

Alamo Township Planning Commission

Alamo Township Hall

7901 North 6th Street

Kalamazoo, MI 49009

March 1, 2011

Members Present: Vice-Chair Baker, Member LaBrie, Member Smith, Member Sweitzer, Secretary Veenstra

Absent: Chair Goyings and Member Feniger

Also Present: Deputy Supervisor Fisher and three interested others

Call to Order: Vice-Chair Baker called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda: None

MINUTES

1. **Excused Absences:** Motion by Member Smith to excuse Member Feniger and Chair Goyings was seconded by Member Sweitzer -Carried
2. **Approval of Previous Minutes:** Motion by Secretary Veenstra to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held January 4, 2011 was seconded by member LaBrie -Carried
3. **Recording of minutes:** Motion by Member Sweitzer to record the portion of the meeting regarding outdoor furnaces was seconded by Member LaBrie-Carried
4. **Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Report:** Motion by Member Smith to appoint Member Sweitzer to a new 1 year term on the ZBA was seconded by member LaBrie - Carried

5. Review of Outdoor Furnace Ordinance: Understanding that Township Board has asked the Planning Commission to review the outdoor furnace ordinance, three residents (Mark Bomersheim, Jeff Spitzner and Fred Havenaar) offered the following questions, concerns and/or observations, as summarized here:

Why does the ordinance put a limit on the time that the outdoor furnaces may be operated?

The issue of pollutants is really not an issue at all when burning wood

Burning of leaves is done all the time

What's issue was the Planning Commission responding to in creating the ordinance?

Year-round campfires are common. The campground on C Ave has many campfires burning all summer.

Outdoor furnaces are becoming more efficient

Burning wood in fireplaces is done all the time without issue or regulation

Outdoor furnaces are safer than fireplaces or wood burners inside the home.

Higher stack heights and spark arresters cause outdoor furnaces to burn colder and produce more smoke

Regulating the seasons that outdoor furnaces can be used seems inappropriate

Outdoor furnaces are safer than other alternative energy sources

Some residents heat their pools and hot tubs with outdoor furnaces throughout the year

Older outdoor furnaces create more smoke than the newer ones

Fuel oil furnaces produce more pollutants than wood stoves

There was some short discussion among those present. It was re-iterated that the ordinance is currently in effect and that existing outdoor furnaces should be registered with the Alamo Township no later than April 11, 2011. Vice Chair Baker thanked the residents who spoke and noted that the Planning Commission will consider their input, along with other information, at a future meeting.

6. Review of Sign Ordinance: Report from committee: Member LaBrie and Member Sweitzer summarized the committee's work and introduced a written report that was distributed to all members for information.

Citizen comments and non- agenda items:

Member Smith noted that he has been working on re-define zoning districts for his committee and has made some progress.

Vice-chair Baker reported that the D Ave Corridor Zoning Committee has made good progress and will be reporting to the commission at the April meeting.

Member Smith noted that he would like to see numbers and statistics that might add information regarding the outdoor wood furnaces as we review the ordinance.

7. Adjournment: Motion by Vice Chair Baker to adjourn was supported by Member Smith - Carried. Adjournment at 7:46 pm

Respectfully submitted,

David Veenstra

Secretary