

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
March 23, 2015**

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
 Victor Ezbenko
 Jeff Price
 Jon Scott
 Sherri Snyder

Absent: Greg Pierce
 Russell Fry

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

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 23, 2015** Planning Commission meeting minutes. Snyder moved to approve the minutes as presented. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment on non-agenda items was offered.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2015-2016 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Scott moved to adopt by resolution the proposed 2015-2016 meeting schedule of the Planning Commission. Price 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 2015-2016 fiscal year. Snyder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Scott moved the nomination and election of Price and Fry as Planning Commission Co-Chairs for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Snyder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Snyder moved the nomination and election of Fry as Planning Commission Secretary for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Scott seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. 2014 Planning Commission Annual Report

The Board noted the accuracy and completeness of the 2014 Annual Report prepared by Chairperson Lauderdale and accepted same as presented.

4. 2015 Planning Commission Work Plan

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the draft Planning Commission Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. He noted that pursuant to previous Board deliberation, the proposed work items were not prioritized.

Board discussion ensued wherein the following modifications were suggested:

- Add the following items to 4) – *Address Zoning Ordinance Text change(s) as needed, such as:*
 - : Review Sections 21.4 and 18.4 D.4.
 - : Review sign standards for golf courses (18.2 B.)
 - : Revisit ‘livestock facilities’ per any 2015 modifications to the GAAMPS
- Note the year that an item is placed on the Work Plan

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

5. Public Hearing – **Section 2.2** – Definitions; **Article 20** – Standards Required of Special Land Uses

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the Tentative Text of Proposed Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the following:

Section 2.2 – Definitions: amend so as to add a definition of ‘Veterinary Clinic’.

Article 20 – Standards Required of Special Land Uses: amend so as to add a new Item 34 providing for ‘Veterinary Clinics’ as a special land use within the Agricultural and Rural Residential Zoning Districts and providing therein separate criteria for ‘small animal clinics’ and ‘large animal clinics’.

He stated that the proposed text amendments were considered in response to an application by Adriano Vatta and Linden Stocking. It was noted that the changes have received lengthy Board consideration at meetings of the Planning Commission in November, 2014 and January, 2015 and finalized for public hearing in February, 2015.

No public comment was offered on the matter. The public comment portion of the public hearing was then closed.

Price moved to recommend approval to the Township Board of the proposed amendment to Section 2.2 as set forth in the March 23, 2015 public hearing notice/tentative text document. Snyder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Scott then moved to recommend approval to the Township Board of the proposed amendments to Article 20 as set forth in the March 23, 2015 public hearing notice/tentative text document. Snyder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Public Hearing – Scott Allen

The next matter to come before the Board was consideration of the request by Scott Allen for special land use permit/site plan review for the proposed construction of a residential accessory building on a back lot that will exceed the 10% lot coverage requirement. The subject property is located at 555 South Gull Lake Drive and is within the R-1 District.

Gale referenced the application material and summary review provided on the request. He noted that the subject site is limited to 10% lot coverage pursuant to Sections 16.1 D. and 18.4 D. Gale stated that the proposed accessory building will result in approximately 15% lot coverage.

Scott Allen was present on behalf of the application. He stated that he purchased the portion of the property occupied by the house and the subject back lot in 2001 as a single lot. Allen explained that a 1344 sq ft garage and a shed are currently located on the back lot and that he proposes to remove the shed and construct the a pole barn. He confirmed that the proposed accessory building will be used for residential storage.

Allen noted that the back lot is surrounded by open land that is wooded and that the accessory building will have little impact on adjacent property.

No public comment was offered on the matter and the public comment portion of the public hearing was closed.

The Board proceeded with a review of the application pursuant to Section 18.4 D. – residential accessory buildings/structures. It was confirmed that the proposed building will meet building height and location requirements . . . but will exceed the 10% lot coverage requirement. It was further noted that the accessory building is proposed to be used for a purpose incidental to residential uses allowed within the R-1 District. The Board noted that a variance is not required for the proposed accessory building and that the site plan presented is acceptable.

In consideration of the Special Land Use Criteria set forth in Section 19.3, the Board concluded the following: the proposed accessory building will be compatible with other uses/buildings allowed within the District and with the natural environment; its location on the subject site will not adversely affect public services or facilities serving the area; adequate parking is provided on the site; and, the proposed accessory building will not be detrimental to adjacent properties, the public health, safety and general welfare of the community, or the character of the site given its proposed use/location and the existing use and land cover of the surrounding properties. It was further noted that the proposed accessory buildings meets the Site Plan Review Criteria set forth in Section 21.6 B.

