

Minutes:
Watersmeet Township Planning Commission

Regular Meeting of March 11, 2015

Watersmeet High School Library

- 1) Meeting called to order by Chairman Roy D'Antonio at 6:30 PM.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance was given.
- 3) **Roll Call:** Members Present: Chairman Roy D'Antonio, Secretary John Neumann, Township Board Liaison-Rich Henriksen, Pete Peterson, Jeff Wasson, John Cestkowski, Larry Potter, Dave Sherrill and Jeff Zelinski were present. Several community members were present.
- 4) **Approval of Agenda/Changes:** Dave Sherrill requested 5 additions to the agenda. Dave Sherrill made a motion to accept the Agenda with changes as presented, second was made by Roy D'Antonio. Unanimous yes vote to approve agenda.
- 5) **Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by Pete Peterson to accept minutes of regular meeting of February 11th as written, second by Dave Sherrill. Unanimous yes vote.
- 6) **Zoning Clarification on Resorts:** There was a discussion on how resorts are zoned in Watersmeet. The discussion dealt with the subdividing of resorts and what that did to the resort classification. Could the dividing of a resort change its classification and the zoning of the property? Roy believed that if a resort is divided, short term rentals should be allowed without Special Use Permit. Change of use of the resort seemed to be the consensus of whether a Special Use Permit should be required to short term rent or not.
- 7) **Street Signs/Blight Within Watersmeet Village:** Roy was concerned about the street signs missing and unreadable. Mike Rogers stated that some street signs will be replaced this year. House number signs are the responsibility of the home owner. Roy was also concerned about blight in the Township. There was a discussion about blight and concerns of how it makes the town look plus the expense of cleaning it up. Rich stated that a previous Planning Commission had entertained a blight ordinance but it was shot down. Roy said he would get a sample blight ordinance and send to the PC members.
- 8) **Township Survey:** The Township Survey was returned to the Planning Commission by the Town Board. There was a discussion of what to do about the survey at this point. Rich stated that the Board sent the survey back because much of the survey asked questions that the Township had no control over. Many comments centered on this being too late to do a survey to use it for the Master Plan completion. Dave believed it was needed to complete the Master Plan. Jeff Zelinski made a motion to scrap the survey at this time, Second by Pete Peterson. All except Dave Sherrill were in favor.
- 9) **Master Plan Update:** Dave stated that he was waiting for information from the Watersmeet School to complete the Master Plan and was disappointed in the response from the school supervisor. He said he was told to look it up on the school's web site and that all the information was there. Roy defended Supervisor Peterson. He said he spoke with George and George said he was kind of busy at the time and didn't feel his attitude was inappropriate. Roy will get the information to Dave so the Master Plan can be completed.

- 10) **Change to PC By-Laws:** Dave submitted a change request to the Planning Commission By-Laws that dealt with continuing education for Planning Commissioners. There was a discussion that followed. Dave made a motion to add the following to the PC By-Laws; **Section 6: Continuing Education;** To be reappointed to the Planning Commission, each member of the Planning Commission will complete one hour of continuing education for each year of their appointed term in office. This education must be related to their responsibilities as a member of the Planning Commission. Reimbursement of cost is subject to approval of the Watersmeet Township Board. **Transitional Rule:** Existing members must complete one hour for each year or partial year of their remaining term. Second by Rich Henriksen. Roll call vote: Roy D'Antonio yes, Dave Sherrill yes, John Neumann abstain, John Cestkowski yes, Jeff Wasson no, Jeff Zelinski no, Larry Potter yes, Pete Peterson yes, and Rich Henriksen yes. Motion carried.
- 11) **Township Web Site:** Dave had concerns about draft minutes as well as links not being updated on the township web site. Rich stated he should be informed when misinformation is found on the web site so he can correct it. Dave also stated he was offended in a saying by Joseph Goebbels (propaganda minister for Adolf Hitler) posted on the town's web site and wondered who put it there. Supervisor Rogers said he did. Dave thought it was offensive to Jewish people. The saying was, "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the state can shield the people from the political, economic and military consequences of that lie. It thus becomes really important for the state to use all of its powers to repress dissent. For truth is a moral enemy of the state." Mike stated that he believed the only problem Dave had with the saying was who said it and if Mike would have put anonymous behind the saying Dave wouldn't have any problem with it. Dave said he didn't like the saying and it was offensive to Jews. Mike and everyone else at the meeting disagreed with Dave and did not find any offense in the saying. Mike stated that he spoke with other Jewish people about it and explained the context of the saying. He said they had no problem with it.
- 12) **Blue Bus Update:** Jeff Zelinski reported that the biggest problem with the bus is that it doesn't go places people want to go such as Wisconsin. The Blue Bus isn't allowed to go into Wisconsin where people from Watersmeet would like to go. Roy will try to get the grant application for a bus service and try to apply for money to better serve Watersmeet. Roy will get it to the Blue Bus Committee (Jeff Zelinski/Kathy Stupak Thrall) if possible.
- 13) **Status of the Recreation Plan:** No other local participants were contacted for input so this item was tabled. There was some discussion about an extension of the bike trail.
- 14) **Town Hall:** Dave Sherrill read a section from the Michigan Enabling Act and stated that it said that it was the Planning Commission's responsibility to approve the removal and building of the township hall. Supervisor Rogers stated that the Township Board had already held a hearing concerning the building. Dave felt it was the responsibility of the Planning Commission and the law to approve the planning of the new township building. Some on the Commission stated that Supervisor Rogers and the Town Board should be commended for taking the initiative in building a new town hall. Pete Peterson made a motion to support the Township Board's plans to build a new town hall. Second by Jeff Wasson. A large discussion commenced. Supervisor Rogers gave the PC an update of the

Township Board's plan for a new town hall. Roll call vote: Roy D'Antonio yes, Dave Sherrill no, John Neumann yes, John Cestkowski yes, Jeff Wasson yes, Jeff Zelinski yes, Larry Potter yes, Pete Peterson yes, Rich Henriksen no. Motion carries.

15) **Zoning Administration Report:** David Neumann reported there was one land division request and one dock issue that he and Jim Caron were dealing with on Thousand Island. Dave wondered where we were on Special Use Permits regarding classifications of property uses. This was tabled.

16) **Public Comments:** Craig Hesse wondered about a survey that was sent out. It was explained that that was an internet survey and not the survey we were talking about earlier in the meeting.

17) **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by John Cestkowski, second by Pete Peterson, Unanimous yes vote. 8:20 PM

Respectfully submitted by, *John Neumann* – Planning Commission Secretary

Approved: April 8, 2015