

April 19, 2018

The Portage Township Planning Commission (PC) April 19, 2018 meeting was called to order by chair Melanie Watkins at 7:00 PM. Present were Watkins, Ted Soldan, Dave Rulison, Connie Sherry and Peggy Anderson. Guests Bruce Peterson, Richard Laplander, Kevin Koskela, Kevin Diley, Crystal Maki, and Dennis Maki were also present.

The minutes from the Jan 18, 2018 and Nov 30 2017 meetings were available, but since most of the PC members had not seen them, they will be voted on at the next PC meeting.

Portage Township resident Dennis Maki addressed the members of the PC. He said his neighbor, Troy Colombe, has an outdoor heating stove which he believes was installed in 2007 or 2009. He told the commission that about 20% of the time the stove is going the smell coming to his home is very strong. Even when he stays inside with his windows closed, the smell is still oppressive. Mr Make filed a complaint with the health department, and they informed him they visited the site on 6 occasions and saw no evidence of oppressive smell. According to Mr. Maki, as soon as they quit coming, the smoke started up again.

Supervisor Peterson said he spent considerable time on the phone with the township attorney, Nick Davatella. Peterson wondered if the preamble to the zoning manual, which suggests the purpose for zoning is for the "...health, safety, and well-being..." of the residents, is enforceable. Nick suggested the township has police powers to regulate, but a regulation needs to be in place. According to the records available, this outdoor heater was put in before the zoning manual was in place, so it is probably not enforceable by the township.

Commission members, trying to suggest avenues for Mr. Make suggested he might file a suit in small claims court, and/or contact the health department again.

The Ancillary Buildings Ordinance, which has been in the hands of the Houghton County Planning Commission for more than the required 30 day comment period has received no comments from the Houghton County Planning Commission, so now it can be posted at the township office's kiosk for the requisite amount of time.

The Rental Ordinance was discussed. The next step is to take it to the township board. We will need to figure out how to configure a Civil Infractions Board and hire a township rental inspector.

Metal roofs were discussed. A situation took place this winter where a recently constructed building with a metal roof shed its snowload with such force that it buried the neighbor's driveway. Had anyone been under it when it let go, it could have been fatal. It was suggested that the planning commission consider some wording that it is the responsibility of the property owner to be sure snow falling from roofs does not cause any damage to the neighbor's property.

Medical Marijuana was discussed. One member of the community, Phil Vasquez had asked about getting deposit back. It was explained to him that the deposit is non-refundable. It was also noted that the dispensary in the Mall was closed because the proper State of Michigan paperwork was not filed in time.

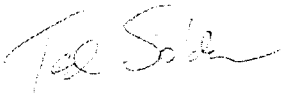
Chair Watkins attended the Chassell board meeting, and said their trail committee was looking for another member. Supervisor Peterson said he'd volunteer.

Watkins also learned that Chassell has a dangerous buildings ordinance, and a civil infractions ordinance.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be July 12, 2018 at 7:00 at the township offices.

A motion was made by Soldan to adjourn at 8:14. The motion was seconded by Rulison and passed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ted Soldan".

Ted Soldan, Secretary

Guests

P.C. mtg 4/19/18

~~Richard Laplander~~ Richard Laplander
~~Kevin Koskeley~~ Kevin Koskeley
Kevin Dilij
Crystal Maki
Dennis Maki

Members

1. Ted Soldan
2. Dave Ruben
3. Peggy Le Barb
4. Connie
5. Melanie