

Colfax Township, Weldon Township and Village of Thompsonville
Community Joint Planning Commission
14714 Lincoln Avenue, Thompsonville, MI 49683
Meeting Minutes – April 4, 2013

Chairperson Sue Meredith called the meeting to order at 6:30PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at roll call: JPC members Jack Richter, Peggy Minster, Shelley Greene, Sue Meredith, Bryan Matthews, Don Suchocki, Debra Franke, Pat Workman, Eugene Allen, Mike Foust and Zoning Administrator Craig Meredith. Absent: Bryan Matthews (excused) and Marty Lonn (unexcused). Guest: Mark Eidelson (LANDPLAN)

Meredith welcomed Mike Foust, new alternate member representing the Village of Thompsonville.

Citizen Matters. None.

Public Comment. None.

Agenda Additions/Corrections. Richter moved, seconded by Minster to accept agenda as presented.

Ayes: all, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes. Suchocki moved, seconded by Franke to accept the March 7 meeting minutes.

Ayes: all, motion carried.

Joint Zoning Ordinance.

A. Nonconformities, Miscellaneous “Supplemental” Zoning Issues. Eidelson said this is last meeting for preparation of the draft ordinance. For Nonconformities, the JPC discussed and agreed to draft the ordinance as follows: 1) permit rebuilding if nonconforming structure is destroyed by less than 50% and not increase nonconformity; 2) permit repair/improvements to nonconforming building not more than 10%/year; discussion: new owners, who monitors, require permit, life of building, allow over a specific period of time; 3) replacement of a nonconforming use with another nonconforming use borders on issuance of a variance and should be heard by Zoning Board of Appeals; and 4) strike Section 14.2 of the Weldon Township Zoning Ordinance (WTZO): “continuation of nonconforming structures...even if the extent...is increased...provided the degree...is not increased.”

Eidelson said the Weldon and Village ordinances contain issues that fit a miscellaneous category. While the JPC wishes to remain flexible, he said a balance is needed as well as consideration of the effect certain provisions may/may not have on the community; some issues could be amendments in the future. Suchocki stated as technology changes, we change and adapt; that is why we have to have amendments as things come up. The JPC discussed and made decisions on the following Miscellaneous/Supplemental Issues.

1. Private Roads: Include a provision with flexibility to require certain minimum design standards and a maintenance agreement recorded with the Registrar of Deeds. Access by emergency vehicles needs to be considered. Comments: C. Meredith on county standards and cul de sacs, steepness and washouts; Richter: there should be some control; Greene: when is a very long driveway not a private road? Eidelson said definition of private roads varies by community.
2. Lot Access: Allow two flag lots as a starting point. Weldon’s Section 4.2 requires a lot have frontage on “a road or an approved access to a road.” Eidelson: are there means that would not be acceptable? Meredith: there are some landlocked parcels; Suchocki: it’s an issue; Richter asked about

extending a driveway to provide access; others said neighbors may not get along; Allen asked about future subdividing.

3. Commercial Vehicles in Residential Districts: Suchocki gave many examples of residents having such vehicles for business purposes; Allen said Village ordinance has a one-ton limit; WTZO is silent on issue in zoning ordinance. Option may be to limit in denser areas; Eidelson to develop language.

4. Accessory Buildings and Structures: For front yard and scale, provide limits in residential districts and flexibility in rural areas along lines of current ordinances. Meredith: Crystal Mountain architect committee controls this. Allen: what about on an adjacent lot? Eidelson: yes, if the two cannot be split by ownership at a later date. Height limits are okay as is. Extensive discussion and mixed opinions on erection of accessory buildings prior to establishment of the principal use (dwelling).

5. Dwelling Standards: As a starting point for R-1 and R-2, require standards for roof pitch, square footage and width/length similar to Village zoning ordinance.

6. Temporary Dwelling with Permanent Dwellings: There was support to allow a temporary dwelling (to be removed later, establish time limit) during the repair of the principal dwelling damaged by fire, storm or similar event. No support expressed to allow a temporary dwelling as secondary living quarters.

7. Recreational Vehicle as a Dwelling on Vacant Lot: Include standards and permit requirement with a time limit of 30 days per year. Intent is to allow use for vacations, not as a partial-year residence, and discourage issues that currently exist.

8. Temporary Uses: Allow temporary uses such as community events (car show, farmer's market); include provisions for garage sales. Intent is to discourage "commercial use by default."

9. Yard Storage for Vehicles: Include a provision to limit the number of operative and licensed vehicles to five in a side or rear yard plus three in the driveway as well as limits on the number of other recreational vehicles to address concerns of examples discussed.

10. Damaged/Dangerous Buildings: Eidelson suggested this issue not be addressed the zoning ordinance. Local building code/condemnation/blight process could address an issue.

11. Outdoor Storage, Sales and Merchandise Display: Relative to commercial business, it does not appear to be an issue.

12. Outdoor Furnaces: Does not appear to be an issue at this time.

13. Keeping of Farm and Wild Animals on Residential Property: This does not pertain to a "farm." Not an issue in rural areas; should be addressed to some extent for higher density areas.

B. Schedule of Review Meetings for Initial Drafts. Eidelson covered scenarios on medical marijuana including Michigan and Federal laws. He said the initial draft portions will be in three submittals with the first probably toward the end of April which may not be enough time to review prior to the May meeting. He suggested the JPC flag issues and ask for clarification; he will use meeting minutes to revise drafts. The Agreement includes two draft ordinance review meetings to go through initial revisions. Need to read cover letter before reviewing drafts; indicate in individual notes where decisions were made to save time and avoid conflicting info. For schedule purposes, Eidelson anticipates the JPC will need at least three meetings to review drafts, probably more, and not meeting with us until late summer/early fall.

C. Zoning Board of Appeals. Discussed under New Business.

Unfinished Business and Reports

- Cleanup Days. S. Meredith felt volunteers with pickups/trailers would be helpful. Allen suggested a flyer with a number to call to assess need/situation. Weldon's date is May 18 (proof of residence required); Colfax is June 15 (must present cards mailed to property owners). Allen, Franke and Minster will meet as a committee.

- GT Band Grant. Greene received no response. Issue closed.

- Annual Report/Budget. Greene will prepare for entities; quarterly expenses by account would be helpful in the future to develop the budget page. S. Meredith to create a spreadsheet by items in the budget.
- Expense/compensation approval. Invoice presented for \$208.25 from LIAA for maps. Franke moved, seconded by Suchocki to approve payment of invoice. Ayes: all, motion carried. Compensation authorization was signed.
- Zoning Administrator Update. C. Meredith received feedback that the low-income housing between Crystal Mountain and the airport is still moving forward. There were no new permits issued in Weldon. Owner on Gunn Road to hold off building for a couple of years.

New Business

- ZBA Administration Workshop. C. Meredith gave dates and locations. April 16 is early registration date for \$55 fee. He reviewed the workshop program. S. Meredith said we need to think about the ZBA structure under the ordinance in regard to Eidelson's opinion on administering the joint zoning ordinance. She will email him for ZBA member details and discuss at the next meeting.

Correspondence. None.

Other.

- Correction. Richter pointed out the ZIP code on the agenda needs to be corrected.
- Alternates at Future Meetings. C. Meredith felt the alternates need to attend future meetings with compensation at this critical point in the zoning ordinance development so they have the background on issues and decisions if a regular member is absent. Franke moved, seconded by Suchocki to schedule the alternates to attend the balance of the zoning ordinance meetings.

Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 9:45PM. Next meeting is scheduled for 6:30PM on May 2 at the Village Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Greene
Secretary

Minutes are proposed until approved at the next meeting.