

Clearwater Township
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting of June 4, 2018
As approved July 9, 2018

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance:

Chair Backers called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of Members and Recognition of Visitors:

Commissioners present: Backers, Casassa, Eldridge, Fields, Von See.

Township officials: Zoning Administrator Parzych

Public: James Lindner, Jeff West, Jule Moore, one person who declined to be identified

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION by Casassa, second by Backers, to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Call for Disclosure of Conflicts of Interests:

Chair calls for commissioners to disclose any real or potential conflicts of interests.

There were none

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Casassa, second by Von See, to accept the minutes of the meeting of May 7, 2018 as presented. Motion carried.

Discussion:

The Open Meetings Act protects the right of citizens to make recordings of public meetings. There was discussion of how properly to handle citizen requests for recordings of meetings. Clerk Eldridge explained that the township would like to have documentation of those requests and how they are fulfilled, and that the recording of a meeting is not kept indefinitely – it is destroyed after the minutes of the meeting are approved. It was decided that the mention of the request in the minutes of the meeting adequately documented this request.

Public Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:

Jeff West – Raised his concern that zoning violations are not enforced even-handedly. He asked what the policy is with regard to violations. The current policy is to investigate complaints of violations. West took issue with the complaint form calling for a phone number but not requiring a signature. He stated that the county will not honor an unsigned complaint. Zoning Administrator Parzych responded that the Township Supervisor instructed him to follow up on complaints, whether they are signed or not, and that the phone number is required only to enable him to report back to the complainant. West suggested that perhaps a box should be added to the form that a complainant can check if a follow-up report is desired.

Commissioner Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:

Von See – Speaking as a resident on Pine Circle, he said the neighborhood is tired of the noise. There are loud events happening on West Plum Valley Road on weekends that disturb the peace and interfere with nighttime rest for the surrounding neighborhood. Individuals have called the cops and not had any satisfaction. Indeed, he said, the Deputy no longer responds to calls from certain individuals.

The township’s nuisance ordinance does not address the matter of noise and disturbance of the peace, and until the township has an ordinance that the police can enforce, the police will not take any action on the noise complaints. Clerk Eldridge agreed to bring the concern to the Township Board.

Eldridge – reported on a letter received from the Chain of Lakes Water Trails, about their work on development of sign standards for the rest stops. In our township there are ten stops: at Oak Street, Birch Street, Maple Street, Pine Street, Cedar Street, Division Street, Aarwood Trail, Aarwood Road Bridge, Freedom Park East and Freedom Park West. Before taking the letter to the Township Board, Clerk Eldridge wanted to make sure the signs are in compliance with our ordinance. The signs do comply with MDoT standards for trailheads. Upon review of Article XII, we could find no issue with the proposed signs. There will be no cost to the township for manufacture or installation. Fire Chief West commented that when a sign goes down, as in a vehicular accident, it can be distorted and become a safety hazard. He suggested that requiring contact information on a sign, as part of our ordinance, would be advisable. Chair Backers indicated that the suggestion will be included on the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting.

Ongoing Permanent Business:

Assignment of Master Plan sections for review. As covered during the special meeting immediately preceding this regular meeting:

Introduction and Population Characteristics – Fields

Land Use Trends, A, B, C, and D – Parzych

Land Use Trends, E – Parks and Rec Committee if reactivated by Township Board

Roads and Traffic – get input from Mike Gaylord and the Road Commission

Schools – Fields

Fire, Police and Emergency Medical Services – get input from Fire Department

Other Pertinent Trends – seeking input from public

Future Land Use Plans – will receive a thorough review of objectives and the township’s vision for accomplishing those objectives.

Old Business:

Nothing at this time.

Report of Township Representative:

Clerk Eldridge - Fields did get reappointed to the Planning Commission for a three-year term, and will be sworn in following this meeting.

Report of Zoning Administrator:

Zoning Administrator Parzych – distributed his report for May, which is hereby incorporated into the record by reference, and a copy of which is attached to the permanent copy of these minutes as [Att A].

New Business

Nothing at this time.

Closing Public Comment:

West – Offered the suggestion that as part of the Master Plan review, the township look at the DNR Pere Marquette Forest and see about opening up the trails. How about a beach for the township? Perhaps someone would donate shoreline property for a township beach?

Moore – Explore tiny house concept in the Master Plan review process.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Fields, second by Von See, to adjourn. Adjournment at 8:10 pm.

Assignments:

- Fields – agenda item for July meeting - to consider adding contact identification to signs (potential amendment to Article 12).
- Eldridge to bring request to the Township Board to consider including noise and disturbance of the peace in the nuisance ordinance.

Next Meeting: July 9, 2018, 7:00 p.m., at the Clearwater Township Community Center (aka the Little Red Schoolhouse).

Respectfully submitted,



Tina Norris Fields
Secretary

Clearwater Township Zoning Administration Monthly Report

Month/Year MAY 2018

8 Land Use Permits Issued
 Garages, Sheds
2 Residences
 Residences w/Attached Garage
1 Pole Barns
 Resident Additions
3 Decks, Porches, etc.
2 Miscellaneous, Other Buildings

15 Field Checks
2 Attorney Contacts
1 Planning Commission Meetings
0 ZBA Meetings and/or Township Board Meetings
12 Contacts with Public, Home or Land Owners
0 Training Sessions

Zoning Violations

0 Zoning Violations closed this month
5 Open Zoning Violations as of this month
2 New Zoning Violations opened this month
0 Zoning Violations under investigation
 30 Day Notices Sent or in this status
 60 Day Notices Sent or in this status
3 90 Day Notices Sent or in this status
 Turned over to Attorney

Date: MAY 31

Signature: *Adela P...*
Zoning Administrator

