

1 **TYRONE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**
2 **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**
3 **September 8, 2020 7:00 p.m.**
4 **Meeting Held at The Tyrone Township Hall & Via Zoom Video Conferencing**
5
6

7 **PRESENT:** Dan Stickel, Kurt Schulze, Rich Erickson, and Perry Green
8

9 **ABSENT:** Bill Wood and Jon Ward
10

11 **OTHERS PRESENT:** Ross Nicholson & Karie Carter
12

13 **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Kurt Schulze at 7:01
14 pm.
15

16 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**
17

18 **CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**
19

20 Kurt Schulze asked if there were any members of the public in attendance who wished to ask any
21 questions or comments.
22

23 No public comments or questions were received.
24

25 **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**
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27 Perry Green made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Dan Stickel supported the
28 motion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
29

30 **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**
31

32 The item was deferred.
33

34 **NEW BUSINESS #1: Election of Officers:**
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36 Kurt Schulze asked the Planning Commission if anyone would like to make a nomination for
37 Chairman of the Planning Commission. Perry Green nominated Dan Stickel for Chairman of the
38 Planning Commission. Dan Stickel accepted the nomination. Kurt Schulze asked if there were
39 any additional nominations. None were received. Rich Erickson made a motion to close the
40 nomination. Perry Green supported the motion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Rich
41 Erickson made a motion to elect Dan Stickel as Chairman of the Planning Commission. Perry
42 Green supported the motion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
43

44 Kurt Schulze congratulated Dan Stickel on his new position as Chairman of the Planning
45 Commission and indicated that he could now conduct the meeting.
46

47 *The item was closed.*

48

49 **NEW BUSINESS #2: PC Action List:**

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51 Chairman Stickel opened discussion. He confirmed that everyone had a copy of the latest
52 Planning Commission Action List (PC Action List). Chairman Stickel asked Ross Nicholson for
53 confirmation that items one through five on the list (crossed out) have been completed. Ross
54 Nicholson confirmed and briefly summarized the items. Chairman Stickel went through the
55 items on the list under “Pending Approval”. He asked the Planning Commission if they felt any
56 additional items should be added to “Pending Approval”. Ross Nicholson indicated that item # 8
57 “Administrative Approval of Permitted Home Occupations, amended standards” had been
58 completed and could be removed from the list/crossed out. Ross Nicholson summarized the
59 remaining items under “Pending Approval”. The Planning Commission briefly discussed.

60

61 Chairman Stickel moved down to the next section of the PC Action List, “In Progress, Near
62 Completion”. The Planning Commission briefly discussed. Chairman Stickel indicated that the
63 three items listed would likely take some time to complete. Ross Nicholson suggested that the
64 items should be discussed with the Township Board at the next joint meeting to help determine
65 the levels of priority. Kurt Schulze agreed. The Planning Commission briefly discussed.
66 Chairman Stickel asked if anyone had suggestions for items to add to “In Progress, Near
67 Completion”. Ross Nicholson indicated that the “Pool Covers” topic has progressed to the point
68 where it could be moved to that section. The Planning Commission briefly discussed.

69

70 Chairman Stickel moved down to the section of the list titled “Initiated, More Development
71 Required”. He asked Ross Nicholson to summarize the items. Ross Nicholson summarized the
72 items. The only item in the section other than “Pool Covers” was “Outdoor Lighting- make
73 reference to regulatory ordinance”. Ross Nicholson explained that the item was included on the
74 list following the adoption of the Residential Outdoor Lighting regulatory ordinance. He
75 indicated that the intent is for the Planning Commission to go through the Zoning Ordinance
76 requirements for residential outdoor lighting to make any necessary revisions to ensure
77 consistency with the new regulatory ordinance.

