally discussed with the neighbors, as well as the education that could be provided. What would happen at the end of the season? Would the animals be returned to their owners? Concerned with no limitation of hours, 26 weeks 6 days a week. Food and gift shop not selling products from the farm. Without amusement rides will it become a destination. Carousel needs permit from LARA, State of Michigan. She has many suggestions for activities that would be farming related. Neighbors are concerned about noise.

Richard Mueller stated that they have no intention to conduct weddings. Rehearsal dinners would be on Friday. Would support birthday parties. "You might be surprised at how many people are interested in the opening date with the carousel and train. There is no way a business can be viable open only two days a week."

Elizabeth Quirk stated she admires the petting zoo but is concerned about an amusement park.

Ken Carnwath of Sequanota Association stated that the residents of the association generally agree with the proposal. With a special use permit what control do we have in the future? Farms do not have a lot of pavements.

Residents not opposed to the carousel or train.

Received communication from Members of Sequanota Drive Association and Ellis McQuillan.

Commissioner McGinn closed public comment at 8:10 p.m.

IV. Township Staff and/or Planner summarizes: John Iacoangeli stated it is appropriate to address the chairman. A lot of activity for Agri-tourism is more commercial such as vineyards which sell glasses and hold animal related activities. Making animals available and an ag theme amusement area is pushing the envelope. It is up to the Planning Commission to determine if it could be a

regional destination, with the experience of being on a farm, Agri-tourism. The Planning Commission has three choices, approves as presented, approve with conditions or deny.

- V. Commission publicly discusses and may ask questions of staff or audience: Following discussion of operations and possible conditions it was decided that to hold a special meeting at the Hungry Ducks Farm at 4:30 Friday September 10, 2021.
- VI. Planning Commission deliberates and may or may not reach a decision: Deliberations to be held at the next regular Planning Commission meeting, October 6, 2021.

6) Public Comment: No additional comments received.

7) Training: Following discussion, Deb Graber will forward the presentation with power point slides to everyone to view at their convenience. The session is about two and a half hours.

8) Zoning Administrator: Presented two greenbelt plans to the commission for discussion. Natural plantings and deep-rooted grass were discussed. It was recommended to the zoning administrator to give options to achieve compliance with the ordinance.

8) Commissioner Comments: Chairman McGinn presented an amendment to the table of land uses, recommended by Attorney Graham for consideration. Commissioner Beishlag made a motion to hold a public hearing on the amendment at the October 6, 2021 regular meeting. Motion was supported by Commissioner Kurtz. Motion approved.

9) Adjournment: Chairman McGinn adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Whiteford
Recording Secretary