

Minutes:
Watersmeet Township Planning Commission

Special Meeting of September 15, 2014

Watersmeet Township Office

- 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, Vice Chairman Dave Sherrill, Secretary John Neumann, Township Board Liaison-Rich Henriksen, Pete Peterson, Jeff Wasson, Larry Potter and John Cestkowski were present: Jeff Zelinski was absent. Township Supervisor Mike Rogers was the only member of the public present.
- 4) **Approval of Agenda/Changes:** Roy requested an addition of a discussion of last meeting. A motion was made by Larry Potter to approve change and agenda, 2nd by John Cestkowski. Unanimous yes vote.
- 5) **Discussion about the last meeting:** Roy D'Antonio said he was a little disgusted and embarrassed with the last meeting and thought that things became too personal. He believes that everyone on the PC is doing what they believe is right for the Township and just because we disagree ideologically doesn't mean we can't govern correctly. Roy thought that Dave Sherrill approaching the Piels after the meeting was not right. He believed the Piels had their information correct and approaching them was not appropriate. He also commented that Supervisor Rogers informed him that Dave Sherrill had requested a Public Hearing with the Town Board. Dave said he did. Roy thought that this was a conflict of interest and contacted Attorney Pope about it. Roy wanted to be sure we were legal in our actions. Jeff Wasson was concerned that people believe there is a conflict of interest on the PC because we have realtors, builders and excavators on the board. He doesn't believe that there is a conflict of interest. We are here for the Township. John Cestkowski made the comment that being on the PC could actually be hurting their business if people disagree with their vote. He stated we need to get people to come back to Watersmeet and not make it hard for them to do that. Roy thought it was insulting to him to be accused of wanting the sq. footage change because he's a realtor and hears in his business the comments all the time that many people want this change. Roy brought up the Ordinance change that was made to dock length on Lac Vieux Desert Lake and how it was a struggle to get that approved. But he believes it was the right thing because now the people can use their access to the lake even though it is very shallow. Roy stated he hasn't heard it so much on the Cisco Chain but he has heard it concerning the smaller lakes. There was a discussion about a 3 story house on Thousand Island that John Cestkowski built that looked ridiculous compared to the other cabins around it because it had to conform to the 1200 sq. ft. It was on a very small pie shaped lot. It was commented we will never make everyone happy. John Neumann commented that he doesn't feel like he should have to apologize for his opinions and won't. We all have different opinions at times. He said this has always been a vacation area and why should we require people coming here to build something 1200 sq. ft. when they don't want or need a house that big. Roy told Dave that

he didn't believe it was right for board members to stir the pot. He stated that he could get 200 signatures tomorrow and fill the Township Hearing with people that want this change but he doesn't feel it's right for PC members to do that. Pete didn't believe people would put out 2-300 thousand dollars for lake property and build a 750 sq. ft. house anyway. Supervisor Rogers commented on the conflict of interest of Jeff Zelinski and said someone named Dave had already contacted Pope about it. Pope told Rogers that he didn't see the Zelinski comments a conflict of interest. They also talked about board members commenting that their perceived property values would go down because of the sq. ft. change. Pope felt this was more of a conflict of interest because it could directly affect their property financially. The PC had discussed it and the majority of the board did not see Zelinski's comments as a conflict of interest. There was a discussion about the Bed & Breakfast decision and Supervisor Rogers asked the board to read 7.10 in the Ordinance. He said although Bed & Breakfast is not specifically mentioned, it does fit into short term rentals. Roy stated that we can work on the Ordinance and add Bed & Breakfast in the future which would be a good idea but it doesn't prohibit us from approving it. Dave Sherrill felt there was a licensing issue with the Bed & Breakfast according to the Michigan Act. There was disagreement on this point and what the Act actually says. The point made was with the words "should and shall" which mean something very different. John Neumann asked Dave Sherrill why he requested a Public Hearing with the Township Board concerning the sq. ft. change. He stated he was asked to do it. John said don't you think it would have been a better idea to tell the person that they should ask for a Public Hearing instead of you creating the perceived conflict of interest by doing it as a PC member? John commented that just because you (Dave) did not get your way with the sq. ft. vote, you would then go to the Township Board requesting a Public Hearing? Dave stated it was not a conflict of interest. John stated that even if it weren't a conflict of interest, it didn't seem appropriate for him (Dave) to file a request for hearing because he is a PC member. John stated again the appropriate response to people asking him to file for Public Hearing would have been "no, they should request the hearing".

- 6) **Discussion of Master Plan/Survey:** Dave Sherrill went through all the grammatical changes and deletions that were boiler plate language that didn't fit the Plan. Rural Northwood environment was a topic of discussion and whether or not this term still applies because we seem to be heading towards more rentals. Dave and Rich stated that Rural Northwoods was defined as single family dwellings. John Neumann asked where this was defined as he couldn't find it in the Master Plan. Dave thought it was somewhere in the Master Plan. The definition was not found. There was a discussion pertaining to expanding Watersmeet sewer and water. Many items were taken out of the Master Plan as they didn't apply or didn't make sense for Watersmeet. The situation in Watersmeet has changed as much of the area has. Towns are shrinking due to the economy. There was a discussion about resorts closing in our area. Dave commented that we really can't finish the Master Plan without completing the survey. There was concern that the survey would delay finishing the Master Plan. Dave thought that we could get the survey done in a couple months and we really can't move forward without it. We finished cleaning up we could all the way up to the Housing Element. There was a discussion about the previous survey and the response from that mailing. There was a discussion concerning the Tribe and whether or

not they would be surveyed. Dave believes we would have to contact the Tribe and see if they would be interested in being involved.

7) **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.

8) **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Pete Peterson, 2nd by Jeff Wasson. Unanimous yes vote. 9:01 PM

Respectfully submitted by,

John Neumann – Planning Commission Secretary

Approved: October 8, 2014