78

79 Chairman Stickel moved on to the section of the list titled “Future Items”. He indicated that item
80 #1, “Accessory Structure Standards (last revised Oct.2013)”, is included because some of the
81 existing accessory structure standards may be considered by many to be overly restrictive. Ross
82 Nicholson indicated that there has been a number of concerns raised over the past few years
83 regarding accessory structure standards in the Zoning Ordinance. He indicated that the goal
84 would be to revisit all accessory structure standards in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure they
85 suitable for the current times and needs of Township residents.

86

87 Chairman Stickel moved down to the next item on the list of future items, “Alternative Building
88 Materials”. Ross Nicholson indicated that the item was added to the list following a number of
89 inquiries regarding the possibility of permitting dwellings built with “upcycled” materials such
90 as shipping containers. The Planning Commission briefly discussed.

91 Chairman Stickel moved down to the next item under future items, “Tiny Houses”. Ross
92 Nicholson indicated that the item was added following a number of inquires from people looking

93 to downsize into small, minimalist-style dwellings (between 100 and 800 square feet, but
94 primarily under 600 square feet). He continued, stating that the current minimum floor area for
95 single-family residential dwellings is 1,200 square feet for a 1-story/ranch-style home in all
96 single-family zoning districts. He stated that most of the inquires for smaller dwellings were
97 specific to actual “tiny homes”, which are generally under 600 square feet of living area,
98 typically built onto a trailer/movable foundation, however, there have also been a number of
99 inquires from people who are interested in downsizing to smaller, conventional-style dwelling
100 (around 800 square feet) on permanent foundations. Rich Erickson asked if it would be possible
101 for people to seek a variance for a reduction in the minimum floor area for a new dwelling. Ross
102 Nicholson indicated that he has not seen anyone apply for such a variance, but it could happen
103 since minimum floor area is a dimensional standard. He continued, stating that, though people
104 could technically apply for a variance, it would be much more difficult to demonstrate
105 compliance with the required criteria for a variance than it would be for setback variances
106 because they would need to demonstrate practical difficulty without a consideration of monetary
107 factors. Most of the people who wish to “downsize” their living space wish to do so for energy
108 efficiency, reduced maintenance, and simplified living in general, which would generally be
109 considered “wants” rather than “needs”, reducing the likelihood that variances could be granted
110 in compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA). The Planning Commission
111 briefly discussed. Ross Nicholson suggested that, if the Planning Commission feels that
112 permitting “tiny houses” should be considered, there are a number of ways it would be done
113 without negatively affecting existing patters of development, such as establishing a new zoning
114 district for single family dwellings with reduced minimum floor area requirements.

115
116 Chairman Stickel moved on to the next item under future items, “Environmental Study
117 Requirements”. Ross Nicholson indicated that he believes the item was added to the list
118 following the latest application for a new cemetery. He indicated that he believed the intent of
119 including the item was to revisit the current environment study requirements for uses that
120 warrant them and determine whether or not revisions should be made to ensure land uses do not
121 negatively impact the environment. He indicated that the item ties into the next item on the list,
122 “Cemetery Standards (Working with Livingston County)”. Chairman Stickel moved down to
123 that item. Ross Nicholson stated that the latest cemetery application also prompted the
124 Livingston County Planning Department to begin review and modification of their cemetery
125 standards to ensure they are appropriate and up-to-date. He stated that, as Livingston County
126 works through those standards, the Planning Commission should review them to ensure they are
127 consistent with the Township’s cemetery standards.

128
129 Chairman Stickel moved on to the next list item, “Limited Lot Waivers”. Ross Nicholson
130 explained that limited lot waivers are intended to allow for a waiver of certain outdoor storage
131 location requirements on parcels of land that have significant dimensional and/or topographic
132 limitations that prevent property owners from storing items within permitted yard locations. He
133 stated that he does not believe there to be any major issues with the current limited lot waiver
134 standards, but he recommended reviewing them to ensure they are appropriate since they have
135 not been addressed in a number of years.

