

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
November 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
Russell Fry
Greg Pierce
Jeff Price
Jon Scott

Absent: 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 **October 27, 2014** Planning Commission meeting minutes. Price moved to approve the minutes as presented. Pierce seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Adriano Vatta and L. Ruey Stocking addressed the Board. Dr. Stocking stated that she is a licensed veterinarian and resides at 6291 North 37th Street. She explained that she would like to convert the existing hay barn on the property to a cat clinic and care facility.

Dr. Stocking noted that the property is located within the Rural Residential District and that a veterinary clinic is not an allowed use within the R-R District. She explained that AGS has suggested pursuit of a text amendment rather than a rezoning of the property. She requested Board direction on the matter.

The Board requested clarification of the elements of the proposed use and how a cat clinic differs from a general veterinary clinic. The Board then proceeded with a review of the allowed uses within the A and R-R Districts and opined that veterinary clinics may have been omitted from the R-R District based upon existing land use patterns.

It was determined that the Ordinance currently does not establish special land use standards specific to 'veterinary clinics'. It was also suggested that 'veterinary clinics' may be similar in character and impact to several allowed uses such as, 'kennels', 'group day care facilities', and certain 'home occupations'.

Board consensus was noted that a text amendment allowing 'veterinary clinics' within the R-R District was a reasonable request to consider.

No further public comment on non-agenda items was offered.

NEW BUSINESS

1. PC 2015-2016 Budget

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the 'Income Statement' (through November 30, 2014) and the Department Budget Request 2015-2016 (Planning Commission) provided to Board members.

The Board conducted a line-item review of the existing budget. The accuracy of the 'Spent YTD' for 'PC Minutes' was questioned. It was also noted that the 'Spent YTD' for 'Attorney Expenses' well exceeded the 2014-2015 budgeted amount due largely to the 'reorganization' of the zoning ordinance and legislative issues raised with the Right to Farm Act and would not necessarily be repeated in 2015. It was recognized, however, that there will be a change in the Township's legal service provider in 2015 and applicable billing rates and practices are unknown. The 'Spent YTD' for 'Printing & Publishing' was highlighted and anticipated needs in 2015 recognized.

The Board concluded that the amounts budgeted for each line-item in the 2014-2015 budget were generally acceptable for the 2015-2016 budget, noting the following:

: the allocation for 'PC Minutes' should remain as budgeted for 2014-2015 in recognition of anticipated needs;

: the allocation for ‘Attorney Expenses’ cannot be recommended at this time;

: the allocation for ‘Printing & Publishing’ should be increased from \$1800 to \$2500 given the work plan of the Board anticipated for the coming year.

There was Board consensus to present the Planning Commission Budget Request for 2015-2016 with line-item allocations consistent with the 2014-2015 Budget, recognizing the allocation for ‘Attorney Expenses’ to be unknown at this time, and with a further request to increase the allocation for ‘Printing & Publishing’ from \$1800 to \$2500 . . for a total Budget request likely ranging from \$21,000-\$22,000.

In response to general Board discussion, Jon Scott agreed to investigate and advise regarding the relationship between the revenue generated by zoning-related applications and the Planning Commission’s budget.

2. Work Plan Items (1.d., 1.e., 1.f., and 1.g.)

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the Planning Commission Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2014-2015. He noted that four of the items raised by the Board during their review of the ‘reorganized/reformatted zoning ordinance text’ had yet to be addressed.

Item 1.d. – rewrite screening options to address use of “berms” (*Section 18.6 A.*)

It was determined that Harvey would provide the Board with examples of good screening standards that give both direction and flexibility in establishing effective screens.

Item 1.e. – address inconsistent requirements between Article 20, Item 5. and Item 16.

It was noted that Article 20 sets forth minimum required standards applicable to special land uses. It was further noted that the special land use ‘golf course’ is subject to standards set forth in both Item 5.d. and Item 16 of Article 20.

In review of the referenced standards, it was determined that Item 5.d. establishes a setback requirement of 200 feet for ‘buildings and activities’ from ‘an adjacent residential district or residentially-zoned properties’ . . .whereas Item 16.B. sets forth a ‘sideline setback of not less than 500 feet from adjoining residentially zoned land under different ownership’ for a pro shop or clubhouse related to a golf course.

It was determined that the deletion of Item 5.d. from the ‘minimum required standards’ applicable to ‘golf courses’ would satisfactorily address the inconsistency.

Following continued discussion of Item 16.B., it was further determined to consider adding ‘maintenance buildings’ (not ‘storage buildings’) to those buildings currently subject to the 500 foot sideline setback requirement.

Item 1.f. – address standards for restrooms (*Article 20, Item 16.D.*)

It was noted that Item 16.D. sets forth a requirement applicable to ‘golf courses’ for the provision and maintenance of ‘adequate public restrooms and other facilities’. The question had initially been raised as to the merit of establishing a similar requirement for a ‘youth practice soccer field’. (*Article 20, Item 29*)

It was agreed that applying a similar standard to ‘youth practice soccer fields’ was consistent with public health, safety and welfare objectives. To that end, consideration of the addition of the following standard to Item 29 was suggested:

Article 20, Item 29.B.13.

