

**Keene Township Planning Commission
Special Meeting**

Minutes from meeting dated 1-27-2025

Denny Briggs called the meeting to order at 7:02pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call:

Present: Denny Briggs, Ray Krieger, Cori Wilber, Matt Stahlin

Absent: Nancy Solomon Late: Nate Wolff

Note: 1 current vacancy

There were 3 members of the community present along with Zoning Administrator Jeanne Vandersloot.

Changes to the agenda:

Stahlin made a motion to accept the agenda as provided. Krieger seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Approval of last meeting minutes:

Due to the short time between meetings, minutes from the last meeting were not yet available.

Report from Township Board Rep:

Board representative Wolff was not present as he was at a meeting with the Saranac fire department. However, a board meeting had not taken place since the last Planning Commission meeting.

Report from Zoning Administrator:

Report was given at another PC meeting earlier this month.

Public Comment – Topics not on the agenda:

None.

New Business:

- Resumed working on the wind energy ordinance.
- Wilber provided info obtained from approximately 10 other townships' ordinances, explaining that their noise levels were all either 45 or 55 Db(A) Lmax.

- Briggs reported on information gathered from conversations with local farmers Dustin Hardy and Aaron Roth regarding potential impacts of wind turbines on agricultural operations, including orchard fans, aerial application on crops, stray voltage, and effect on livestock.
- Discussed the plan for moving forward with the wind ordinance. Will be amending the current ordinance, which would apply to any projects under 100MW. Would then add Exhibit A (which was written by the township attorneys) to create a Compatible Renewable Energy Ordinance (CREO).
- Discussed decorative windmills and decided they will continue to be allowed.
- Carl Heiler from the audience explained that there are some wind turbines that spin horizontally instead of vertically.
- Touched on wind turbine heights. Paul VanderZiel from the audience referenced that he saw wind turbines in the state of New York that were approximately 900 feet high. Currently the height allowed for residences in Keene township is 35 feet.
- For wind turbines generating power specifically for onsite use, height shall be a maximum of 75 feet to the top of the blades when extended fully upwards, and the setback shall be 1.5 times the blade height.
- Discussed whether to add a timeframe stating decommissioning must begin if the project has not generated power. Decided on 12 months.
- Decided to remove Rural Residential districts from allowed areas. The current draft also includes PUD (Planned Unit Development) districts. Will also remove that reference since we don't have a PUD.
- Reviewed special use requirements. Confirmed that PC can ask for impact studies if desired as part of the application process.
- Wolff arrived at 8:08pm, following a meeting with the Saranac Fire Department.
- PC members agreed that we need to add a section for complaint process resolution, that road damage will be repaired by the company that caused the damage, to use Lmax in the sound section, and to measure the sound from the property lines.
- Wolff provided information about shadow flicker that he had researched, and stated there were no specific health risks that he found, though there are some case studies. Mostly it was referred to as an "annoyance." Wolff also pointed out that an analysis that we request for local projects should include data from all months of the year.
- Vandersloot touched on the noticing requirements, and that any parcels within 300 feet must be notified. Wilber pointed out that although that is a ZEA requirement, the PC and/or Board can decide to provide notice to additional landowners if desired.
- Wolff reported that we are not in a flight path for the Grand Rapids airport.
- Briggs asked if the PC would like to proceed with new sections or dismiss for the evening; consensus was to resume at the next meeting.

Old Business:

- None

Public Comment – Any Topic:

- None.

Adjournment:

- Wilber made a motion to adjourn. Stahlin seconded. All approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.

Minutes recorded by Cori Wilber.