

CLARK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

April 10, 2018 AT 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order by Mr. Merchberger and **Pledge of Allegiance** conducted at 7:00 PM

Roll Call: Members Present – Merchberger, Pieri, Koster, Dunn, Wilcox, Kozma, Speidel.

Building Inspector: Waybrant (abs)

Absent: Keighley, Patton

Others Present: Bud Mathews; John Hessel; Mark Clymer, *Twp. Supervisor*; Erich Doerr of *St. Ignace News*.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 13, 2018

Name of St. Ignace News reporter was misspelled. It was corrected.

Motion: Moved by Dunn, seconded by Kozma to approve minutes as amended.

All Ayes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Bud Mathews: presented a variety of items:

- a) concern that a December PC meeting inhibited residents who own property in Hessel and who reside in Florida during winter months to attend and protest decisions of the commission;
- b) he's writing a book about the history of the Hessel area
- c) that state law prohibits road ends to be blocked as in Hessel
- d) that the Township has no right to put a dock at the Hessel beach
- e) that lake frontage along Cedar Road ought to remain natural, it provides a 'therapeutic walking path'
- f) he advised the Township to use caution when signing contracts citing property issues at the Hessel airport as an example

Mr. John Hessel commented that public property provides valuable assets to the community for the "sheer enjoyment" of many areas, and urged the commission to prevent private interests to take them over, and not use all public access sites for commercial use.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Mr. Merchberger added: Special Land Use regarding boat houses and boat shelters.

Ms. Wilcox said the vendor permit application will be ready for the May meeting.

Motion by Pieri, second by Koster to approve the additions to the agenda. All ayes.

ZBA Report

Mr. Pieri said the Zoning Board meets April 11.

He talked about a training he and Mr. Clymer attended in Gaylord, *The ABCs of ZBAs*. He noted standards the ZBA is to use, that members are to view properties individually and not together to avoid prejudging; that the Planning Commission should review annually the variance appeals to determine what property owners are attempting to do and where ordinances may need amending.

Discussion followed about:

- * to list the standards for granting appeals with the public notice
- * that variances ought to be 'extremely' difficult to obtain
- * that each variance does not set a precedent, that each case is considered unique

Mr. Pieri noted, when questioned, that in his four years on the ZBA reviewing about 12 appeals for variances, none had been turned down.

Township Board Report

Mr. Clymer was asked to give a Board report in the absence of Ms. Patton. He said the case involving the Christians continues under discussion and review. He said the Township Board chose not to install a dock at the Lake Street road end in Hessel at this time, but will consider it later depending on what the Planning Commission decides regarding road ends.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Road Ends.

Mr. Dunn presented a spreadsheet outlining 28 road ends in Clark Township. He stated some may be made into low impact access, such as for kayaks and canoes, while others could be high impact for work boats and emergency vehicles, and to prioritize what is needed.

He also provided a sketch of adding dockage at the Hessel marina for commercial and emergency vehicle use. Mr. Clymer noted that the State has policy prohibiting commercial use at public marinas. Mr. Kozma expressed that a commercial dock was the only sensible thing to do, yet Mr. Koster added that to use the site as configured for commercial dockage would significantly reduce parking and launching capability. Discussion followed about various strategies to potentially provide commercial access near the Hessel marina site. Mr. Clymer said the Township is working to have an engineer examine the area.

Mr. Merchberger recommended that five road end sites be reviewed at a time to outline what could or could not be done there, evaluate for best use, then bring to the commission for review.

2. Boat Houses and Shelters

Mr. Merchberger said the document that Mr. Keighly drafted explains well why Special Land Use Permits require a review process, and ought to be included with notices to property owners.

Mr. Koster stated he believes in the appeal process, and that people (i.e. adjacent property owners) need to understand what they can do in commenting to the commission.

Mr. Kozma said there is a clear matrix for boat house construction and a Special Land Use permit is unnecessary. Mr. Koster responded that boat houses are unique to this area and the appeal process insures that rules and the ordinance are followed such that an adjacent property owner cannot question the construction after it has been publicly reviewed and approved. Ultimately, he said the benefit is with the property owner seeking the special land use.

Mr. Dunn said boat houses are a unique feature to Les Cheneaux and that township residents requested the Township to keep control over their construction.

Mr. Koster and Ms. Wilcox will draft a letter based upon Article 11 of the Zoning Ordinance to be distributed to adjacent property owners when a notice of a hearing is mailed.

NEW BUSINESS: none.

ADJOURNMENT: *Moved by Mr. Koster, second by Mr. Pieri to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. All ayes.*

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday May 8, 2018 at 7 p.m.