

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 22, 2008**

Chairman Lauderdale called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Ross Township Planning Commission on October 22, 2008 to order at approximately 7:20 pm at the Ross Township Hall. (Start of meeting was delayed to accommodate conclusion of ZBA meeting.)

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Those present were: Jim Lauderdale
 Russell Fry
 Sandra Kiger
 Garry Lane
 Diana Langshaw

Absent was: Robb Blain
 Jeff Price

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Lauderdale distributed a letter from Attorney Rolfe regarding status of preparation of the updated Zoning Ordinance to incorporate recent amendments. Attorney Rolfe lauded the efforts of Jackie Whitney, Township Office Manager, toward assembling the updated ordinance. The members expressed agreement that Jackie does excellent work on behalf of the Township and its citizens.

Langshaw asked that "Ag Definition" and "Dumpsters" be added as topics for discussion.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for September 24, 2008

On motion by Lane seconded by Langshaw the minutes of **09/24/2008** were unanimously approved, as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT on non-agenda items – ZBA Chairman, David Carpenter, summarized the variance request considered earlier this evening, and encouraged

consideration of modifications to address concerns related to the recent changes combining the R-2 and R-1 districts.

Lauderdale thanked Mr. Carpenter for his comments and also for his efforts in the ZBA meeting this evening.

OLD BUSINESS

1) Adjust Master Plan & Zoning Ordinance

Harvey referred to the draft amendment document dated 08-27-2008, and a subsequent revision dated 10-22-2008. She directed the attention of the members to sections written in bold (10-22-2008): language has been added to describe the master plan's relationship to the zoning ordinance, the new residential districts, and to incorporate the elements required to express the "zoning plan".

Lauderdale asked if the appropriate use of this document is to compare to current master plan, and then stated that it appears this should take place prior to the next meeting.

Harvey confirmed that this is the appropriate next step, and that following review by the members, the amendments should be the subject of a public hearing regarding amendment of the master plan. She also confirmed that the zoning plan is imbedded within the proposed revisions, and will not be a separate document.

There was discussion of the various MSU properties, which include the bird sanctuary, farm, biological station and Brook Lodge, which will be separately and specifically identified.

Lauderdale suggested that agenda items #2 through #5 be deferred, and moved on to item #6 on the agenda.

6) Docks

There was discussion of the need to modify the language regulating docks.

Lane suggested that an effort should be made to coordinate this language with the other townships on Gull Lake in order to obtain consistency, especially regarding the issue of water depth.

Fry stated that a number of docks on the lake do not comply with current requirements, and that the MDEQ uses depth as a regulating factor, along with consideration of consistency with the neighborhood. He added that construction materials should also be considered, and that he is willing to work with Jeff Price on this issue.

There was discussion of the LSL document dated 11-01-2007, which listed and compared the requirements of the four townships surrounding Gull Lake.

It was the consensus of the members that January 2009 be the goal for action on this issue.

Lauderdale asked that items #8 & #9 (AG definition and Dumpsters, respectively) be considered at a later date.

NEW BUSINESS

Lauderdale introduced his email of 10-03-2008, and initiated a discussion of the effect of the recent changes related to the effective rezoning of all previous R-2 zoned properties to the R-1 District.

There was extensive discussion of the effects of the changes, and the appropriate process to evaluation modifications to reduce the effect of the changes on properties previously zoned R-2, and now zoned R-1.

Following discussion, the lot coverage was determined by consensus to be the primary issue of concern, and Dean was asked to produce a table prior to the next meeting illustrating the effect of various lot coverage rates, with the effect of the "sliding scale" taken into account.

REPORTS

ZBA

No report.

Township Board

No report.

Workshops

No report.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS - none

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Lane seconded by Kiger and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Dean, AGS