

**Athens Township Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
October19, 2023**

Opening

The regular meeting of the Athens Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM on October 19, 2023 and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

Planning Commissioners Present

Todd Christensen, Marlys Balfany, Jack Cole, Jason Ross, AJ Ondrey, Dean Thompson, Township Clerk Diane Carpenter and Mike Jungbauer

Guests Present

A few residents attended.

Approval of Minutes

M/S Jack Cole/Marlys Balfany to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2023 meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Open Forum

None.

Public Hearing

Mike presented the proposed IUP resolution for the Sanchez public hearing and some clarifications were made. Some of these included up to two employees that are not related and removing the minimum fence height of six feet.

M/S Jack Cole/Dean Thompson to forward the resolution to the board for approval at the November meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

None.

New Business

- Mike brought up the issue of regulating sizes for accessory buildings on rural residential lots, as we currently have no restrictions on properties over five acres. A discussion was held but no consensus was reached. We would like to see examples from other areas similar to Athens township to see what they do as far as size and quantity. Dean brought up the point that we want businesses to start small but not remain in a residential area once they grow. Also, we have the issue of Ag vs. Non Ag with Ag being less restrictive.

A discussion was continued about the business zoning. We have to allow things like adult bookstores, marijuana and smoke shops and group homes by state statute. We can control where we allow them to be located. It was suggested that they must be at least 600 feet off the center line of a road.

Other ideas that were submitted were discussed. Possible convenience store with hunting licenses and gas was discussed. It was also suggested that mini golf, archery, and B&B would be a better fit in the retail area.

Suggestions for the retail area included live/work businesses, with a walking corridor near the town hall.

Discussion was also held about the possibility of extending the bike trail from Isanti into Athens township

M/S Jack Cole/AJ Ondrey to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 PM.
Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Diane Carpenter