

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
March 24, 2014**

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Chairperson Lauderdale called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Ross Township Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Ross Township Hall.

ROLL CALL

Present: Jim Lauderdale, Chairperson
 Robb Blain
 Jeff Price
 Jon Scott

Absent: Russell Fry
 Gregg Pierce
 Sherri Snyder

Also present: Bert Gale, AGS – Township Zoning Administrator
 Rebecca Harvey – Township Planning Consultant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was reviewed and approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

The Board then proceeded with consideration of the **February 24, 2014** Planning Commission meeting minutes. Price moved to approve the minutes as presented. Scott seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment on non-agenda items was offered.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2014-2015 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Price moved to adopt by resolution the proposed 2014-2015 meeting schedule of the Planning Commission. Blain seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Election of Officers

Price moved the nomination and election of Lauderdale as Planning Commission Chair for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Scott seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Blain moved the nomination and election of Price and Fry as Planning Commission Co-Chairs for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Scott seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Blain moved the nomination and election of Fry as Planning Commission Secretary for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Scott seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. 2013 Planning Commission Annual Report

The Board noted the accuracy and completeness of the 2013 Annual Report prepared by Chairperson Lauderdale and accepted same as presented.

4. 2014 Planning Commission Work Plan

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the draft Planning Commission Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2014-2015, as well as the documents provided by Harvey identifying proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments related to the recent Zoning Ordinance Reorganization effort and Zoning Ordinance amendments recommended to improve consistency with the Master Plan. (*developed in 2009/updated in 2014*).

Chairperson Lauderdale explained that the work items in the draft Work Plan had not been prioritized. Following discussion, the Board agreed that the items set forth in the Work Plan would not be prioritized and that the title should be revised to reflect same.

Scott noted that he would like the Board to add the development of a 'resort-type' zoning provision to the Work Plan. He stated that he had discussed the matter with the Board in the past and more recently with Harvey regarding the

availability of sample language. The Board agreed to add the item to the Work Plan and directed Harvey to proceed with compiling sample zoning text from resort areas for Board consideration.

The Board accepted the draft Work Plan as revised and scheduled the adoption of same for the April Planning Commission meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Recreation Plan

Scott stated that the Gull Lake Area Trails (GLAT) group continues to actively meet and is currently concentrating on the development/coordination of a system of bike paths.

He noted that Tom Wheat, Prein & Newhof has been enlisted to produce maps that will define the preliminary routes to begin to achieve desired alignments/connections. He explained that a 3-phase approach is being discussed: 1 – extensions to the Bay area, 2 – extensions to Richland, and, 3 – extensions to Prairieville Township.

Scott stated that the bike path map and the general message is slated to be approved at the next meeting of GLAT. The next step will be vetting the effort/message to the public.

He reiterated that the Township is envisioning implementation of the Recreation Plan through two (2) avenues: 1) a citizens-based group working at a more regional level in education and partner-building for the development of recreational facilities (ie. trails, bike lanes) and, 2) a group/vehicle responsible for the administration and funding of the recreational goals/strategies of the Plan, such as a ‘parks board’.

Scott noted that the Township Board delayed moving forward on the topic of a ‘parks board’ until the membership returned but is scheduled to pick the matter back up this month. He advised that he continues to receive helpful feedback/information from Richland Township and Prairieville Township.

2. Zoning Ordinance Reorganization

Harvey provided a summary of her meeting with Attorney Rolfe regarding the Board’s review of the proposed Zoning Ordinance Reorganization. She advised that Board direction is requested regarding Attorney Rolfe’s suggestion that the ‘waterfront-type’ zoning provisions be organized into a single/separate section. The Board agreed with the proposed modification.

The Board determined that the matter was ready for public hearing and could tentatively be scheduled for consideration in May. It was requested that a revised draft of the proposed amendments be prepared for final Board review in April. It was further requested that the draft text prepared by the Board in August, 2013 on wind energy systems also be included for public hearing at this time.

3. Accessory Uses or Buildings/Structures

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the accessory building text from Prairieville Township provided by Harvey in November, 2013. Harvey provided a review of the provisions and explained their approach in the regulation and review of accessory buildings.

Lengthy Board discussion ensued wherein the following points of consensus were noted: accessory building and accessory structures should be treated similarly; accessory buildings and garages should be treated similarly; accessory buildings/structures should be limited to side and rear yards; accessory buildings/structures should continue to be subject to all applicable dimensional standards (ie. setback, height, coverage, etc.); and, accessory buildings/structures proposed to be located on a vacant lot, within a front yard, or inconsistent with the applicable size, height, or locational standards would be addressed as a special land use.

The Board reviewed the special land use criteria. It was agreed that the criteria considered directly applies to the objectives discussed and would appropriately address the questions/issues that have been raised in the Township regarding accessory buildings and structures.

The Board directed Harvey to revise the draft text per the Board's discussion for consideration in April.

4. Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the December 27, 2007 and July 16, 2008 Memos received from AGS requesting clarification/direction regarding the regulation of 'boarding houses' and 'bed and breakfast inns' in the Zoning Ordinance.

Harvey noted that she had prepared a study of area ordinances on the topic with recommendations dated November 25, 2013 for Board consideration.

Board discussion ensued wherein the following conclusions were noted:

- 'Boardinghouses' -
 - : the term 'boardinghouse' is antiquated and no longer relevant
 - : 'boardinghouse' should be removed from the Definitions section of the Ordinance

‘Bed and Breakfast Inns’-

- : the Ordinance does not currently address and there appears to be no current pressure to provide for them
- : if interest in the use is presented. . text can be developed to address

‘Guest Houses’ –

- : this is a relevant land use for a community with waterfront residential;
- : continued discussion is warranted
- : Harvey requested to develop draft text to frame the discussion

REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD

Scott advised that Supervisor Bither has announced his intentions to step down as Township Supervisor in June/July. He noted that the Township Board is currently addressing the appointment process for the position.

He added that roads remain a primary concern for the Township as they continue to discuss matters of roadway quality and funding.

REPORT FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Chairperson Lauderdale stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals did not meet in March.

MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS, ADVISORS

Scott and Price stated that it was a good meeting and that the Board was very productive regarding their agenda items.

Gale extended his thanks to Rolfe and Harvey for their work on the Zoning Ordinance Reorganization effort.

In response to correspondence received from Rolfe regarding legislation recently proposed involving The Right to Farm Act/GAMPs, Chairperson Lauderdale directed Rolfe to proceed with the development of a memo on the impact of the proposed changes.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Harvey, AICP, PCP
Township Planning Consultant