

**Minutes:**  
**Watersmeet Township Planning Commission**

**Regular Meeting of April 9, 2014**

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, Vice Chairman Dave Sherrill, Secretary John Neumann, Township Board Liaison-Rich Henriksen, Pete Peterson, Jeff Wasson, John Cestkowski, Larry Potter and Jeff Zelinski were present. Several community members were present.
- 4) **Approval of Agenda/Changes:** A motion was made by Pete Peterson to accept the Agenda as presented, second was made by Jeff Wasson. Unanimous yes vote to approve agenda.
- 5) **Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by Pete Peterson to accept minutes of February 12, 2014 and March 12, 2014 as written, Second by Jeff Wasson. Unanimous yes vote.
- 6) **Zoning Administration Report:** David Neumann reported that there was a request for one building permit for a 21x13 tree house and 2 requests for Special Use Permits. One Special Use Permit for a Bed-and-Breakfast on Twist Lake and one for renting a home on Lac Vieux Desert Lake. No Special Use Permit is required for the tree house.
- 7) **Key Hole Ordinance Language:** Chairman D'Antonio presented the Commission with a letter from Township Attorney Pope and sample Key Hole Ordinances from other Townships. There was a discussion back and forth concerning the process the PC would develop to move this portion of the Ordinance forward after the Watersmeet Township Board sent it back to the PC for change. The discussion centered on whether or not the whole section should be totally re-written or just adjusted and clarified to reflect the intent of the PC. After many opinions were offered from the public and PC members it was determined that we would retain the major portion of our current ordinance and add language that Julie Mathiesen had previously provided to clarify the PC's intent. A motion was made by Pete Peterson to send the information to the existing PC Sub-Committee (Pete Peterson, Jeff Wasson, Rich Henriksen, Dave Sherrill, and David Neumann) to re-write that portion of the Ordinance.
- 8) **Dan Wait Special Use Permit:** Chairman D'Antonio presented a letter from Mr. Wait requesting a Special Use Permit for renting to no more than 4 people. An email from Lynne Madison was also provided from the Health Department stating that the property in question could support renting to 4 people. There was a discussion concerning the process to approve the Application and it was determined that a new application was not required to approve this Special Use Permit. There was much discussion about septic systems and what should be required as far as inspections. Points were made about renting short term on lakes vs. short-term rentals off lakes and why they are treated differently. It was determined that the PC had approved the previous Special Use Permit if Mr. Wait's septic system was adequate to support the number of renters in the home. Dave Sherrill made the motion to amend the original Special Use Permit to allow Wait to rent to 4 people

because it was rated for that many people by the health department, second by Jeff Wasson. All in favor. Motion carried.

- 9) **Sub-Committee Update:** There hasn't been a meeting since the last update according to Dave Sherrill. A meeting will be scheduled soon to continue going through the current Zoning Ordinance to clean up and clarify the Ordinance. There was a short discussion on R1 and R2 problems. It was stated by Pete Peterson that the whole Ordinance was going to be cleaned up but not changed. The wording in the complete Ordinance will be gone through and then brought to the full PC for approval or further discussion.
- 10) **Schedule Special Meetings for Continued Work on Master Plan Updates:** A meeting was scheduled for April 15<sup>th</sup> for a meeting on the Master Plan at 6:30 at the Township Office. There will be a Sub-Committee meeting at 6:30 on the 17<sup>th</sup> at the Township Office.
- 11) **Public Comments:** Ed Kennedy stated that Mr. Pope should provide the PC with sample Key Hole Ordinances that strictly prohibit Key Holing. The PC reminded Mr. Kennedy that it was already decided that we were going to continue to use the language in our current Ordinance with modifications that already prohibits Key Holing. Julie Mathiesen commented that Bed and Breakfasts are not allowed by our current Ordinance. She said that comes directly from Attorney Pope in an opinion letter written in November of 2012 concerning Cisco Lake Resort. Supervisor Rogers said it is covered in the Ordinance under short-term rentals. They disagreed and no consensus was reached on the subject. Her second comment was on septic systems and rentals. She provided a spreadsheet gleaned from the Internet concerning what rentals were being advertised. She stated many of the properties could not support the occupancy that was being advertised. She also said that this was probably a small portion of the rentals being advertised. She recommended that septic systems should be inspected and provided 3 different options for developing requirements. There is a bill in the Michigan Legislature that states some of these requirements but is currently being held up by the Real Estate lobby. Mr. Wait agreed with Julie on requiring septic system inspections. Julie was against the Wait Special Use Permit because it did not provide sufficient information for the PC to assess the impacts on the septic system and lake, the well, or whether or not he was operating a marina. Mr. Wait interjected that he believes the water going through his system is less than any full time resident living on the lake. There was much more discussion on the subject. Chairman D'Antonio stated per our Ordinance the Wait property could be given a Special Use Permit. This is a complicated subject and more work will have to be done. It was suggested by Supervisor Rogers that perhaps a letter to Jason Elders should be written by the PC to inform him that in order to be consistent with the Wait property his septic system must be able to support the number of people staying in his rental. Dave Neumann made the comment that he was concerned about the fire code on the Elders property with the house possibly being over capacity. He was trying to reach Attorney Pope concerning this but he was on vacation. Craig Hesse made the comment that he was against the Wait Special Use Permit because it should be considered commercial. His resort should not be treated differently than the Wait property.

- 12) **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Dave Sherrill, second by Rich Henriksen, Unanimous yes vote.  
8:35 PM

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