

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 25, 2005**

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Allen Harmon with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:

Present:	Allen Harmon	Jim Lauderdale
	Anne Couture	Owen Murray

Absent:	Bob Cox	Ray Wolfram
	Garry Lane	

Also present were Rebecca Harvey, PC Planning Consultant.

3. AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Commissioner Murray, seconded by Commissioner Lauderdale. Motion passed unanimously.

Insert "Hillcrest Orchards" after Item #5.

4. MINUTES OF APRIL 27, 2005:

Motion by Commissioner Couture, seconded by Commissioner Murray to approve the minutes of April 27, 2005 as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

Page 1, strike the first sentence in Item #6, second paragraph.

Page 3, second paragraph, last line, change "them" to "the commissioners".

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS: No public

6. HILLCREST ORCHARDS DEVELOPMENT:

Ms. Harvey said she was contacted by the developers because they are past their time limitation for their special exception use request and site plan. Ms. Harvey talked to Attorney Rolfe regarding this matter. It was decided that the developers have the option to request a six month extension. If a building permit is not pulled in six months, the developers will have to start the process over again, even if they are submitting the same plan. The attorney stated the applicant needs to show "just cause", and he thought that this condition has been met. The developers also need to provide the township with a phase boundary proposal and a construction schedule. They will then have twelve months from the date on the schedule to start the phase. This will allow the developers to work without coming back to the PC for extensions.

Mr. Bob Oudsema arrived to discuss this issue with the PC. He brought in drawings for the PC which showed the development and the different phases. He explained how they came up with choosing the different phases and how they arrived at the order with which they would be started. The developers are alternating between the two school districts involved, Gull Lake and Galesburg-Augusta .

Mr. Oudsema also said that the buildings located at the site of the original homestead off of 46th St. are not shown in any phase. This is the area where they are removing the arsenic contaminated soil. This area will not be home sites, but may possibly have storage units available for the lot owners to purchase for additional storage for boats, additional cars, etc. These would be very nice units harmonious with the new houses. Mr. Oudsema would like the PC to be aware of this and he would appreciate any feedback from the commissioners.

Mr. Oudsema also said there were basically two reasons for the delay of the beginning of the development. 1.) The 60+ acres of arsenic contaminated soil and 2.) The issue of water and a waste system for the development. He said that Phase 1 would have private wells and septic systems. The arsenic contaminated soil was the most important reason for the delay. Their special exception use request expired in April of 2005.

Motion was made by Commissioner Murray, seconded by Commissioner Lauderdale to extend the Hillcrest site plan and special exception use permit approval for six months based upon the presentation of the applicant of Hillcrest Orchards as reflected by the drawing C3 dated June 9, 2004 which was presented this evening as well as the applicant's oral application for an extension. The motion is contingent upon receiving written confirmation of the phasing schedule. The decision was based on the delay caused by the arsenic soil contamination. Motion passed unanimously.

7. OLD BUSINESS: ITEMS 6, 9 & 10 HAVE BEEN COMBINED :

Commissioner Couture would like to see the most efficient way to get through the process of making the changes to the ordinance regarding the open space. It was decided that the PC work their way through the amendments then act on them all at the same time.

Ms. Harvey e-mailed the proposed language to the commissioners and passed out a Residential District Rewrite Summary (Comparison Table) tonight.

The old R-A District has been split into two districts, AG Preservation and R-R Residential-Rural. The new R-1 is really combining the old R-1 and R-2 Districts. The PC is going to keep any proposed Open Space Development as a permitted use. The new R-2 district is similar to the old R-3 district.

There was much discussion on the proposed changes. Ms. Harvey said the Commissioners need to study these two handouts and bring them back to the next meeting for discussion.

Commissioner Harmon said that this is a full year project, the whole township would have to be noticed by the township, possibly to be included in the winter tax bills.

Ms. Harvey will talk to Craig and show him what the PC is working on and get his input on the issues.

8. OLD BUSINESS: 50% OPEN SPACE:

Because three of the commissioners are absent tonight, this issue is tabled until the June meeting.

Commissioner Harmon said he would ask Attorney Rolfe to attend the July PC meeting to discuss the Right to Farm Act, the rewritten B, E & F from Ms. Harvey's proposed language for open space developments, and also his comments regarding Master Deed's.

9. NEW BUSINESS: RIGHT TO FARM ACT:

Tabled until Attorney Rolfe is present.

10. REPORTS:

ZBA: Commissioner Harmon said the ZBA had an application to put up an accessory building in the front yard. Because of the topography of the land behind the house which was already on the property when purchased, there was no other place to put the pole building. There were no other accessory buildings on the property. Commissioner Harmon thought that this issue might be one that the PC might want to look at to eliminate the need of a variance.

TOWNSHIP BOARD: Commissioner Murray summarized the last Township Board meeting for the PC.

4-TWRC: Commissioner Couture said that the council is currently wrapping up their 319 Grant. She would like any comments the commissioners may have regarding the helpfulness of the council in enhancing the PC's understanding of natural resources.

WORKSHOPS: None

11. COMMISSION COMMENTS: None

12. ADJOURNMENT:
Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Lauderdale, seconded by Commissioner Murray to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Whitney
Recording Secretary