136
137 Chairman Stickel moved on to the next item, “Temporary Housing”. Ross Nicholson explained
138 that the Zoning Ordinance currently allows for the use of a temporary dwelling during

139 construction of new dwelling and for temporary housing following a disaster. He stated that
140 there are frequent inquires for the use of temporary housing during construction and there have
141 been questions raised whether the current approval requirements are appropriate. He stated that
142 the language for temporary housing during construction is written in a way where travel trailers
143 may not be considered (the language is specific to manufactured homes), however, the Township
144 has approved the use of travel trailers a number of times over the past few years because they
145 had demonstrated compliance with all approval criteria. He suggested that the Planning
146 Commission should review the current standards to ensure they can consider the use of travel
147 trailers as long as the Livingston County Health Department (LCHD) approves a temporary
148 connection to well and septic/sewer and to determine whether or not the current approval
149 standards should be amended.

150
151 Chairman Stickel moved down to the last item on the list, “Guest Houses/ Mother-in-Law
152 Suites”. Ross Nicholson indicated that the Zoning Ordinance does not currently permit guest
153 houses or similar structures in single-family zoning districts. He stated that, over the years, there
154 have been many inquiries regarding the use, especially for the purpose of housing
155 elderly/handicapped family members in close proximity to a principle residence (as an
156 alternative to assisted living/retirement homes). He stated that most people are either unable to
157 afford care for relatives through facilities and/or would like to provide a higher-quality level of
158 care for them than would be otherwise possible. The Planning Commission briefly discussed.
159 Ross Nicholson indicated that one of the primary arguments against permitting guest houses or
160 similar structures is that property owners could potentially rent them out to random people short-
161 term when not inhabited by family/friends (such as Airbnb). He stated that the use of deed
162 restrictions or other mechanisms could potentially be implemented to prevent the use of such
163 structures as short-term rentals. The Planning Commission briefly discussed. He recommended
164 changing the title of the item to “Accessory Dwelling Units” or “ADU’s” because the term
165 encompasses guest houses, mother-in-law suites, pool houses, and all similar uses.

166
167 Chairman Stickel moved down to the last section of the list, “Applications”. All applications
168 listed were crossed off the list. Dan Stickel asked for confirmation that all items under the
169 section had been completed. Ross Nicholson confirmed.

170
171 Chairman Stickel asked the Planning Commission if they had any suggestions for additional
172 items to be added to the list. Kurt Schulze noted that the MMMA (Michigan Medical Marihuana
173 Act) caregiver regulation amendments were not included on the list. Ross Nicholson indicated
174 that the item should be added under “In Progress, Near Completion” since the proposed
175 amendments had already been reviewed, recommended for approval by the Planning
176 Commission, reviewed during a public hearing, reviewed by the Livingston County Planning
177 Commission, and reviewed by the Township Board. The Planning Commission briefly
178 discussed.

179
180 *The item was closed (no action taken).*

181
182 **CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

183 Chairman Stickel asked if there were any public questions or comments.

184

185 Alexa Huspek (resident), asked to see a copy of the PC Action List. She asked for clarification
186 on several items from the list. The Planning Commission and Ross Nicholson provided
187 clarification.

188
189 Chairman Stickel asked if there were any additional questions or comments. None were
190 received.

191
192 *The item was closed*

193
194 **MISCELLANIOUS BUSINESS #1: Next Workshop Meeting:**

195
196 A Workshop meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 16, 2020, beginning at 6:00 pm.
197 Ross Nicholson stated that he would verify that a quorum would be present at the meeting. He
198 indicated that, if a quorum can be confirmed, he would convert the workshop meeting to a
199 regular meeting so action could be taken on the “Election of Officers” item. Chairman Stickel
200 confirmed that would be appropriate due to the current vacancy for the position of Planning
201 Commission Secretary.

202
203 Kurt Schulze took a moment to thank the former Planning Commission Chairman, Mark Meisel,
204 and the former Planning Commission Secretary, Dave Wardin, for their work on the Planning
205 Commission and their service to the Township.

206
207 *The item was closed.*

208
209 *The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm by Chairman Stickel.*