

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission
Russell Administration Building
November 20, 2013

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

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. The Secretary stated that she had sent a Sunshine Notice for tonight's meeting to three newspapers and posted it at the Administration Building.

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 23, 2013 – *Mr. Warren moved to approve the minutes of October 23, 2013, Mr. Kotowski seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

MEETING PROCEDURES AND DECEMBER MEETING – The Chairman discussed procedures he would like to see implemented to conduct Zoning Commission meetings. There was also a discussion regarding the possible purchase of tablets for the Commission that has been recommended by the Fiscal Officer Chuck Walder. The necessity, cost and cost savings to the Township and the brand that would be of the most use were all considered, as was upgrading the Zoning Office computer. The Commission also discussed potential expenses involved with the Guide Plan update in the next two years.

There will be a light supper prior to the start of the December meeting.

The Commission approved the 2014 meeting schedule drafted by Mrs. Steffen. Meetings will continue to be scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of the month, with the exception of November and December, both of which are close to holidays. November's meeting will be scheduled for the third Wednesday and December's meeting for the second Wednesday.

LAND USE GUIDE PLAN UPDATE: Demographics – Mr. Kotowski said he has started to enter information into charts, and he handed out copies of three charts that he is developing. He noted that some of the statistics he has found regarding housing units are not accurate. He also noted that the 2010 Census did not ask about household income, so he will review other sources to try to obtain accurate figures. The Commission felt it is important to document the range of household income, but if Mr. Kotowski cannot find actual figures then they suggested he use estimated figures but include the source with the table. Mr. Kotowski said he found that population density is lower in Russell than in other western tier townships of Geauga County. The Commission agreed that he should research the percentage of children in Russell who receive food stamps or free school lunches.

Action Item: Mr. Kotowski will continue working on tables and charts, and will research statistics from the American Community Survey, the U.S. Census, City-Data and the Russell Township residents' survey. He will specifically research household income figures, children receiving free school lunches and population density.

Land Use Patterns – Mr. Snyder explained that he, Mr. Murphy and Mrs. Steffen met with the Chagrin River Watershed Partners to ask for their assistance in demonstrating the effects of the large lot zoning on land use in the Township. Christina Zndarsic proposed utilizing the Coastal Change Analysis Program to identify types of land cover using aerial photographs. The program will categorize the types of land cover which they will then tweak manually as necessary. The Commission reviewed a sample map produced by this program that shows Russell Township Land Cover 2005. Mr. Murphy said this characterizes the condition of the land in development. He explained that C.R.W.P. is actively looking for students at Cleveland State University who might be interested in doing a project to determine the natural open space and compile maps to show this. Mr. Murphy emphasized that this involves land cover, but as far as determining land use C.R.W.P. is looking for a student to take that on. C.R.W.P. has access to

