

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission  
Russell Fire-Rescue Station  
November 19, 2014

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

Bruce Murphy was absent with apologies.

Also in attendance: Jennifer Dorka, Administrative Assistant.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. Mrs. Steffen announced that she had sent a Sunshine Notice to three newspapers on 11/13/14 changing the scheduled venue from the Administration Building to the Fire-Rescue Station.

**MINUTES OF OCTOBER 22, 2014** – *Mr. Warren made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, Mrs. Weiss Carson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

**LAND USE GUIDE PLAN – DEMOGRAPHICS** – Mr. Snyder explained that he had asked Ms. Dorka to enter age and gender data into an Excel spreadsheet for the years 1970, 1990, 2000 and 2010, with a comparison between 2000 and 2010. She also created charts using this data and had posted them on Dropbox. Mr. Kotowski is working to correct the errors on his charts, and will compare the data to Ms. Dorka's data to check if they are the same. The information Mr. Kotowski used from the American Community Survey has a margin of error of about 10% in single age group brackets. Upon Mr. Snyder's suggestion Mr. Kotowski will use the U.S. Census data in order to create accurate graphs.

Action Item: Mr. Kotowski will work on the charts and produce a separate page for each with the data used to create the charts. He will use U.S. Census data and review it to determine which of the charts he created using the A.C.S. data can be replicated using the U.S. Census data. Mr. Warren will edit the demographics narrative drafted by Mr. Kotowski.

**RETAIL FOOD SERVICE AMENDMENT** – The board discussed the conditions required for a buffer zone for a food service business adjacent to a residentially zoned property. Mr. Snyder explained that he is concerned that the buffer as written in the amendment may be too restrictive and expensive for a smaller food service establishment, such as a coffee shop or a sandwich shop. He had spoken to a representative of the Pattie Group and was told that to install a 200 foot earthen mound buffer would cost approximately \$7,000, with landscaping with trees and shrubbery being an extra cost. A 400 foot long mound would cost nearly double. As written the amendment requires both an earthen mound and evergreens and shrubbery, whereas conditional uses in the Limited Business zone are required to have only a mound, wall or fence. The board discussed the need for something that will be applicable for many years, but with some flexibility depending on the type of business that will be required to have the buffer zone. Due to Mr. Murphy's absence the board will discuss the issue further at the next meeting.

Regarding the need to have metes and bounds descriptions of the commercial districts included in the Zoning Resolution, Mr. Snyder said that the Commission has resisted doing this. Both Greg Studen as Chairman of the Zoning Commission during the 1992 revision of the Zoning Resolution, and Forrest Burt, Assistant County Prosecutor at that time, had decided not to have legal descriptions but to rely on the Zoning Map. Jim Dickinson had followed this procedure when he was Chairman of the Zoning Commission and he advised the ZC to continue this practice during his tenure as Township Trustee. However, David Dietrich, Director of the Geauga County Planning Commission, explained to Mr. Snyder that the maps are no longer created by the G.C.P.C., but are taken from Geauga REALink and there could be errors on the map of which the Commission is not aware. To prevent any errors Mr. Dietrich strongly suggests the Township hire a licensed surveyor to create the legal description to encompass the

perimeter of each zone. It can be included as an appendix to the Zoning Resolution but does not have to be included in every hard copy. Mr. Snyder said that he now feels this should be done. It is possible that bid documents can be created, the project awarded and the work completed by the February meeting. He said he could ask the Township's Assistant Prosecuting Attorney to come to a meeting to explain the need for the legal descriptions, and the Commission agreed that this would be helpful.

Action Item: Mrs. Steffen will ask Bainbridge Township for a copy of their bid document. Mr. Snyder will invite legal counsel to a meeting.

**DRAFT ZONING MAPS** – Mrs. Steffen showed the Commission three copies of the Zoning Map sent to her by the Geauga County Planning Commission relating to the three proposed amendments. The first includes the change from Passive Park District to R-5 to correct the error on the Zoning Map, the second includes that change plus the splitting of the C-S zones into two zones, and the third shows both these changes as the final official map.

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT** – The board discussed the change to the Geauga Park District's Statement of Purpose and bylaws, and reviewed a draft letter to the G.P.D. board. The board discussed changes to make to the letter, and agreed to send it out before the G.P.D. board's next meeting.

Action Item: Mr. Warren will edit the letter and email it to the Commission for further review. Mrs. Steffen will find out if there will be a November meeting of the park board, or if the next meeting will be in December.

**OTHER BUSINESS** – Mr. Snyder said that he had been looking at the final items that need to be done for the Land Use Guide Plan update. He asked Mr. Warren to read over the existing environmental chapter and to add to it as necessary. This will include the results from the residents' survey regarding oil and gas wells and 'fracking'.

The board approved the draft of the 2015 meeting schedule and the 7:30 p.m. start time of meetings.

Action Item: Mr. Warren will begin writing the environmental chapter, and Mrs. Steffen will send him the results from that section of the residents' survey. Mr. Snyder will review the demographic charts from the current Guide Plan.

There being no other business Ms. Weiss Carson made the motion to adjourn, Mr. Kotowski seconded and the meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Diana Steffen  
Secretary

Date

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Richard E. Snyder  
Chairman

Date