**Powell Township**

**101 Bensinger Street**

**Big Bay, MI 49808**

**Planning Commission – Regular Meeting Minutes**

**October 20, 2021**

**Draft**

**1. Call to Order:**

Chair, Phil Moran, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Hall.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Moran (Chair), Hall, Hudson, Korstad, Mohrman, Stanley and Williams.

**Members Absent:** None

**4. Public Hearing and Adoption of the Proposed Master Plan:**

At 6:35 p.m. Moran called the Public Hearing to consider the proposed Powell Township Master Plan to order. Jason McCarthy spoke briefly about the rich history of the town of Big Bay and the good stewardship of the Township. McCarthy emphasized the relationship between zoning functions and the Master Plan, which is at its core is a future land use plan. McCarthy suggested that future zoning changes be considered in light of the goals set forth in the Master Plan and component Future Land Use Map.

Board discussion followed concerning post-adoption: (a) insertion of current census data, (b) update to reflect the current school population; and (c) amendment of the Acknowledgement section to reflect the current composition of the Township Board and Planning Commission. McCarthy opined that these changes are not substantive and should not require a second public hearing.

There being no public commentary, the public hearing was closed at 6:50 p.m.

Motion to approve the proposed Master Plan, subject to the inclusion of the items enumerated above (Mohrman/Moran). A roll-call vote was undertaken and the motion passed unanimously as follows: Mohrman Aye, Hudson Aye, Stanley Aye, Korstad Aye, Moran Aye, Hall Aye and Williams Aye.

**5. Approval of Agenda:**

Motion to accept the October 20, 2021 Agenda (Hudson/Williams). All in favor motion carried.

**6. Approval of Minutes:**

Motion to accept the September 15, 2021 Minutes (Stanley/Moran). All in favor motion carried.

**7. Call to the Public: Time for Citizens to be Heard:**

a. Polly Brebner Bell submitted a letter in opposition to the proposed spaceport project. A copy of that correspondence is attached as Exhibit “A”.

b. Melanie McNally submitted a letter in opposition to the proposed spaceport project. A copy of that correspondence is attached as Exhibit “B”.

c. Louise Bolleber submitted a letter in opposition to the proposed spaceport project. A copy of that correspondence is attached as Exhibit “C”.

d. Tom Grotewohl submitted a letter in opposition to the proposed spaceport project. A copy of that correspondence is attached as Exhibit “D”.

**8. Updates from the Zoning Administrator:**

There were no updates from the Zoning Administrator.

**9. Unfinished Business:**

There was no further unfinished business.

**10. New Business:**

Rochelle Dale, Administrator of the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve, gave a presentation. The mission of the organization is to preserve the watershed in its most natural state for the benefit of the public, now and in the future. To further that mission, the Preserve seeks standardization of setbacks and maintenance of natural buffer strips along the length of the Yellow Dog River.

Dale advised that, from its inception in the McCormick Wilderness Area, the Yellow Dog River passes through four (4) townships: Michigamme, Champion, Ishpeming and Powell. Setbacks vary from township to township from a minimum of 30 ft to a maximum of 75 ft. Further, in some townships, permits are not required for structures under 200 sq. ft. implying that those structures could be situated even closer to the river banks.

Dale presented photographs of buildings that, although conforming when built, are currently dangerously close to the river banks and structurally threatened by erosion. To address this, the Preserve seeks the adoption of 100 ft. setbacks along the length of the Yellow Dog River. In addition, the Preserve believes that the health of the river and its banks would be improved by maintaining a 20 ft. natural buffer strip along the river banks. Finally, the Preserve advocates the use of best management practices for all logging and road building in proximity of the Yellow Dog River.

Discussion followed concerning the impact of structures along the river, the degree to which structures influence erosion and the efficacy of the measures advocated by the Preserve.

**11. Board Discussion:**

a. Board discussion followed concerning the election of a Vice Chair. Both Stanley and Williams were nominated. Williams was elected by a majority showing of hands.

b. Board discussion followed concerning the appointment of a member to serve on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Motion to appoint Hall (Hudson/Stanley). All in favor motion carried.

c. Board discussion followed concerning attendance at planning commission meetings. It was suggested and decided that hereafter meetings will start at 7:00 p.m., as stated in the bi-laws, rather than 6:30 p.m. as has been the practice.

**12. Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Hall.

**13. Adjournment:**

Motion was made to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. (Hall/Stanley). All in favor motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Hall