

**Watersmeet Township Planning Commission
Final and Approved
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 8, 2019**

Location: Watersmeet Community Center

Meeting called to order by Chairman Pete Peterson at 5:00 PM

Roll Call:

Members Present: Jeff Zelinski, Jeff Wasson, Pete Peterson, John Cestkowski, Peggy Tuttle, Roy D'Antonio, Craig Hesse, Yvonne Clark, Paul Kemppainen

Members Absent: Roy D'Antonio had informed Commission he would be absent

Approval of Minutes of March 13, 2019. Motion by Peggy, 2nd by Yvonne. Motion Carried

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Yvonne, 2nd by Craig. Motion Carried

Public Comment: Greg Clark again thanked the Commission for establishing a committee to look into the issue of short-term rentals. He explained the rationale behind the creation of the draft document and how much the original version given to work from had been modified. He mentioned that there are presently about 15 people publicly advertising short-term rentals on the internet.

Julie Mathiesen thanked the commission members for their participation at the joint training session held with Tim Dean. She raised a question as to when the Civil Penalty for Zoning Ordinance Violations had been enacted. She could not find a reference in the minutes from the Township Board. (Paul checked into this and the Municipal Civil Infraction Ordinance, which is a stand-alone ordinance was approved on March 23, 2018 by the Township Board after a Public Hearing had been held. This ordinance gives the Township the right to enforce all ordinances that have been enacted by the Township by legal action if necessary).

Gary Goska expressed concerns about short-term rentals as there are only about 50 commercial rooms available through the present resorts in the Township. He feels that short-term rentals open up the area for a significant increase in tourist traffic and increased revenue for the local community.

Zoning Administrator's Report:

Dan Kline had the following Zoning Applications for April and May

4/4/19	4008 North Shore Dr. Cisco Lake	Don Dornan	Attached deck
4/10/19	Transfer Station Rd.	Vertical Tower	Cellular Tower for T-mobile
5/6/19	White Birch Rd.	Steve McDonough	Single Family Dwelling

Pending Applications:

21001 Old US 2 West	Steve Wermager	Dwelling
19780 Eagle Drive	Patrick & Ann Kelleher	Dwelling
19403 Fish Hawk Rd	Jeffrey Clay	Garage

4922 Blair St	Keith Williams	Covered Deck
19554 Hebert Rd	Paul Lucas	Garage Addition
19510 Clearwater Lake Rd	Julie Chapman	Garage

Old Business:

Email received from Commissioner Roy D'Antonio concerning short-term rentals which was sent by e-mail and physically delivered to other members of the Planning Commission.

With all due respect, and as a planning commission member, I cannot or will not support this ordinance as written as it is not in the best interest of this community and its property owners. I feel it would be an injustice to our community if this was passed as written.

Whether anyone dislikes my opinion or not this is nothing personal against anyone. I respect the people who drafted this ordinance just as they should respect the people that do not agree with all or part of it.

This ordinance will have negative affects to our tourism, property owner rights, real estate market and property values and which will all affect this area economically. We need people to come to this area. This does just the opposite. As written that is.

The planning commission needs to agree upon an ordinance well before it ever proceeded to a public hearing.

This ordinance, in my view, is much to restrictive.

Since, I will not be able to attend our next meeting as I will be out of town, my main issues with this ordinance are as follows:

The amount of days allowed in L-1(What is wrong with using the Wisconsin law of 180 days?) Our own attorney said we cannot have to restrictive of an ordinance.

1,000' distance among rentals.. For example; this will eliminate most of the rentals on Cisco lake that currently rent.. The advocates for this ordinance say a person can rent BUT if there's another rental within 1/4 you cannot?? Think what this does.

The grandfathered clause.. Anyone who was issued a special use permit is automatically grandfathered.. Not "if" approved.. Again our attorneys opinion is special use permits run with the land. A party who received a special use permit should be grandfathered.. not "if".

Amount of rentals in township.. there's 30 rentals on the chain alone.

Lakes should be 600 acres and above.

Again, this is nothing personal against anyone who has worked on this ordinance or supports its current language.

Feel free to share my comments or thoughts at the next meeting..

Sincerely,

Roy

Yvonne Clark explained that there was an effort to balance the interests of all the residents in the creation of a short-term section. The township could post all of the short-term rental opportunities available on the website. She hoped that everyone appreciates how much effort has been done so far. Pete Peterson questioned 3.1 because it would only allow rentals on two lake areas, Cisco Chain and Lac Vieux Desert. Yvonne stated that the rentals are in this area presently. She also brought up the idea of depleting local fish populations on smaller lakes and the spread of invasive species. Pete said that if only one permit is allowed on a lake, a person that holds it would have it for life in the present language. This does not give people equal opportunity to do renting. John Cestkowski also brought up the issue of Wisconsin property that we can't control from renting on bordering lakes. Yvonne explained that if only 30 permits are allowed it would force people to comply with the conditions because they would be easier to monitor and people would not take a chance on losing their permit. Craig Hesse felt that what had been done was a happy medium for all parties and would ensure a level playing field for all and that compliance could be ensured. Jeff Zelinski doesn't agree with the new ordinance and feels that it overreaches and should be left as is. Peggy Tuttle said she agrees with the changes and feels that it is a good thing for the township moving ahead. Paul brought up that advertising on websites could be monitored and those not having permits could be penalized. He also said that we are adding to the Zoning Ordinance, not creating a new one, and expanding use by special approval with the specifics for short-term rentals. Pete brought up the idea of house sitting as legitimate without the need for a special permit. John brought up Section 3.2 which should limit the number of occupants based upon septic services and not the size of the property. Dan Kline asked if you can rent a caretaker house and it is in current ordinance.

During discussion suggestions arose about the minimum size of lake for rental opportunities, changing from 1000 sq. acres to 750 sq. acres or even 500 sq. acres. Also it was suggested to change the proximity of rentals from 1000' to 600' feet on either side of a parcel presently doing short-term rental. Dan Kline also suggested to check out lake sizes and the average acreage to try to determine number of allowable rentals. Dave Sherrill stated that the current document has many good points and should be brought up to a public hearing. Pete said that we were working to produce the best document we can prior to bringing it up to the public at a hearing. Peggy suggested keeping the present proposal in place relative to lake size and neighbor proximity. Julie Mathiesen felt that we should remember that lake areas are primarily residential and not commercial opportunities. Craig said that he said that it is better to start with current values and modify them if needed. Yvonne felt that we could always revisit the numbers in the future and adjust them as needed.

Paul motioned to amend the distance be 600' rather than 1000' and the size limit to 500 sq. acres rather than 1000 sq. acres and call for a vote. Yvonne seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Craig, Peggy, Yvonne and Paul in favor and Pete, John, Jeff W. and Jeff Z. against. The motion failed.

The feeling was that we should make Tim Dean aware of any further changes that might come up and a Public Hearing could be done in June perhaps. Work could be done to research lake size and other considerations to create a document that would have Commission approval upon such a Public Hearing. Craig felt that we could meet next week to further discuss issues. Mike Rogers felt that there was no need to push the changes as there are few people coming forward requesting permits for short-term rental, only a couple had been applied for in the last couple of years.

Paul made a motion to table further discussion on Wednesday, June 5 at a special meeting, Peggy seconded. The motion carried.

New Business: None

Adjournment: Motion by John, 2nd by Jeff W. Motion carried. Meeting ended at 6:50 PM

SPECIAL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2019 AT 6:00 PM

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss issues related to short-term rentals

Next Regular Meeting on Wednesday, July 10, 2019

Submitted by: Paul D. Kemppainen – Planning Commission Secretary