ELK RAPIDS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – Thursday January 3, 2008

Chairwoman Mischel called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street.

Present: Brian Altonen, Don Glowicki, William Larson, Jim Lundy, Emile Sabty, Shen Smith and Renee Mischel.
Also Present: Leonard Harrett, Zoning Administrator, Larry Nix, Planning Consultant and Audience of 5.

Adoption of Agenda: Agenda for the January 1, 2008 meeting was distributed then approved by consensus.

Approval of Minutes
M/S – Smith/Lundy. Minutes for 11-1-2007 meeting, approved by the Planning Commission unanimously.

Public Forum
Mr. Terry Miller spoke of the need for a permanent sound system in the Township Hall on River Street. Currently, users bring in a temporary system as needed. Chairwoman Mischel responded that as much as this is a useful suggestion, it has to be addressed by the Township Board, and then asked Mr. Glowicki, Township Board Representative, to apprise the Township Board of the suggestion.

County Processing of Lighting Standards and Septage Amendments
County letter of 12/14/2007, showed action taken on reviewed two amendments. The Lighting Standards amendment was approved and the Septage amendment was denied with concerns about the part mentioning Treatment Facility. The Township Board will address the County response and act on the amendments during their Township Board meeting on January 14, 2008.

Old Business

Township Planning Commission by-Laws
By-Laws draft was reviewed by the Planning Consultant, Mr. Nix. Concerns brought up during the previous meeting were revised with new wording. Discussion centered on section 3.9, Agenda Items, as to how non public hearing requests are handled and what time limits cover when they are put on the agenda. Chairwoman Mischel asked the Planning Consultant to review the concerns for further refinement of the by-laws.

New Business

Special Use Standards
Chairwoman Mischel introduced this new subject, which when completed, would lead to improving the existing Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Nix, Planning Consultant, distributed a handout on the subject and reviewed it; pointing that the existing Zoning Ordinance does not have the contents that make for a good Special Use Standard, that they are general. A Special Exception, as sometimes referred to, would have specific elements listed. Usually a Zoning Ordinance lists what can be done in a district, while Special Use deals with what could be considered in that district which would be listed under Special Use, however, if not listed under special use it is not permitted, and a hearing would determine if the use becomes permitted under special use. In a district a compatible use can be handled under Special Use. That a Special Use goes with the property, however, if the use is to be changed it will require a new Special Use Hearing. A special land use does become associated with a site plan review. It was pointed out that at this point in time the Township does not have many special uses, beside a couple of Bed & Breakfast.

Chairwoman Mischel asked Mr. Nix to prepare items for Ordinance review during the next meeting, and in line with the Special Use discussion.

Planned Unit Development (P.U.D.)

Chairwoman Misched stated that possibly the previous subject on Special Use can be coupled with a new subject P.U.D, which is another type of use, and both can be reviewed in conjunction with the Ordinance P.D. section. During this meeting, the P.U.D. subject will also be considered as the **Training** subject for this meeting.

Mr. Nix, Planning Consultant, gave a verbal review of the P.U.D. subject, pointing out that a tool can be developed within the Ordinance that allows P.U.D. standards within a district. A P.U.D. can allow for the location of where parts of the development are added, that can enhance the overall development. The Ordinance would outline what goes on in a P.U.D., however, a P.U.D. is optional and is not mandated for inclusion in an Ordinance. A P.U.D. would allow uses that are not customary in a zone. Discussion and questions took place as to whether the Ordinance should be revised to include a P.U.D section? Can an Ordinance have a P.D. and P.U.D. at the same time? The answer was yes, for they are not related. Should the Ordinance have a Special Use Standard, a P.U.D. Standard and a P.D. Standard? Mr. Nix stated that this subject can be confusing at times, and more reviews of the current Ordinance, where applicable, should be done, and those applicable areas can be recognized to reflect these subjects.

Chairwoman Michel asked Mr. Nix to pursue these subjects as needed and prepare them for the next meeting.

Correspondence - None

Members Comments
Chairwoman Mischel distributed a Mission Statement handout prepared by Mr. Nix, Planning Consultant, and an article from *The Township Guide to Planning and Zoning"* which described some of the elements mentioned in the Mission Statement to be discussed in the next meeting.

Mr. Richard Sanderson, Chairman of the US-31 Study Group, apprised the Commission that with the Planning Consultant assistance a final report is being prepared for eventual review by the Planning Commission. Their next meeting is on January 14, 2008.

The next scheduled meeting will be on February 7, 2008 at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street.

Having no further business Chairwoman Mischel adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

E. S. Sabty, Secretary
1-3-2008

Minutes Approved 2-7-2008

Minutes are subject to approval at the next regular Planning Commission meeting.