

STANTON TOWNSHIP

PLANNING COMMISSION POLICY MANUAL

October 13th, 2020

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Conflict of Interest001

PURPOSE: In an effort to eliminate the appearance of conflicts of interest involving members of the Planning Commission, this policy is hereby adopted by the members of the Planning Commission.

Members of the Stanton Township Planning Commission shall refrain from voting or discussing any business matters of properties which:

- 1) Involve properties which are owned, rented, leased or managed by the member.
- 2) Involve properties which are owned, rented, leased or managed by the immediate family of the member. Immediate family shall include mother, father, sister, brother, spouse or child.
- 3) Involve properties for which the member will receive any personal or financial gain of any type as a result of any action taken concerning the property.
- 4) If a member has an actual or perceived conflict of interest, he/she shall notify the commission of the possible conflict and shall not vote on the matter.

Meeting Dates and Times

002

PURPOSE: In an effort to establish a consistent time for meetings to better serve the public; this policy is hereby adopted by the members of the Planning Commission.

Stanton Township Planning Commission meetings shall normally be held on the second (2nd) Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Stanton Township Meeting Room.

Meetings may be cancelled or rescheduled for purposes including:

- 1) National holidays.
- 2) Election Day.
- 3) Lack of a Quorum.
- 4) Or other reasons determined by the Planning Commission Chair.

Public Hearings.....003

PURPOSE: In an effort to efficiently handle public hearings and questions and comments from the general public, the following policy is hereby adopted by the Planning Commission:

1. The chair opens the hearing at the published time and announces the subject of the hearing.
2. Staff presents main points of application and staff report.
3. The applicant speaks first. The applicant describes the justification for the request.
4. Residents speak next. (Questions/comments from the public may be limited to five minutes per person at the Chair's discretion)
 - If necessary, ask for a representative to speak on behalf of many.
 - Allow everyone interested, an opportunity to speak
 - Overrule irrelevant remarks.
5. Rebuttal and question, including questions from the Planning Commission.
All questions and comments must be directed to the Chairperson.
6. Close public hearing to public comment.
7. Deliberation begins
 - Fact Finding (application, ordinance requirements, physical characteristics of lot and adjacent parcels, staff reports and impact on public service, natural resources, character of area, street, parking, traffic and neighbors)
8. Discussion (The public is not involved in this discussion)
 - Review pertinent facts from all information presented.
 - Seek majority viewpoint
 - Focus on insuring conformance with ordinance standards
 - The discussion should proceed until a commissioner is confident in proposing a complete motion that embodies the important findings.

Member Attendance004

PURPOSE:In an effort to avoid any misunderstanding pertaining to reimbursement for members' attendance at meetings, the following policy is hereby adopted by the Planning Commission.

Meeting attendance will be recorded by the Clerk and members will be credited for all meetings attended.

Planning Commission members will submit a timesheet monthly to the township clerk.

In the event of expected absence, Planning Commissioners should contact the Planning Chair or township clerk, prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

Members/Officers005

PURPOSE: In an effort to clearly define officers' and members' responsibilities, the following policy is hereby adopted by the Planning Commission.

The Stanton Township Planning Commission shall consist of five (5) members. An annual election shall be held the first meeting in April each year, wherein a majority of the five-(5) members shall nominate and elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.

DUTIES: A Chair shall preside at all meetings and shall conduct all meetings in the public hearing procedure identified in procedure number 003:

The Vice-Chair shall act in the capacity of the Chair in the absence of the Chair and shall succeed to the office of Chair in the event of a vacancy in that office in which case the Planning Commission shall select a successor to the office of Vice-Chair at the earliest practical time.

Meeting Rules006

PURPOSE: To avoid any misunderstanding during the meeting process, the following policy is hereby adopted by the Planning Commission.

The elected Planning Commission Chair shall preside over all meetings. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall carry out the duties of the Chair. If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from the meeting those duties shall be carried out by a Planning Commission member.

1. Chairperson calls the meeting to order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance is given.
3. Public Comment – where an individual may speak on a topic not on the agenda for up to three (3) minutes. Prior to speaking, each person shall give their name and address for public record.
4. Public Hearings (following procedures outlined in #003 for a public hearing) The Regularly Scheduled Planning Commission meeting is suspended for the public comment portion and then resumed, after the public comment portion is called and closed.
5. New and Old Business
6. Adjournment

All meetings of the Planning Commission shall be open to the public and held in a place available to the general public. All deliberations and decisions of the Commission shall be made at a meeting which is open to the public and subject to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law State Statute Chapter 13D.

All records, files, publications, correspondence, and other materials are available to the public for reading, copying and other purposes and are governed by the Freedom of Information Act.

Minutes.....007

PURPOSE: In an effort to maintain clear and concise records of meetings, the following policy is hereby adopted by the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission minutes shall be prepared by the Clerk and, after formal approval by the Commission, shall be signed by the Clerk.

The minutes shall contain a synopsis of the meeting, including a complete restatement of all motions and recording of votes; complete statement of the conditions or recommendations made on any action; and recording of attendance. All records shall be deposited in the office of the Stanton Township Clerk.

Agenda Items..... 008

PURPOSE: In an effort to provide the members of the Planning Commission with the proper time and materials to make appropriate decisions in the best interest of the Stanton Township community, this policy is hereby adopted by the members of the Planning Commission.

Preparation of the Agenda

The agenda for the Planning Commission meeting will be prepared by the Clerk.

- ◆ A meeting agenda.
- ◆ Minutes of the previous meeting.
- ◆ Supporting documentation for any zoning cases.

Amendments to the Agenda

At the discretion of the Chair, the agenda may be amended at the appropriate time or at the beginning of the Planning Commission meeting for the purpose of deleting items from the agenda, changing the order of items on the agenda, or adding items to the agenda that are of significant importance to be considered at that meeting.

Motions and Voting/Tie Votes009

PURPOSE: In an effort to provide voting outcome clarity this policy is hereby adopted by the members of the Planning Commission.

Motions

Any member of the Planning Commission can recommend modifications, additions or deletion to the motion.

Action and Recommendations

Action on non-public hearing items will require a simple majority vote of members present in order to pass any motion that is made. For voice votes lacking unanimity, each member's vote will be recorded by the clerk. Action on any item will require no less than a majority of votes in the affirmative in order to pass any motion that is made. Tie votes result in no action.

Quorum Required for Action on Items.....010

PURPOSE: In an effort to provide the most fair outcome to all persons involved in Planning Commission actions, this policy is hereby adopted by the members of the Planning Commission.

Attendance Required

All meetings of the Planning Commission will require the attendance of a quorum, a minimum of three (3) members. A quorum is required for Planning Commission action on any item. Any public hearings not held at the time scheduled and advertised, due to lack of a quorum, will be automatically rescheduled for the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission.

Retention of Planning Commission Meeting Tapes011

PURPOSE: In an effort to clearly establish a retention period for of meetings for the Planning Commission, this policy is hereby adopted by the members of the Planning Commission.

All audio recordings of Planning Commission and other planning related meetings shall be retained until the meeting minutes are approved. When copies of meeting audio recordings are requested under the Freedom of Information Act or other relevant action, the original audio recordings shall be retained, in order to provide an accurate record, for a minimum of 12 months.

