

WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting – May 15, 2007 @ 7:30 p.m.

Vice Chair Jill Kemp called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Roll call indicated four members of the Zoning Commission were present: Jill Kemp, James Likley, Scott Anderson and John Miller (alternate). Wayne Brezina and Russ Zupanic were absent. Others in attendance included: Trustee Jeff Plumer (late), Trustee Carolyn Sims, Trustee Tim Kratzer (late), Donald Iacobucci (9518 Daniels Road), Carole and Allan MacKinnon (5945 Seville Road), Joel Sech (5905 Seville Road), Karen and Tom Micklas (7360 Buffham Road), Tim Sims (5570 Mud Lake Road), Jon and Debi Stepleton (9171 Deerfield Drive), Mary Sklenar (136 W. Main, Seville) and Scott Spitzer (5735 Greenwich).

Minutes

Vice Chair Kemp proceeded to the approval of the minutes at which time Trustee Sims stated that Jeff Plumer was to have called Chair Russ Zupanic to ask that the minutes be tabled. Since Russ Zupanic was not present, Vice Chair Kemp inquired of Trustee Sims if she was requesting that the minutes be tabled to which Trustee Sims answered in the affirmative. Upon further inquiry by Vice Chair Kemp, Trustee Sims indicated that she was requesting that both the April 10, 2007, workshop minutes and the April 10, 2007, regular meeting minutes be tabled.

Vice Chair Kemp indicated that she had talked with Assistant Prosecutor Bill and he had told her if such a request to table minutes was made by a trustee then the Zoning Commission needed to schedule a meeting with the trustees to determine the reason for the request and then a second meeting of the Zoning Commission would be needed to approve the minutes – both meetings were to be done within two weeks. As requested by Trustee Sims, the minutes were tabled.

Old Business

Vice Chair Kemp indicated that Home Occupation and Signage matters had been tabled previously. It was determined that these matters would continue to be tabled.

New Business

Jim Likley stated that he had been in contact with the Prosecutor's Office relative to our flood plain language. He had received a 14-page fax this afternoon from A.P. James Bennett relative to the review of our Natural Hazards Overlay District along with an attachment of a Model Riparian Setback Zoning Resolution drafted by Geauga County. The Prosecutor's Office May 14, 2007, faxed letter suggests that there should be more detail and other evidence is needed for these regulations. The letter further indicates that the Medina County Soil and Water Conservation District should be able to provide such supporting information. It was the consensus of the board that additional time was needed to review this information. It was tabled until the next regular meeting to give everyone time to review.

Other Business

Trustee Sims indicated that the county had put together a detailed flood plain overlay map that shows the flood plain as well as the FEMA 100 year, 500 year and the floodway - when that is received it can be reviewed.

Jim Likley indicated that a request was presented to the trustees in regard to the comprehensive plan funding to work with Mr. Arnold (who is working on Lafayette Township's comprehensive plan) and the trustees decided to hold up at this time for funding for that update. He further indicated that Arnold's fee was for the total rework, review of our comprehensive plan, the community involvement, committee meetings, the whole process and Mr. Arnold would oversee that procedure as facilitator.

Jill Kemp inquired as to why the trustees didn't want to pursue the comprehensive plan update since the original survey to the residents was done in 1994-95 and when NorthStar did their recommendations in 2002 another survey was not done. Kemp indicated that Planning Services recommends updating a comprehensive plan every four-five years at a minimum. She is concerned that we need to know we really are following what everybody wants, and if they want a rural atmosphere, do they also want conveniences. She stated that she is trying to look at everything with an open mind, as all the zoning board members should - no matter who comes before us with any request at any time. Updating the comprehensive plan is a good idea because we can get current information from the residents instead of just an updated plan by a planner.

Trustee Plumer indicated the quote from Mr. Arnold was for \$38,000. He also indicated that last year when this was brought up there was no reason from a cost standpoint to go forward with it. He further indicated there was no reason for a change because it was just done recently by NorthStar. He further indicated that the plan itself spoke for the people - the rural integrity that the people wanted to preserve.

