

Laketon Township Planning Commission
October 13, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes – APPROVED 11/10/2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Bob Marine called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm

ROLL CALL:

- Present: June Earhart, Eric Anderson, Dave Mieras, Paul Hoppa and Bob Marine.
- Absent: Suzanne Lockwood-Hayes and DJ Hilson with notice.
- Also present: Zoning Administrator Heidi Tice, Recording Secretary Veronica West, Township Supervisor Kim Arter, Consultant/Attorney Ron Bultje and two local citizens.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: June Earhart moved to approve the agenda as presented. Eric Anderson supported the motion and the motion carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- **Public Hearing of 9/14/2022** – Dave Mieras moved to approve the public hearing minutes as presented. June Earhart supported the motion. The motion carried by voice vote.
- **Regular Monthly Meeting of 9/14/2022** – Eric Anderson moved to approve the regular monthly meeting minutes as presented. Dave Mieras supported the motion. The motion carried by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: NONE

CORRESPONDENCE:

- **Zoning Permits Report (09/01/2022 – 09/30/2022):** Summary report of numbers of different permits issued covering the month of September, brief discussion of permits and one question on the report noting that permit fees on two different categories were exactly the same – will look into it to make sure the report fields are pulling accurate data.
- **Training:** ZA H. Tice informed the members present that Attorney Ron Bultje has agreed to do his Planning and Zoning training session here at Laketon Twp on Wednesday 11/30/2022 at 6pm and Laketon will be sending invites out to other local municipalities for their official to attend as well.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Mixed Use District - Witham Rd Corridor:** ZA H. Tice introduced Consultant/Attorney Ron Bultje to the PC members. She also gave a brief synopsis of the Witham Rd Corridor history, noting it was rezoned Major Commercial in the 1976 Zoning Ordinance and changed to Service Commercial in the 2006 Zoning Ordinance. The history was discussed noting that the change over to a commercial area has not come to pass and there are still quite a few homes in this corridor and there have been issues with several of them with not being able to do things without costs of variances or rezoning and the PC would like to give flexibility in this area with some sort of mixed use zoning district. Mr. Bultje noted he has seen the current language and that there are options; to create an overlay district, or to create a new mixed use district for this area that allows both some commercial uses and some residential uses. He added that with a mixed use district a property could be commercial, then changed to residential and back again with no issues of non-conformity as these would be permitted uses by right. There was discussion of combining the uses currently allowed and if it should be C1 or C2 commercial and R3 or R4 residential. There was discussion of blowing up this portion of the zoning map to better see the current zoning boundaries, how many properties are involved and where this potential mixed use boundaries should be and bring it to the next meeting to review and discuss where this proposed new district boundaries should be. Eric Anderson commented on wanting to allow both uses but concerns of some inconsistencies or incompatible uses right next to each other. Mr. Bultje said he could draft the language of a mixed use district, and then bring it to the PC to review and remove or add uses as appropriate before having the required public hearing for amendments to the text and map. There was also discussion as to the process of making the changes and effectively rezoning the properties in this corridor. Mr. Bultje said if there are more than 11 parcels there is no requirement to notify individual property owners. It was estimated there are approximately 30 or so parcels currently and ZA Heidi Tice noted the township is planning to be very open and notify each property owner of the proposed changes and public hearing when it gets to that point. There was also discussion of keeping the process in the most economical way possible and it was noted that only one

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public hearing with a publication is required for both the text amendment and map changes – it is all done at the same time. Then once the PC holds a public hearing they then recommend it to the board if they are happy with the amendments as proposed and with the public hearing outcome and then it is up to the Board of Trustees to either approve or deny the amendments. Paul Hoppa asked if this change would affect then entire length of Witham Rd in Laketon Township. There was also discussion of a parcel included in the commercial district currently that doesn't front Witham, but is off the corner on Dykstra. ZA Heidi Tice discussed reviewing the map and including whatever parcels are deemed appropriate by the PC. Dave Mieras asked what kind of timeline would be involved in this process. Mr. Bultje stated he felt he could have draft language prepared in time for the regular November meeting date, 11/9/2022. Eric Anderson moved to request Ron Bultje to proceed with drafting language for a mixed use zoning district, combining our C2 **and R4 uses**. June Earhart supported the motion. Roll Call Vote: Voting in favor were June Earhart, Dave Mieras, Eric Anderson, Paul Hoppa and Bob Marine. There were not votes in opposition of the motion. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS: **NONE**

PUBLIC COMMENTS: **NONE**

BOARD REPORTS:

- **Board of Trustees:** Eric Anderson noted he has alerted the Board of the PC's discussions on a proposed mixed use district for the Witham Rd Corridor and they will be taking up the zoning ordinance amendments from the September 14th Public Hearing at their meeting next week.
- **Zoning Board of Appeals – NONE/No activity to report.**

ADJOURNMENT:

- Dave Mieras moved to adjourn. Eric Anderson supported the motion. The motion carried and the adjournment occurred at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Veronica West
Recording Secretary