

November 24, 2015

The Portage Township Planning Commission November 24, 2015 meeting was called to order by acting chairperson Ted Soldan at 7:05 PM. Present were Ted, Dean Latandresse, Bernie Carr, John Ligon, Melanie Watkins, Dave Rulison, and Peggy Anderson. Guests Linda Ligon and Bruce Petersen were also present (see attached.)

Carr made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. His motion was seconded by Anderson. The motion passed with no dissent.

Anderson made a motion to nominate Melanie Watkins for chair of the planning commission. The motion was seconded by Bernie. Watkins accepted the nomination. The motion carried unanimously. Watkins ran the meeting as chair from this point on.

Peterson suggested several topics the commission might consider discussing. They included rentals, how to handle them, and to look at the recent changes the City of Houghton has implemented, the junk ordinance, and the dangerous building ordinance.

There was discussion about the structural definition of an apartment. For example, if a family rents a room to one person, is that a rental? If a home owner in the township leaves for a year and rents the home to another family, is that a rental? We also discussed whether we should have a rental ordinance, do we have the wherewithal to enforce it, and what problems are we trying to solve. Peterson said the township receives regular complaints from residents of the township regarding rentals in their neighborhood.

Some commission members expressed skepticism about whether a rental ordinance is necessary, and that it might preclude people from owning homes for rentals. There was a lot of discussion.

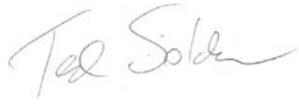
Peterson said he is working on the dangerous building ordinance, #134. This is being done in concert with the personnel and insurance committee (Bill Bingham, Peterson, and John Ollila.) He said he'd like the planning commission to look at it when it is done. He said the junk ordinance is also being looked at.

Next the commission talked about tentative meeting dates in 2016. The dates proposed were Jan. 6, April 6, July 6, and October 5.

Chair Watkins proposed a subcommittee be formed to look into the rental ordinance issue. She offered to serve on the committee, and asked for volunteers. Carr and Soldan stepped forward. They agreed to have their first meeting in Tapiola on December 9 at 2:00 pm.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:27 pm by Soldan, seconded by Latandresse, and passed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ted Soldan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ted Soldan, Secretary

Planning Commission

11/24/15

1. TED SOLDAN
2. Peggy Lee Anderson
3. Bernie Carr
4. Diane Palendresse
5. Bruce Peterson
6. Patricia Watkins
7. ~~John Lynn~~
8. ~~Paul Pulver~~

Guests

1. Bruce Peterson
2. Linda Lyon