Trustee Sims indicated that the 2003 update was only a few years old so it is still relevant and we did spend the money for that update. There are still suggestions in there relating to the Lake Road corridor that haven't been addressed yet. She further indicated that in addition we have had only 60 new homes in the last five years so there hasn't been any growth or influx of residents whose opinions have changed. She also stated it's a bottom line issue this year.

There was a question from the audience (later identified as Allan McKinnon) about putting the matter on the ballot to ask residents what they want. Clarification of his question indicated the ballot question would be whether the township wanted to remain rural or go another direction. Vice Chair Kemp stated it's not that easy just to put it on the ballot. Jim Likley indicated that the process would require a referendum from the residents to put it on the ballot.

There was some discussion about the February meeting where there was a lot of discussion about certain changes that were potentially being proposed. Both Tom and Karen Micklas indicated that they thought there was a pretty good representation of a

large part of the population at that meeting and a large number of people wanted to maintain the rural atmosphere. Vice Chair Kemp indicated that when the zoning commission held several meetings on the sexually oriented business language the meeting room was packed. Jim Likley indicated there was no application for a zoning change for any district other than possibly looking at the Lake Road corridor, which had been suggested by a planner.

There was general discussion about how updating the comprehensive plan would work and how a survey would work. A question was asked about what percentage of return the original survey generated and board members indicated it was probably about 33% or between 30-40% - probably about average when you look at voter turnout.

Trustee Sims indicated a topic for discussion would be agricultural preservation of our existing farms. She has been working with two agencies to set up a meeting in June. The brochure they provided goes over the agriculture overlay district and some suggestions for zoning boards. She has been asked to sponsor a property for conservation through the easement program where they actually purchase the easement. There is an ASA (agriculture security area), which requires 500 acres but it could be made up of multiple parcels and in that ten year period of time they are guaranteed no additional infrastructure would be built in the ASA. The State has already come up with several parcels that they wish to conserve as anchor parcels and that information will be provided at the meeting with the farmers and the farmers can see what their individual options would be. Also a new House Bill that should be coming out of committee soon that proposes contractors to come in and purchase the agriculture easements and then go further north where there is already a denser population.

There was additional discussion about how the easement purchase program would work. Trustee Sims also indicated the concept could also apply to preserving a forested area or a wetland area for wildlife preservation, watershed, etc. As soon as a firm meeting date is set it will be announced but it is not a township meeting – it is a meeting for the farmers. Trustee Sims further indicated that Jim Likley went to a meeting where second generation agriculture as being more recreational was discussed – it would tie in agriculture to the pumpkin patch, the apple orchard, the Christmas tree farm, etc. – there could be year around recreation on the farm so that the second generation farmer or another business could turn a profit.

There was a question from the audience (later identified to be from Joel Sech) that he read in the Post and the Gazette about a shopping complex with a Target or Lowe's store and is this what was being discussed. He indicated this was his first meeting and he only moved here from the Cleveland area about four years ago. He commented that the people around here and his neighbors are so kind, so nice and so understanding. He stated that he thought Wadsworth had overdone it with stores and he wanted to keep the area just as it is. Vice Chair Kemp stated that a possible proposal for development was brought to our attention but we do not have any application at this time. Jim Likley indicated that before any change like that could happen, it has to come before this board and it would need to be reviewed and the board would go through the steps and make a decision at that

time. Jim Likley further indicated that what was in the paper was from a possible proposal but nothing has been received for a zoning change and until then we have to follow our current zoning code. He also states that once an application is received it would need a public hearing and notices would be put in the Gazette and any contiguous landowners would receive notice. The meeting and public hearing notices would also be put on the website.

Adjournment

Hearing nothing further, Vice Chair Jill Kemp adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Marlene L. Oiler, Certified PP, PLS
Westfield Township Zoning Commission Secretary

(Minutes approved 6/12/07.)