

May 31, 2017

The Portage Township Planning Commission May 31, 2017 meeting was called to order by chair Melanie Watkins at 7:01 PM. Present were Watkins, Ted Soldan, Connie Sherry, Dave Rulison, and Peggy Anderson. Guests Bruce Peterson, Emma Hitch, Bill Fink, Bill Bingham, and Alice Soldan were also present.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Rulison, seconded by Anderson, and passed.

Emma Hitch, owner of a tiny house in the township requested that the planning commission renew her 1-year provisional permit for her residence in Hurontown. The commission asked Ms. Hitch several questions, including how she was taking care of her sewage. Based on her answers, the commission told her she needed to approach the health department with her plan to properly handle her sewage, and bring documentation from the health department back to us that shows they approve of her technique. Once that is in hand, the commission would consider another on year extension. The understanding was that this would be accomplished by the end of June, 2017.

The rental ordinance was also discussed. It was clarified that the application for and cost for township water and sewer was the total responsibility of the property owner. The proper wording and format for a certificate to be posted at the rental, and a compliance checklist were also discussed. Melanie offered to work on the checklist.

The commission then talked about fencing. The current wording in the ordinance says that a fence between two properties should be on the property boundary. Discussion ensued on how the property owner would maintain the other side of the fence if he or she is not welcome on his neighbor's property. A 2' offset for the fence was discussed, but in the end, it was decided to leave it the way it is written in the current ordinance.

Medical Marijuana was also discussed. The township will have to decide whether to allow it and how to regulate it by the end of 2017. After this discussion, the decision was to table it for now and gather more information.

Residential buffering was next discussed. When commercial buildings abut residential properties, a 25' offset from the residential property line seemed reasonable. A motion was made by Peggy to change section 3.12 of the zoning ordinance from 10 feet to 25 feet. The motion was seconded by Connie and passed.

The storm water ordinance was also discussed. Bruce updated the commission on the work a sub-committee did on this project some years ago. Much of it was completed, but the group got hung up on the engineering specifications, and hoped an expert could advise it on how to proceed. The project has languished since that time. Bruce offered to look into what was done and Melanie offered to look at it and make recommendations to the commission on how to proceed.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:42 pm by Anderson, seconded by Rulison, and passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Ted Soldan, Secretary

Planning Commission May 31, 2017

1. Tal Sold
2. Dave Rulisen
3. Peggy Lee Anderson
4. Bruce Peterson
5. Connie Sherry
6. Malissa Watkins

Emma Hitch
Bill Fink
Bill Bingham
Alice Soldan