

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission
Russell Fire-Rescue Station
May 22, 2013

Present: Richard E. Snyder, Chairman
Bruce Murphy
Donna Weiss Carson
Ben Kotowski
Tom Warren
Diana Steffen, Secretary

Chairman Richard Snyder called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

MINUTES OF APRIL 24, 2013 – *Mr. Murphy moved to accept the minutes as submitted, Mr. Warren seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

LAND USE GUIDE PLAN UPDATE – Land Use Patterns – Mr. Snyder said that David Dietrich, Geauga County Planning Commission, had said he needed more time to prepare before meeting with Mr. Snyder and Mr. Murphy on this topic. Mr. Snyder said he did some research regarding land use classifications but could not find anything well defined. Mr. Murphy said he is having a problem with how to define the land classes that can be used now and into the future. One suggestion from Mr. Dietrich was to use the County Auditor's land use classification system, but the long list of different classifications in Russell would be unwieldy to use and classifies many lots differently from how they were classified in previous guide plans. Mr. Murphy said he is looking for a system of classification that can be defined and the methodology explained, so the same system can be used for future guide plan updates.

The Commission discussed the problem of land use classification. Mrs. Steffen and Mr. Kotowski had worked on a list of potentially developable lots as part of the demographics section, and will provide it to Mr. Murphy. Ms. Weiss Carson strongly recommended using facts only and not to try to anticipate future development. She also recommended asking Mr. Dietrich for input on how to classify lots of 10 acres. Mr. Murphy suggested considering 5 acres as developed if there is a residence, and the other 5 acres as undeveloped and not developable, which would be simple to replicate in the future. Extra acreage on lots over 10 acres could be considered developable.

Mr. Murphy said classifying agriculture is also an issue. The Auditor classifies any lot larger than 10 acres, with or without a residence, as agricultural. Also in the 1976 Guide Plan CAUV was considered commercial, but not in the 1995 Guide Plan. The question is what is agricultural versus residential or incidental agriculture on a residential lot. The Commission discussed this at length. Mr. Murphy emphasized that it is important to include agriculture since it is part of the Township now, and was in the past and will be in the future. Mr. Snyder said that the land use classifications need to provide a true insight into the character of the community and to reinforce the characteristics that the residents want to preserve.

Action Item: Mr. Murphy and Mr. Snyder will discuss land use patterns with Mr. Dietrich, and continue this discussion at the next meeting.

LAND USE GUIDE PLAN UPDATE - Update Status:

Demographics – Mr. Kotowski said that since compiling a list to determine the approximate number of developable lots in the Township he has not worked further on this topic because the G.C.P.C. has obtained all the necessary information from the Census that can be used in the Guide Plan. The total number of potentially developable lots is about 438 lots. Mr. Snyder said this number is important for planning by the fire, emergency and road departments.

