

**ROSS TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 27, 2005**

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairman Allen Harmon with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:

Present:	Allen Harmon	Bob Cox
	Jim Lauderdale	Ray Wolfram
	Anne Couture	Garry Lane
	Owen Murray	

Also present were Rebecca Harvey, PC Planning Consultant.

3. AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Commissioner Cox, seconded by Commissioner Lane. Motion passed unanimously.

4. MINUTES OF MARCH 23, 2005:

Motion by Commissioner Murray, seconded by Commissioner Cox to approve the minutes of March 23, 2005 as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

Page 3, next to the last paragraph, change "removed from" to "not included in".

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None – No public

6. OLD BUSINESS: 50% OPEN SPACE DRAFT:

Ms. Harvey said the PC had previously received an assessment of the Ross Township zoning regulations from LSL. Embodied in that report were their comments in regards to the open space. As a result of the conversation at the January meeting the PC asked her to create three amendments, one dealing with open space project size, one dealing with the street systems, and the third with the issue of phasing. In February she gave the PC a handout that created those draft text amendments.

He also said that he remembers discussing the terms "shall" and "may" and that the PC was in agreement about wanting to create the ability for flexibility with the connectivity of the roads. Commissioner Harmon said he didn't want to give the developers a blank check to do what ever they want. He didn't think the PC has come together yet on a vision of what the open space project would look like that was going to be able to get the waiver versus one that would not be able to get the waiver. There was also the question about the minimum size to qualify as an open space. Ms. Harvey stated that a 10 acre minimum was discussed.

Commissioner Lauderdale reminded the PC of a letter from Attorney Rolfe, dated March 17, 2004, regarding Rolfe's opinion that the issue of connectivity needs to be either specifically prohibited by the PUD regulations, or if requested by the landowner, a township may approve a PUD with open space that is not contiguous to the rest of the PUD. Commissioner Harmon stated that we have prohibited non-contiguous and are good on this point. The PC agreed that Ms. Harvey's language on this issue, "B. Scope", is acceptable as written.

The PC then went on to discuss "F" on phasing. There was discussion on how changing the wording would effect the open space development. With the new wording the first phase must meet the 50% open space requirement but when each phase was added to the first phase, the combined

open space must meet the 50% open space requirement. There was much discussion on the proposed wording in order to make it clear to the applicant.

Ms. Harvey will rewrite the proposed language and send it to Attorney Rolfe for review.

The PC then went to “E. Design Standards” of Ms Harvey’s draft language. Commissioner Couture said that when the PC tried to gain some flexibility, to be able to consider alternatives, what actually happened was that by combining our proposed language and the proposed language from LSL, we are raising the standards higher than we had before, and were putting a greater burden on the developers. There was discussion on the proposed wording on this issue. Ms. Harvey will rewrite the language.

Ms. Harvey said that since there is a disagreement among the PC members regarding the connectivity issue, it is her opinion that in order to get consensus on the proposed language the PC is going to have to be very vague in the language. She also said that they will not be able to sit down and craft what the objectives are because of their disagreement on the objectives.

Motion was made by Commissioner Harmon, seconded by Commissioner Cox to approve the wording for “B. The Scope” as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Commissioner Harmon, seconded by Commissioner Cox for Ms. Harvey to rewrite the language for “F” to be subject to township attorney’s approval, and to be brought back to the PC. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Harmon to approve the language for “E. Design Standards” as amended, subject to township attorney review for public hearing, where adjoining areas are not subdivided the arrangements of streets, pathways and open space in the proposed open space preservation development shall be required to be extended to the boundary line of the project to make provision for future projection of access into adjoining areas. PC may consider an alternate arrange where limitations exist and where it is determined that the proposed arrangement substantially forwards access and connectivity. No support for the motion. Motion died for lack of support.

Motion by Commissioner Lauderdale, seconded by Commissioner Lane that the language for “E. Design Standards, Interior Streets” be “Where adjoining streets are not subdivided, the arrangement of areas in the proposed open space preservation development shall be required to be extended to the boundary line of the project to make provisions for the future projection of access into adjoining areas. The Planning Commission may consider an alternate arrangement where limitations exist and where it is determined that the future projection of access into adjoining areas is adequately addressed.” Motion passed unanimously.

This language will also be sent to Attorney Rolfe for review.

Commissioner Couture would like all of the proposed open space language to go for public hearing at the same time.

Commissioner Harmon asked the commissioners look over Ms. Harvey’s comments on LSL’s review for the May PC meeting.

7. OLD BUSINESS: SLIDING SCALE ZONING & LOT SIZE STANDARDS, AG PRESERVATION DISTRICT AND RESIDENTIAL ZONE REVIEW..

Ms. Harvey put language together for the AG and Residential Rural Zoning Districts. She would like the PC to think about how they want to deal with this.

With regards to the AG district Ms. Harvey wanted the PC to look at limiting single family dwellings to only farm owners. She did not put this in the language, she left single family homes as a permitted use.

With regards to the Residential Rural zoning district, there are 3 approaches to this. One is to simply refer back to the table of lot sizes, changing the 120' and the 200' to 330'. Secondly is the R-A Clustered Land Division Option. The proposed language is on her handout. There was discussion on her proposed language. Ms. Harvey would like the commissioners to especially study the density issue for the next meeting.

These three items will be brought back to the May PC meeting.

8. REPORTS:

ZBA: No report

TOWNSHIP BOARD: The minutes were included in the PC packets. Commissioner Murray went over the Township Board minutes.

4-TWRC: Commissioner Couture said they had two workshops, one on low-impact design and their annual meeting where the natural features were presented. Rick King is now a board member of the 4-TWP WRC.

WORKSHOPS: None

9. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Harmon said that Attorney Rolfe is willing to come in and discuss the Right to Farm Act with the PC. The Right to Farm Act will be discussed at the May meeting.

Commissioner Lauderdale thanked Ms. Harvey for educating the PC and standing up under the pressure of tonight's meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Lane, seconded by Commissioner Wolfram to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Whitney
Recording Secretary