

PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes for Rescheduled Regular Meeting of
July 11, 2024

PRESENT Commissioners Dave Roesler, John Warner, Paul Josephson, Mike Holman, Chris Campeau and Brian Butler.

NOT PRESENT Commissioner John Gloster.

ALSO PRESENT Zoning Administrator Jensen, Recording Secretary Sally Dion and 4 interested parties.

CALL TO ORDER Chairperson Roesler called the July 11, 2024 meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

AGENDA Motion by Commissioner Josephson second from Commissioner Butler, **ADOPTED** to amend by changing date from June 11 to July 11 and accept the July 11, 2024 agenda as amended.

6 AYES
1 ABSENT

MINUTES Motion by Commissioner Holman, second from Commissioner Campeau, **ADOPTED**, to accept the June 6, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes as written.

6 AYES
1 ABSENT

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Marie & Marilyn Hamilton, 4532 Orshal Road, are attending township meetings, daughter is interested in political happenings, especially local.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Electric car charging stations

No update per Chairperson Roesler.

2. Solar structures as accessory structures

After brief discussion of the following language consensus was to send it to Attorney Even for review.

Definitions to be added to the glossary

- Building-integrated Solar Energy Systems – A solar energy system that is an integral part of a principal or accessory building, rather than a separate mechanical device, replacing or substituting for an architectural or structural component of the building. Building-integrated systems include, but are not limited to, photovoltaic or hot water solar energy systems that are contained within roofing materials, windows, skylights, and awnings.

- Community Scale Solar – The U.S. Department of Energy defines community solar as any solar project or purchasing program, within a geographic area, in which the benefits flow to multiple customers such as individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and other groups. In most cases, customers benefit from energy generated by solar panels at an off-site array.
- Grid-intertie Solar Energy System – A photovoltaic solar energy system that is connected to an electric circuit served by an electric utility company.
- Ground-Mounted – A solar energy system mounted on a rack or pole that rests or is attached to the ground. Ground-mounted systems can be either accessory or principal uses.
- Off-grid Solar Energy Systems – A photovoltaic solar energy system in which the circuits energized by the solar energy system are not electrically connected in any way to electric circuits that are served by an electric utility company.
- Roof-Mounted – A solar energy system mounted on a rack that is fastened to or ballasted on a structure roof. Roof-mounted systems are accessory to the principal use.
- Solar Collector – A device, structure or a part of a device or structure for which the primary purpose is to transform solar radiant energy into thermal, mechanical, chemical, or electrical energy. The collector does not include frames, supports, or mounting hardware.
- Solar Energy – Radian energy received from the sun that can be collected in the form of heat or light by a solar collector.
- Solar Energy System (SES) – A device, array of devices, or structural design feature, the purpose of which is to provide for generation or storage of electricity from sunlight, or the collection, storage and distribution of solar energy for space heating or cooling, daylight for interior lighting, or water heating.
- Solar Mounting Devices – Racking, frames, or other devices that allow the mounting of a solar collector onto a roof surface or the ground.

1. Solar Energy Systems

Solar energy systems are a permitted accessory use in all zoning districts where structures of any sort are allowed, subject to certain requirements as set forth below.

1.1. **Height** – Solar energy systems must meet the following height requirements:

1.1.1. Roof or Building-mounted Solar Energy Systems shall not exceed the maximum allowed height in any zoning district.

1.1.2. Ground or pole-mounted Solar Energy Systems shall not exceed 20 feet in height when oriented at maximum tilt.

1.1.3. **Setback** – Solar energy systems must meet the accessory structure setback for the zoning district and principal land use associated with the lot on which the system is located, as allowed below.

1.1.4. **Lot Coverage** – Ground-mounted systems total collector area shall not exceed half the building footprint of the principal structure. Ground-mounted systems shall not count toward accessory structure square footage limitations.

1.1.5. **Roof Coverage**: Coverage will be limited to 80% of the total south-facing roof with a setback of 3 feet from each side of the roof. Additional requirements for fire code may be specified by the NEC code regarding solar installations.

1.2. Miscellaneous

1.2.1. **Building Integrated Photovoltaic Systems** – Building integrated photovoltaic solar energy systems shall be allowed regardless of whether the system is visible from the public right-of-way, provided the building component in which the system is integrated meets all required setback, land use or performance standards for the district in which the building is located.

1.2.2. **Reflectors** – Reflectors for solar use are not permitted.

1.2.3. **Roof-Mounted Solar Energy Systems** – Pitched roof installations may not be steeper than the finished roof pitch. Mounted systems steeper than the finished roof pitch change the appearance of the roof and create additional considerations in regard to the wind and drift load on structural roof components. If the aesthetic impacts are not a concern to the community, the structural issues can be addressed in the building permit by a structural engineer, and an application for a variance sought.

1.6 Approval Required – All solar energy systems requiring a building permit or other permit from Fruitland Township shall provide a site plan for review.

1.6.1. **Plan Applications.** Plan applications for solar energy systems shall be accompanied by to-scale horizontal and vertical (elevation) drawings. The drawings must show the location of the systems on the building or on the property for a ground-mounted system, including the property lines and setbacks.

1.6.2. **Plan Approvals.** Applications that meet the design requirements of this ordinance shall be granted administrative approval by the zoning official and shall not require Planning Commission review. Plan approval does not indicate compliance with Building Code or Electrical Code.

1.6.3. Ground mount solar structure must have proper stability and footings to withstand local wind requirements. An engineered and approved drawing is required.

1.7 Compliance

1.7.1. **Compliance with Building Code** – All solar energy systems shall meet approval of local building code officials, consistent with the State of Michigan Building Code.

1.7.2. **H. Compliance with State Electric Code** – All photovoltaic systems shall comply with the Michigan State Electric Code.

1.7.3. **Utility Notification** – All grid-tied solar energy systems shall comply with the interconnection requirements of the electric utility. Off-grid systems are exempt from this requirement.

1.7.4. **J Decommissioning** – Industry standards for disconnections to the utility grid must be followed. Active or decommissioned ground mount systems may not be used for any other intended purpose, such as storage or a footing for a new structure.

1.8 Solar shall be permitted in all zoning district with noted exceptions.

1.8.1. Lake Michigan Shoreline

- 1.8.1.1. Zoning to be amended to allow use by right.
- 1.8.1.2. No sell back or multi-family use.
- 1.8.1.3. Grid Intertie is restricted.

1.8.2. Inland Lakes District

- 1.8.2.1. Zoning to be amended to allow use by right.
- 1.8.2.2. No sell back or multi-family use.
- 1.8.2.3. Grid Intertie is restricted.

PLANNING/ZONING UPDATE

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Holman, second from Commissioner Campeau, **ADOPTED**, to adjourn the July 11, 2024 regular meeting at 6:25 p.m.

6 AYES
1 ABSENT

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Dion, Recording Secretary
Township of Fruitland