

**ROSS TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
September 24, 2008**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Ross Township Planning Commission on **September 24, 2008** was called to order by **Chairman Lauderdale** at approximately 7:00 P.M. at the Ross Township Hall

**ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Those present were:            Jim Lauderdale  
   Robb Blain  
   Sandra Kiger  
   Garry Lane  
   Diana Langshaw  
   Jeff Price

Absent was:                        Russell Fry

Also present were:                Rebecca Harvey, Planning Consultant  
   Bruce Dean, AGS

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The proposed agenda was modified to add approval of the July 23, 2008 minutes, along with discussion of intent of recent changes to R-1 and R-2 Districts under old business.

On motion by Langshaw seconded by Lane the revised agenda was unanimously approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES for July 23, 2008**

On motion by Price seconded by Kiger the minutes of **07/23/2008** were unanimously approved.

Lauderdale noted that the **08/27/2008** meeting was cancelled for lack of quorum.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** on non-agenda items –

**OLD BUSINESS**

Discussion of intent of R-1 and R-2 District Amendments (Ord #180, adopted 08/12/2008, effective 09/02/2008).

Dean summarized a recent application for which the planning was conducted in July and August, and application was made 09-19-08. The subject was previously zoned R-2, which permitted 20% lot coverage. The proposed construction would result in lot coverage of 18.99%. As of 09-02-08, the property is zoned R-1, with a 15 % lot coverage limit.

Harvey explained that the intent of the recent update was to simplify the districts and combine districts with similar densities. The considerations of the recent changes took into account the densities, and were not based on the coverage rates of the particular districts. The changes described reflect the appropriate outcome based on the changes from R-2 to R-1.

Lauderdale stated that the other items listed under old business should be considered on a priority. It was the consensus of the members that the adjustment of the Master Plan is the first priority.

### **Adjust Master Plan & Zoning Ordinance**

Harvey reviewed the document dated August 27, 2008 – Ross Township Master Plan. Described the effect of September 1, 2008 effective date of the Michigan Planning Act (PA 33 of 2008) on this process: future modification of the plan will require compliance with the new act. Key points were reviewed and specific changes that are recommended were identified within the document.

Lauderdale observed that the recommended changes are limited Section VII, which was confirmed by Harvey.

There was discussion of the process and general time-line for amending the Master Plan.

Lauderdale suggested that the document be reviewed with the plan this evening.

The agenda was suspended as Lauderdale recognized Charlie Glas, Glas Associates, who described that the recent ordinance changes have had a substantial impact on parcels in the previous R-2 District areas of the Township. He stated that the impact of the change equates to a 25% decrease in allowable lot coverage (20% coverage reduced to 15% coverage).

Mr. Eager stated that the neighbors he had talked to did not understand the implications of the change.

Lauderdale suggested that Mr. Glass could submit a written request detailing the concerns, and documenting the effect on various specific properties with the Township. This should be submitted to the Township Supervisor, who would then refer the issue to the Planning Commission for review.

Mr. Eager stated that conversations with neighbors did not identify the lot coverage changes and he questioned the applicability based on existing platted lots.

Harvey described that the changes did not differentiate between platted and unplatted lands.

There was further general discussion of the implications and how to document the concerns.

Upon a return to the agenda, Section VII of the 2002 Master Plan was reviewed by subsection based on August 27, 2008 recommendations for revision.

Lauderdale distributed information provided by Robert Cox, "Subject 2008-2009 P.C. Considerations, which listed various topics discussed by the Planning Commission dating back to 1997, but which had not been incorporated into the Master Plan.

Harvey described the requirement for a "Zoning Plan" in the Michigan Planning Act, PA 33, 2008, and its general content. This will be discussed in future meetings for inclusion in amendment of the Master Plan. Harvey also described sub-plans identified within the Act related to street plans, capital improvements plans, as well as references in the Act to the platting process.

It was the consensus of the members that Harvey be requested to develop a draft zoning plan and master street plan.

Lane was excused from the meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m.

### **Wind as a Source of "Green Energy"**

There was short discussion on the potential development of regulations by the State of Michigan, and a sample ordinance from Chester Township.

### **M-89 Landscaping for Commercial Zone**

Harvey described that regulations in this area usually take the form of a "Corridor Plan", which may designate development, landscaping, and access management standards.

Lauderdale will attempt additional communication with Jon Scott regarding this issue.

### **Hotel/Motel Bed & Breakfast**

There was discussion of the issues presented by memo dated July 16, 2008. Harvey was asked develop draft definitions of the terms.

## **Outdoor Woodstoves**

The sample ordinance from Texas Township was reviewed, and will be considered at the next meeting.

Harvey described her understanding that the State of Michigan is generally recommending prohibition of the units until issues related to the operation of the component boilers are resolved.

## **Commissioners: additional topics – (See REPORTS – Township Board)**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Implications of New Michigan Planning Enabling Act**

See discussion above under “Adjust Master Plan & Zoning Ordinance”

There was general discussion of budget planning for the Planning Commission and development of a “Planning Commission” ordinance, by-laws and policies.

## **REPORTS**

**ZBA** – Lauderdale reported that the ZBA met on 08/06/08, and than two issues (Robbe & Kerman) were considered and approved, and he summarized the requests. There is a meeting scheduled for 10/01/2008.

**Township Board** – The amendment of Section 7.13(B)(6) was approved. Based on the discussion of this topic, Price suggested that regulation of docks be added to listing topics for future consideration.

**Workshops** - No report.

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Blain, seconded by Price, and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Dean, AGS