

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission  
Russell Fire-Rescue Station  
October 22, 2014

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

Also in attendance: Jennifer Dorka, Administrative Assistant.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:12 p.m.

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2014** – *Mr. Murphy made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, Mr. Kotowski seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT** – Because the Geauga Park District is changing its bylaws to permit recreational and other activities that were not previously allowed, the Commission discussed sending a letter to the Park Board explaining that both a County survey and the Township's surveys show that residents support the parks for open space and passive use, and this has been confirmed by the passage of levies for such use. The zoning for Geauga Park District land in Russell is Passive Park because of the wishes of the residents, which are described in the Township's Comprehensive Land Use Guide Plan. The 2012 residents' survey demonstrated again that residents are not looking for any changes in the purpose of the parks. The Commission discussed content for a letter to send to the Geauga Park Board.

Action Item: Mr. Warren volunteered to draft the letter to the Geauga Park Board.

**LAND USE GUIDE PLAN – DEMOGRAPHICS** – Mr. Kotowski apologized that he had not been able to work on this topic over the past month. Mr. Snyder said he had reviewed the 'Population Pyramid by Age and Sex,' and the figures used are not the same as those in the 2010 Census. Mr. Kotowski said he used the American Community Survey estimated figures. However, the Census figures do give an accurate result, and Mr. Snyder recommended using those figures because they will then compare accurately with the 1970 and 1990 population pyramids. Mr. Kotowski agreed that it is important to use a consistent source throughout the three pyramids.

Action Item: Mr. Kotowski will revise the chart using the 2010 Census figures, and will then send it to Mr. Snyder and put it on Dropbox for the Commission.

**RETAIL FOOD SERVICE AMENDMENT** – The Chairman explained that he and Mrs. Steffen discussed the appropriate time to initiate the amendment. Because of the timing of the public hearing, the Planning Commission's meeting dates and the timing of the Trustees' hearing, they felt it would be much smoother to initiate the amendment after the holidays in January. The Commission agreed to this suggestion.

With regard to hours of operation for exterior dining, Mr. Murphy said he thought the Commission had agreed to extend the hours. There was a discussion, and Mr. Snyder said that even though there cannot be any service to customers outside prior to 9:00 a.m. there is nothing to prevent customers from sitting at tables outside earlier in the morning. Anything different could possibly be requested by the applicant when the conditional use is considered by the Board of Zoning Appeals. The Commission agreed not to change the hours.

Mr. Snyder reported that he corresponded with David Dietrich, Geauga County Planning Commission, regarding defining the new commercial zones using metes and bounds to define boundaries of the zones. Mr. Dietrich advised that doing so is considered the best practice. Mr. Dietrich stated he will look into whether there is case law to support this and will advise Mr. Snyder.

**REZONING OF 3 PARCELS – ERROR ON ZONING MAP** – Mrs. Steffen handed out copies of the amendment she had drafted, and explained that in 1989 Amendment 89-2 rezoned part of the 'Kewish' lot, 20.57 acres, to Passive Park District. There are two marked up maps in that file that define the exact area, which is landlocked between Russell Road and Riddle Road. During the public hearing process Tom Stanley was Chairman of the Russell Land Conservancy, which owned the land, and Greg Studen was Chairman of the Zoning Commission. Mrs. Steffen spoke to each of them and they both confirmed that only one lot was amended from Residential to Passive Park. Her research also revealed that the 1992 Zoning Map showed only the one lot rezoned, but according to notes in the zoning files the map was revised in 1993 to make some minor corrections which did not require an amendment. It appears that during that process CT Consultants inadvertently added to the PPD area to include three adjacent parcels. This error has continued on all subsequent revisions of the zoning map. The 20-acre parcel was later transferred from the Russell Land Conservancy to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

Mrs. Steffen said she also researched the old tax maps. The 1980 tax map shows 46 acres in the Kewish name. By the 1990 tax map 20 acres are in the name of the Russell Land Conservancy, with the rest divided into four privately owned lots. The 1996 tax map shows the same configuration. Three of the lots are the subject of the error, the fourth was always shown as Residential.

The Chairman asked Mrs. Steffen to prepare the amendments in the following order: 1) Error on Zoning Map, 2) Splitting of the C-S zones, and 3) Retail Food Service.

Action Item: Mrs. Steffen will prepare the proposed amendments for initiating in January.

There being no other business, Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn, Mr. Warren seconded and the meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Diana Steffen  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard E. Snyder  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date