

**Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Workshop Meeting  
Russell Fire-Rescue Station  
May 24, 2017**

Trustees: Justin Madden, Chairman  
Gary Gabram, Vice Chairman  
Jim Mueller

Zoning Commission: Tom Warren, Chairman  
Ben Kotowski, Vice Chairman  
Jim Dickinson

BZA: Steve Gokorsch, Chairman  
Bill Downing  
Nick Grassi

Absent: Sarah Moore, Vice Chairman  
Dushan Boucek

Also in attendance: Shane Wrench, Zoning Inspector; Jennell Dahlhausen, Zoning Secretary; Kate Jacob, Assistant County Prosecutor; Dave Dietrich, County Planning Commissioner; Chuck Walder, Fiscal Officer; Melissa Palmer, Trustees Assistant; Jen Dorka, Fiscal Officers Assistant; Charlie Butters.

The informal workshop meeting was called to order at 4:00 P.M.

- Land Use Guide Plan – Mr. Warren stated the Zoning Commission is wrapping up the Land Use Guide Plan and should have a final draft to the Trustees soon. Mr. Madden stated the Zoning Secretary has created a word version of the Land Use Guide Plan and said that is the copy he would like the Zoning Commission to use. The Zoning Commission agreed to provide all future edits to the Zoning Secretary.
- Drones – Mr. Madden asked to discuss drones because he feels there may be issues with privacy, etc. Mr. Dietrich stated drones aren't much of a zoning issue since zoning regulates mostly setbacks of structures. Mr. Dickinson stated he believes that a property owner owns about 500 feet above their property. The Zoning Secretary agreed to keep an eye out for any state legislation regulating drones.
- Driveway Placement in Residential Districts – This is currently specified for Commercial Districts but not under the Residential Districts. The Zoning Inspector and Secretary

explained they felt it should be added to be consistent within the Zoning Resolution and the boards agreed.

Mr. Mueller said the Zoning Commission may want to review whether they want to allow having more than one drive on each property. The Zoning Commission will look into what other surrounding communities require when deciding what to propose in the Zoning Resolution.

- Generator Placement on Properties – The Zoning Inspector explained this may be an issue due to noise and the boards agreed. Mr. Gokorsch suggested the Zoning Inspector measure the noise with a calibrator. Mr. Dietrich stated anyone that uses one of these devices must be certified to use it and said we may want to consider placement of air conditioning units as well since they can be noisy. Mr. Warren likes the idea of enforcing a setback instead.
- Planned Residential Development (PRD) – Mr. Dickinson has been researching PRD's. After giving a brief description behind the reasoning for the possible change from a conditional use to a permitted use, it was determined there didn't seem to be much interest either way on the topic, besides Mr. Dietrich stating in an email that all other townships in Geauga County permit PRD's through a conditional use. Mr. Dickinson will continue researching this in his free time, but it won't be a priority to the Zoning Commission.
- Gabion Baskets – It was mentioned there are rules in place with the OEPA (Ohio Environmental Protection Agency) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Mr. Gokorsch also recommended that riparian and waterway rules be enforced.
- Alternate BZA Member – Mr. Gokorsch stated the BZA would like to have about two alternate members for the board to fill in if there are members that will be absent for a meeting, since he feels it is important that all applicants have a five-member board present for their public hearing. He added that he feels the alternates should have experience with the BZA and said he knows of two previous members that are interested to serve as alternates.

Mr. Madden asked if there is a big attendance issue. Mr. Downing said that he felt attendance hasn't been bad over the last couple years, but he agrees with having alternate members. Mr. Warren asked how often the board has to reschedule a meeting due to attendance. Mr. Gokorsch responded they wouldn't be needed often and that calling the alternate last minute to fill in wouldn't be considered. The alternate would only be asked to fill in if they knew there was an attendance issue in advance.

Mr. Madden suggested the board reschedule their meeting like they did for the June 2017 Public Hearing if they know there will be a member absent ahead of time. He added that in the past he didn't feel there was an issue with applicants proceeding


when they were given the option of rescheduling their hearing if a full board wasn't available.


Mr. Gokorsch also brought attention to a perjury issue that occurred at a BZA meeting. Mr. Gokorsch was dissatisfied with Prosecutor Flaiz decision to not prosecute the offender. The Board has a new practice of asking the applicant under oath if all of the information in their application is truthful. Mr. Madden also suggested hiring a court reporter to provide transcripts for contentious BZA hearings.

- The Fiscal Officer and Mr. Madden recommended that everyone attend the Ethics Training on June 1<sup>st</sup> from 6-8 P.M. at Lakeland Community College. They will cover informative ethics topics and provide an opportunity for everyone to ask questions. The Fiscal Officer added the Auditors Office suggests all Public Officials attend these trainings and asked anyone that attends turn their certificate into the Fiscal Office for filing.

There was no public comment.

The workshop meeting adjourned at 5:27 P.M.

  
Jennell Dahlhausen                      7/10/17  
Zoning Secretary                              Date

  
Steve Gokorsch                              7/10/17  
Chairman                                              Date