

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission
Russell Town Hall
February 24, 2021

Present: Ben Kotowski, Chairman
Jim Dickinson, Vice Chairman
Barry Rogers

Mr. Nathan Wynveen was absent with apologies.

Mr. Shane Wrench, Zoning Inspector, was absent with apologies.

Also in attendance: Cathleen Birli, Zoning Secretary

The public hearing Sunshine Notice was announced in the Chagrin Valley Times and the Geauga Maple Leaf, Thursday, January 21, 2021.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Kotowski made the motion to accept the meeting agenda, Mr. Dickinson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commission Discussion on a Fencing Addition to the Resolution Book:

Mr. Rogers presented a draft for the Fencing Amendment which addresses all of the 5 elements.

1. Definition
2. Allowable Height
3. Set Backs – Property Lines
4. Materials
5. Exclusions

The Zoning Board agreed that a zoning certificate shall not be required for a fence or fences that comply with ALL of the following regulations:

The Amendment will be added to section 4.6 of the Resolution Book.

1. **Definition** – Fence, an artificial constructed structure consisting of wood, masonry, stone, wire, metal or other material or combination of materials erected as a boundary or means of protection to enclose, screen or separate areas on a lot. A “Fence” shall not include hedges, shrubs, trees, or other natural growth or vegetation.

They shall be erected outside of the right-of-way of any public or private road.

They shall not block or impede clear sight distance of vehicle operators at the intersection of any public or private road.

They shall not be unsafe or be in danger of falling down.

2. **Allowable Height** – Fencing shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height other than in front yards, where heights shall not exceed four (4) feet above finished grade.

Fencing enclosing tennis courts shall not exceed twelve (12) feet in height above finished grade.

Fencing enclosing baseball fields shall not exceed sixteen (16) feet in height above finished grade.

Swimming Pools – reference section 4.8c.

3. **Setbacks/ Property Lines** - No section of any fence, gate, or wall shall extend beyond the boundary lines of the property being enclosed.

Along lot lines the unfinished side (if any) of a fence, including the structural supports and posts, shall face the lot upon which the fence is constructed.

4. **Materials** – Consists of wood, masonry, stone, wire, metal or other manufactured materials.

Electrically charged fences and barbed wire fences shall be prohibited.

5. **Exclusions** – Fencing that is incidental to agriculture is exempt from this regulation.

Electrically charged fences to protect gardens of limited size from wildlife are not prohibited.

Mr. Kotowski asked if there are any legal issues to the Township regarding injuries.

Mr. Rogers stated that yard fencing are not regulated like pool fencing.

Mr. Dickinson verified that no permit will be needed if all the regulations are followed.

Mr. Kotowski is concerned for the public safety to have setbacks in the Chagrin Heights area.

Mr. Kotowski made the motion for a public hearing for the 4.6 section addition to the resolution book, Mr. Rogers seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The zoning secretary will draft the amendment for the next meeting and will send a Sunshine Notice to the Chagrin Valley Times and The Maple Leaf for a public reading of the Amendment at the March 24, 2021 meeting.

Commission Discussion on Zoning Resolution Book Amendments:

Billboards:

Mr. Rogers presented a new section 4.11d (signs/billboards) – which prohibits signs in ALL districts.

Delete entire Section 6.5h - Conditional Use Regulations.

Mr. Kotowski stated that an on-site sign should not be considered billboards, only off-site signs.

The zoning secretary will draft the amendment for the next meeting for discussion.

Commission Discussion on Zoning Resolution Book Amendments:

Research and Off Campus Buildings (6.5e): Conditional Use. This is for a 25 acre, 100,000 square foot building with 10% occupancy (400 people).

The zoning board are researching the amount of people per septic capacity.

Solar Fields: 10% of total property can be used

Wind Farms: Zoning Inspector stated there are no restrictions for wind farms.

Mr. Dickinson talked with the Auburn Township assistant zoning secretary stating they are not going forward with any future developments of wind turbines.

