

**ROSS TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
January 23, 2017**

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  
Russell Fry  
Greg Pierce  
Jeff Price

Absent: Jon Scott  
Sherri Snyder

Also present: Bert Gale, AGS – Township Zoning Administrator  
Kelly Largent, 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 Commission then proceeded with consideration of the **November 28, 2016** Planning Commission meeting minutes. Price moved to approve the minutes as presented. Pierce 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. Site Plan Review – Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority

The next matter to come before the Planning Commission was consideration of the request by Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority for Site Plan Review of the proposed construction of a 38 ft x 62 ft building for additional office space and equipment/vehicle storage. The subject property is located at 7722 North 37<sup>th</sup> Street and is within the R-3 District.

Rich Pierson was present on behalf of the application. He provided an overview of the proposal, noting that a similar building had been proposed in 2009 but never constructed. Pierson stated that the proposed building has been increased in size to 38 ft x 62 ft to allow for additional office space.

Chairperson Lauderdale noted that the building is proposed for additional office space and will function as a principle building per the Zoning Ordinance. As such, it will not be subject to the accessory building height restrictions.

No public comment was offered on the matter.

In response to questions, Pierson stated the overhead doors are primarily located on the east side of the building toward the interior of the property, but that one overhead door will face M-89 and be served by a driveway.

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the application material and the Site Plan Review Summary (dated January 16, 2017) provided on the request. The Commission then proceeded with a review of the application pursuant to Section 21.4 – Site Plan Review (Content). The following site plan requirements were waived pursuant to Section 21.4 T. 1.:

Subsection C. – surrounding building locations have not been shown but are reflected on the 2009 site plan.

Subsection D. – the operation is not proposed to be expanded; increased parking is not required.

Subsection F. & O. – sealed plans, building elevations and floor plans have now been provided.

Subsection M. – property surveyor has not been shown but is reflected on the 2009 plan.

It was further concluded that the proposed building does not significantly alter the 2009 site plan review conclusions; the building is proposed to be located in a

developed area and will require minimal site disturbance; and, the proposal meets the Site Plan Review Criteria set forth in Section 21.6 B.

Fry moved to grant Site Plan Approval for the proposed 38 ft x 62 ft building on the subject site based upon the review findings of Sections 21.4 and 21.6 B. and noting the site plan waivers previously granted. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

## 2. 2017-2018 Planning Commission Budget

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the Department Budget Request 2017-2018 (Planning Commission) provided. The Commission conducted a line item review noting the following:

- the Professional Services budget does not reflect estimated costs for the review/update of the Master Plan;
- the review/update of the Master Plan will require additional discussion with the Township Board and associated costs can be addressed through separate action;
- understanding that the Master Plan costs are not reflected in the budget, the \$6500 budgeted for planning consulting services should be adequate to cover 2017 services and any potential rate increase in 2018;

The Commission concluded that the amounts for each line-item in the 2017-2018 budget are acceptable, with agreement that the review/update of the Master Plan will be addressed separately.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### 1. Establish Public Hearings

Chairperson Lauderdale noted that public hearings for the following proposed text amendments are required:

- Section 17.2.B.1. and 4. – Boathouse and Dock Regulations – *accepted for public hearing on August 22, 2016*
- Section 22.4 C. – Repair, Maintenance and Restoration of Nonconforming Use or Building/Structure – *accepted for public hearing on November 28, 2016*

Fry moved to schedule public hearings on the previously noted text amendment proposals for the February 27, 2017 Planning Commission meeting. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

## 2. Sign Ordinance

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced previous discussions held regarding needed changes to the sign ordinance to address content-neutral sign requirements. Harvey reported that she is in conversation with Attorney Thall in the preparation of revisions to the sign ordinance and that the draft text will be ready for presentation/discussion in February.

## 3. Watershed Protection Strategies

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced the January 10, 2017 discussion of the Planning Commission wherein it was agreed that revisions to Section 21.4 - Site Plan Review Content and Section 21.6 B. – Site Plan Review Criteria to include content requirements and criteria related to water resource protection, such as storm water, groundwater, shoreline management, wetlands, soil erosion, and surface water, is an appropriate first step. He noted that Harvey had been directed to prepare draft text for Planning Commission consideration in January.

Harvey provided an overview of the draft text provided, noting the provision of alternate text to demonstrate a variety of approaches available. Planning Commission review of the draft text ensued wherein the following was noted:

- Section 21.4 – accept first 4 bullets; prefer the 2 bullets set forth in the second text option for the drainage plan standard
- Section 21.6 – prefer the 2 bullets set forth in the second text option; the second text option has more substance and is easier to understand

Harvey was directed to revise the draft text per the discussion of the Planning Commission for consideration in February.

Discussion then ensued regarding the implementation of the proposed criteria, with specific reference to its application only to land use that requires site plan review and the cost of implementation/compliance.

## 4. Article 20, Item 13.B.2. – Access from a County Primary Road or State Trunkline

Chairperson Lauderdale referenced Planning Commission discussion of the matter in November and its determination that: 1) the Ordinance should be amended to include a definition(s) of whatever roadway classification is to be referenced, and 2) that the 46 special land uses identified in Article 20 should be reviewed and an assessment made for each use regarding the merit of a frontage and/or access standard based on roadway classification.

It was generally agreed that access may be an issue depending on the traffic generation of a particular land use, the nature of the traffic generated (ie commercial vehicles), and the districts in which the land use is allowed. It was noted that the application of a frontage requirement is more related to limiting the location options of a particular land use beyond its zoning classification due to potential roadway impacts.

After clarification of the objectives of access and frontage standards, it was further agreed that both require that the road classification references in the Ordinance be clarified.

It was determined that Planning Commission members would review each special land use referenced in Article 20 as it relates to the need for an access and/or frontage requirement and that the criteria used in conducting the review of each use should be offered to support the assessments. Continued discussion of the matter was scheduled for February.

#### 5. Master Plan Summary by Beckett & Raeder

Due to the lateness of the hour, discussion of the matter was postponed to the February meeting.

### REPORT FROM TOWNSHIP BOARD

In the absence of Scott, Chairperson Lauderdale read a written synopsis of Township Board activity provided by Scott. He noted general Township Board support for the Planning Commission's proposal to address watershed protection elements in the site plan review process, and provided updates on actions/discussions involving road funding, the review/update of the Master Plan, and the potential for a trailhead park at M-89/38<sup>th</sup> Street.

### REPORT FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Chairperson Lauderdale stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals met in December and considered and denied a variance request from the minimum lot width/frontage and lot width to depth ratio requirements. He noted that the request was then reconsidered at the January meeting in light of the applicant's absence in December and earlier miscommunication from the Township, and was again denied by the Board.

He further noted that the Zoning Board of Appeals also considered and granted a front setback variance request and a variance request from the front, side, and rear setback and lot coverage requirements on a nonconforming lot at the January meeting.

## MEMBERS, CONSULTANTS, ADVISORS

Fry reported that 38<sup>th</sup> Street/M-89 has been identified as a park site for the trailhead.

Gale provided an update on assistance recently provided by Attorney Thall on the requested text interpretation involving 'campgrounds'. He also noted recent interest in the former Wildermuth Elementary School on East D Avenue and a scheduled meeting with the potential developer.

Fry reported that he will be absent for the February and March Planning Commission meetings.

Pierce reported that he will be absent for the February Planning Commission meeting.

## ADJOURN

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

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rebecca Harvey, AICP, PCP  
Township Planning Consultant