

Minutes: Russell Township Board of Zoning Appeals
Russell Fire-Rescue Station
August 3, 2015

Present: Steve Gokorsch, Chairman
William Downing
John Rybak
Dushan Boucek
Diana Steffen, Zoning Inspector

Sarah Moore was absent with apologies.
Also in attendance: Jennifer Dorka, Assistant to the Fiscal Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES OF JULY 6, 2015 – *Mr. Rybak made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, Mr. Downing seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

DISCUSSION OF SECRETARIAL ASSISTANCE TO BOARD – The board discussed the change in Mrs. Steffen's duties as secretary. There is a concern about Mrs. Steffen taking minutes for the record of her own testimony as Zoning Inspector. Ms. Dorka will be taking the minutes going forward so that Mrs. Steffen is not recording her own testimony and can focus on the meeting as the Zoning Inspector.

Mr. Rybak asked Mrs. Steffen how often she drives around the Township and inspects the area. Mrs. Steffen said she only drives down each road once a month, on top of site inspections and monitoring violations.

Mr. Gokorsch suggested that Mrs. Steffen set a schedule so she can be out of the office and conducting inspections on certain days of the week. Mrs. Steffen said it would be hard to have a set schedule to be out in the field due to the weather, and demand.

OTHER BUSINESS- The Zoning Inspector noted that a representative of the Hackamore Woods homeowners association visited the Zoning office, and asked the Zoning Inspector if the new and updated bylaws and declaration had any conflicts with the Townships zoning. Mrs. Steffen noted that any amendments need Board of Zoning Appeals approval, and was last rewritten during the time of 1973-1975. Mrs. Steffen also told the board that there is a retention pond in Hackamore Woods that the Fire Department uses, but no one has been maintaining the walk way to the pond and Mrs. Steffen doesn't think that the Fire Department could get to the pond anymore.

Mrs. Steffen said she couldn't identify the changes that have been made from the current version to the proposed newly updated version. Mr. Boucek suggested that the homeowners association submit a revised copy with highlighted areas showing what has changed so the board can see the changes more clearly. Mr. Gokorsch agreed and would also like clarification on the use of the common land and the stand pipe for the use of the Fire Department. Mr. Gokorsch would like the opinion of the Fire Chief on whether he is informed that the pond is blocked off, and if the Fire Department still has a need for the pond.

Mrs. Steffen said that the Fire Department would probably like to have access to the retention pond still.

Mr. Boucek asked if the board needs to make a statement about the common land agreement changes in the revised PRD, and what the specific acres are for the common area. The board mentioned that there are structures in the common land and these issues need to be addressed.

Mr. Gokorsch suggested that members of the homeowners association attend a meeting and present the changes made to the Declaration of Covenants and the By-Laws and supply a copy with the changes highlighted so the board can better determine the changes before anything is approved.

LAUREL SCHOOL- Mrs. Steffen said that last April four representatives from Laurel School come to the zoning office to talk with her about current and future ideas for the school. In April the representatives told Mrs. Steffen that they want to stay in communication with the township. After the meeting Mrs. Steffen discussed the requested uses and asked for a written opinion from Ann Mitchell the assistant county prosecutor addressing the schools plans. In July the school representatives returned and said they would like to focus on activities that have to do with education only, and we not going forward with some of the ideas they had like having weddings and concerts at the school.

The board expressed their concern with any future activities being school activities not community activities. The school is located in a residential area so there can't be loud noise and activities after 9 pm.

There being no other business, Mr. Downing made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Boucheck seconded and the meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Dorka Date

Steve Gokorsch Date
Chairman

bza minutes 08-03-15