

Clearwater Township
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting of April 1, 2019
As Approved May 6, 2019

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance:

Chair Backers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of Members and Recognition of Visitors:

Commissioners present: Backers, Casassa, Eldridge, Fields, Von See.
Public: Carol Backers, Deputy Clerk Jule Moore

Approval of Agenda:

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

Call for Disclosure of Conflicts of Interests:

All commissioners declare none.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Casassa, second by Von See, to accept the minutes of March 4, 2019, as presented. Motion carried.

Public Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:

None.

Commissioner Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda:

Commissioner Fields - reported that both she and Commissioner Casassa attended the seminar on the Master Planning Process, on March 7, 2019, in Gaylord, presented by the Michigan Association of Planners. She lifted up a few items from that seminar: 1) the presenter supported keeping the Master Plan short and simple; 2) the future land use map should be included in the Master Plan, and if it includes changes from the present use, the township should address how to approach those changes; 3) even though the vision should be looking twenty years into the future, actual action items should be feasible within the five-year plan; 4) we should do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the township; 5) we should do an inventory of the existing land use, public facilities, and natural features; 6) we should identify who all the stakeholders are of the community and strive to get their participation in the planning. The presenter pointed out that the baby boomers and the millennials are all competing for the same kind of affordable living space (senior citizens on a fixed income and young adults just starting out).

Correspondence:

Chair Backers - indicated that the letter to Michigan's Attorney General, requesting clarification on the physical boundaries of the township, and the extent of township jurisdiction, has been sent out. Deputy Clerk Moore confirmed it went out on March 21, 2019.

Old Business:

Mass Gathering ordinance - Chair Backers has made the corrections to the language of the proposed ordinance and to the application form. Secretary Fields is to publish the revised documents to the members of the Planning Commission. Commissioners will review for approval at the May meeting.

Report of Planning Commission Chair:

Chair Backers – spoke on the continuation of the telecommunications tower matter pending before both the Planning Commission and the ZBA. April 8, 2019, the ZBA resumes deliberations on the variance request by Mike Bieniek, AICP, of LCC Telecom Services (Agent for Tillman Infrastructure). Chair Backers plans to attend that meeting. Regardless of what decision the ZBA renders on the variance, if the applicant does not withdraw the pending special use permit application, the matter will return to the Planning Commission. It is important for the township's process to be complete and transparent in this matter. If the matter does come back to the Planning Commission, Chair Backers wants an announcement of the resumed deliberations to be published in the paper.

Backers reported that during the township annual meeting, he asked about standard operating procedures for the Zoning Administrator, expressing his own concern over currently perceived inconsistencies. Supervisor Gaylord requested the Planning Commission to draft a proposal to be included in a procedures manual. During discussion, it was pointed out that properties on the main thoroughfare through town were highly visible and that problems with those properties would obviously receive prominent attention. Among the reasons Chair Backers is working to clean up the title to land currently belonging to abandoned alleyways and unopened streets in the village center, is to make the area more attractive for new businesses to locate here, which would promote the local economy.

Report of Township Representative:

Clerk Eldridge – reported that the FY 2019-2020 budget has been approved and that the approval was done separately for each cost center. American Waste will handle the township cleanup day on May 4. The Board will hold a meeting on April 11 at 1 p.m., to appoint election inspectors for the May 7 election. The accuracy testing of machinery will be done on April 2, at 3:15 p.m. A motion was passed to seek a site concept drawing for remodeling of the Township Hall and offices. Backers commented that he had done just such a drawing for the township five years ago. He will try to find that work and pass it on to the Board.

Report of Zoning Administrator:

Zoning Administrator Parzych was not present and no report was provided.

New Business

As reported by Chair Backers, the Planning Commission will begin development of a procedures manual for the duties of the Zoning Administrator. The project is triggered by concerns over perceived inconsistent handling of zoning violations, but, as correctly pointed out by Deputy Clerk Moore, a procedures manual will have to address all areas of the Zoning Administrator's responsibility.

Closing Public Comment:

Commissioner Von See – commented that just cleaning up the ownership of the abandoned and unopened alleyways in the village center will not magically kick-start the economic health of Rapid City.

Adjournment:

MOTION by Fields, second by Von See, to adjourn. Adjournment at 7:58 p.m..

Assignments:

- Fields to publish the Mass Gathering Ordinance language as prepared by Chair Backers, to the commissioners.
- Fields to forward the zoning violation forms to the commissioners

Next Meeting: May 6, 2019, at 7:00 p.m., in the Clearwater Township Community Center (aka the Little Red Schoolhouse).

Respectfully submitted,



Tina Norris Fields
Secretary