Adequate public restrooms shall be constructed and properly maintained.

Item 1.g. – address need for restrooms (*Article 20, Item 29*)

It was recognized that the previous discussion of Work Plan Item 1.f. addressed the issue raised in Work Plan Item 1.g. It was noted, however, that Item 29.B.10. currently establishes a standard that generally prohibits buildings/structures associated with a ‘youth soccer practice field’ . . . which would be inconsistent with a envisioned restroom requirement.

The Board agreed to consider a modification to Item 29.B.10. so as to add the following:

c. a public restroom, as required by Subsection 13.

Motion by Fry, seconded by Pierce, to tentatively schedule a public hearing on the proposed text amendments related to Items 1.e., 1.f, and 1.g for the January 26, 2015 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Zoning Ordinance Issue: Parcels/Lots Bisected by a Road

Chairperson Lauderdale stated that the Board reviewed Draft #1 in October and found that the draft text prepared by Harvey provided for the regulation of 'lots bisected by a road' consistent with the Board's direction in September. Harvey was directed to meet with Attorney Rolfe for finalization of the draft text for Board review in November.

Harvey stated that she had discussed the proposed amendments with Attorney Rolfe and had revised the draft text according to his review comments. She referenced Draft #2 and noted the modifications made.

Following Board discussion, motion by Price, seconded by Pierce, to accept Draft #2 as presented and tentatively schedule a public hearing on the proposed text amendment for the January 26, 2015 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously

2. GAAMPS

Chairperson Lauderdale stated that the Board completed their review of the discussion points raised by Attorney Rolfe related to 'roadside stands'/'farm markets'/'farmers' markets' in October. Accordingly, Harvey had been directed to develop draft text reflecting the Board's points of consensus and to meet with Attorney Rolfe for finalization of the draft text for Board review in November.

Harvey stated that she had discussed the proposed amendments (Draft #1) with Attorney Rolfe and had revised the draft text according to his review comments. She referenced Draft #2 and noted the modifications made. Harvey specifically noted their conclusion that the reference to 'group care facility' in Article 20, Item 17 is an obsolete reference and can be deleted. With the proposed deletion, Item 17 would then become available as a place to insert the standards for the new special land use - 'farmers' market . . . and is reflected in the proposed draft text.

Following Board discussion, motion by Pierce, seconded by Fry, to accept Draft #2 as presented and tentatively schedule a public hearing on the proposed text amendments for the January 26, 2015 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously

3. Recreation Plan

Scott noted that the newly appointed Parks Committee held its first meeting on November 13, 2014 and made progress in constructing its meeting format and operational structure. He noted that officers will be elected at the December meeting.

Scott also noted that representatives of the Parks Committee and GLAT will be meeting with the Kalamazoo Parks Foundation in December regarding trail planning in Ross Township.

In response to Board questions, Scott agreed to confirm DNR approval of the recently adopted Township Recreation Plan.

REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD

Scott advised that the legal firm of Bauckham, Sparks, et al has been retained as the Township Attorney and will begin serving the Township in January, 2015.

REPORT FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

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

MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS, ADVISORS

Chairperson Lauderdale noted that public hearings on the following items have been (tentatively) scheduled for the January 26, 2015 Planning Commission meeting:

- Master Plan Amendment/Rezoning Request: Gull Lake View Golf Club
- Text Amendment – Article 20: delete Item 5.d. from ‘golf course’ (pg 20-1)
- Text Amendment – Article 20: revise Item 16.B. – add ‘maintenance buildings’
- Text Amendment – Article 20: add Item 29.B.13. – provision of adequate restrooms
- Text Amendment – Article 20: revise Item 29.B.10. – provision of restrooms as an exception
- Text Amendment - Add Section 16.1 – D. – lots divided by a street/road
- Text Amendment – Article 20: delete Item 17 – ‘group care facility’
- Text Amendments – related to ‘roadside stands’, ‘farm markets’, and ‘farmers’ markets’

Lengthy Board discussion ensued regarding the noticing requirements for the scheduled public hearings. It was determined that the required noticing would need to be completed by January 2, 2015 to accommodate a January 26, 2015 public hearing. The Planning Commission noted their preference for Attorney Rolfe to prepare/process the requisite legal notices given his familiarity with the amendments and the time frame involved.

The Planning Commission further expressed their desire to have Attorney Rolfe present at the January 26, 2015 meeting given his involvement in each of the public hearing items

to date. It was noted that there may be value in having the newly retained Township Attorney present as well to allow for a seamless transition on Planning Commission items.

Chairperson Lauderdale stated that he will advise the Township Board and Attorney Rolfe of the Board's request.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Harvey, AICP, PCP
Township Planning Consultant