In response to Board questions, Allen confirmed that access will be provided to the rear of the property during construction and that adequate area exists for the control of storm water runoff.

It was reiterated that the above findings were based on the application documents presented and the representations made by the applicant at the meeting.

Price then moved to grant Special Land Use Permit/Site Plan Approval for the proposed accessory building on the subject back lot based upon the review findings of Section 18.4 D. – residential accessory buildings/structures, Section 19.3 – Special Land Use Criteria, and Section 21.6 – Site Plan Review Criteria and conditioned upon its use as accessory to a permitted residential principal building. Snyder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Public Hearing – Mark Olsen

The next matter to come before the Board was consideration of the request by Mark Olsen for special land use permit/site plan review for the proposed construction of a 30 ft x 40 ft residential accessory building within the front yard. The subject property is located at 13565 East C Avenue and is within the R-R District.

Gale referenced the application material and summary review provided on the request.

Mark Olsen was present on behalf of the application. He stated that the accessory building is proposed to be located well in compliance with all setback requirements and will be approximately 850 ft from the roadway. He further noted that a tree line exists between the house and the road and that visibility from the roadway or adjoining property will be minimal. Olsen explained that development on adjacent property is not close and that the rear yard accessory building on the property in front of the subject site will be closer to the road than the proposed accessory building.

In review of the Site Plan, it was further noted that the existing septic system on the west side of the house and the topography and retaining wall along the east side of the property limit the building options on the property.

No public comment was offered on the matter and the public comment portion of the public hearing was closed.

The Board proceeded with a review of the application pursuant to Section 18.4 D. – residential accessory buildings/structures. It was confirmed that the proposed building will meet building height/setback and lot coverage requirements. It was further noted that the accessory building is proposed to be used for residential storage, personal boat storage, and a workshop. The Board noted that a variance is not required for the proposed accessory building and that the site plan presented is acceptable.

In consideration of the Special Land Use Criteria set forth in Section 19.3, the Board concluded the following: the proposed accessory building will be compatible with other uses/buildings allowed within the District and with the

character of the property; there will be limited visibility of the proposed accessory building from adjacent property or the roadway given the size of the property, existing land cover, and the location of the building; limited tree removal is proposed; no additional site access or parking are required; and, residential use of the accessory building is proposed. It was further noted that the proposed accessory buildings meets the Site Plan Review Criteria set forth in Section 21.6 B.

It was reiterated that the above findings were based on the application documents presented and the representations made by the applicant at the meeting.

Price then moved to grant Special Land Use Permit/Site Plan Approval for the proposed accessory building within the front yard of the subject site based upon the review findings of Section 18.4 D. – residential accessory buildings/structures, Section 19.3 – Special Land Use Criteria, and Section 21.6 – Site Plan Review Criteria and conditioned upon its use as accessory to a permitted residential principal building. Snyder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Screening Standards

Chairperson Lauderdale noted that the Board had previously discussed revising the screening standards in the Ordinance to address the use of “berms” (*Section 18.6 A.*) As requested, Harvey had provided the Board with examples of good screening standards that would give both direction and flexibility in establishing effective screens.

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Board agreed to postpone discussion of the sample text to the April meeting.

2. Recreation Plan

Chairperson Lauderdale noted that the Board had been asked to review and prioritize the ‘Action Items’ set forth in the Recreation Plan so that they may qualify for DNR grants.

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Board agreed to postpone discussion of the matter to the April meeting.

REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD

Scott advised that the Township Board continues to discuss roads and the new fire facility. He stated that a new Township website is under construction; a new Township logo has been approved; and, a Township newsletter will soon be coming out. Regarding parks/recreation, he noted that Supervisor Dykstra is actively pursuing a grant for playground equipment in the Ross Township Park; a Parks Administrator will soon be hired; a 'parks clean-up day' is planned; and the Parks Committee is planning a public open house to actively introduce the Recreation Plan and the trail planning activities to the community. Scott also noted that the Township Board approved the recommendations recently submitted by the Planning Commission and the Planning Commission budget for 2015-2016 fiscal year.

REPORT FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Chairperson Lauderdale stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals met on March 4, 2015 and considered a request for variance approval to allow alterations to a nonconforming accessory building which lies within the required side and rear yard setbacks. He advised that the request was granted.

MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS, ADVISORS

No comments were offered.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Harvey, AICP, PCP
Township Planning Consultant