

**Melrose Township Planning Commission Minutes
Melrose Township Hall
Regular Meeting of March 29, 2021**

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

- A. **Call to Order:** Chair Bart Wangeman called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.
- B. **Members present:** Bart Wangeman, Bob Bourassa, and Dan Nowland.
- C. **Members absent:** Charley Zimmer and Tim LaGasse.
- D. **Staff present:** Zoning Administrator Randy Frykberg and Recording Secretary Tom Mackie.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Following a review, the Agenda was approved by consensus with the addition of “Mini Storage” under New Business.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bob Bourassa motioned, Dan Nowland seconded, to approve the January 25, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. All members present voted Yes, motion carried.

IV. NEW BUSINESS - MINI STORAGE

Randy noted the general concept of mini storage has come up a few times over the years but we now have a specific proposal for a site in the Farm Forest Zoning District. The Zoning Ordinance could be expanded to consider this as a Special Use as the property is more than 10 acres. He indicated intensity of use is an important consideration when evaluating a Special Use and listed several high intensity uses currently permitted. The Planning Commission can also add conditions when granting a Special Use Permit.

Carrie May, of Boyne Engineering and Design, indicated she has more than one client interested in developing storage units but this type of use is presently allowed only in commercial districts. She believes this use is a good fit in our FF District and contrasted it with the pre-existing, non-conforming well drilling business currently on this site. Randy reiterated the Planning Commission would have control over the size, look, shape, and construction under a Special Use proposal.

Bart asked about larger, individually owned units commonly referred to as “Storage condos.” Randy noted we cannot regulate ownership. Carrie indicated the proposal envisions high-end units and Randy suggested it may be inappropriate to call them mini storage. Tom Swenor suggested we look at neighboring regulations.

Bart then then asked for Planning Commissioner comments. Bob expressed a need for this service in the Township and advised further consideration. He would also like to see how neighboring townships regulate this.

Bart Wangeman moved to have the Zoning Administrator pursue potential Zoning Ordinance language to allow Storage Unit Facilities in the FF District as a Special Use. Seconded by Bob Bourassa. The motion was approved by a vote of all ayes.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – RESIDENTIAL MINIMUM SQUARE FOOTAGE (TINY HOMES)

Randy noted the Planning Commission has discussed this topic many times in the past. Until recently state construction codes have not permitted their permanent installation so they were considered temporary recreational vehicles that must be on wheels. A recent amendment (Appendix Q) to the Michigan Residential Code now allows their construction. He suggested we consider a smaller footprint while continuing to maintain length to width regulations. Bart acknowledged the state’s apparent acceptance of smaller homes and suggested there may be a need for this in Melrose township, but also suggested it may not be appropriate for all districts.

Tom Swenor stated that Emmet County has reduced their minimum residential structure size to 540 square feet and have allowed them as a second residential structure in some cases. Bart noted the new state construction code defines a Tiny Home as 400 square feet maximum. Randy agreed a Tiny Home is not appropriate on the lakefront and may also not be appropriate in the R-2 District. Bart suggested some of the state’s rationale for allowing Tiny Homes may also be applicable to Zoning concepts but noted many facts in the “Zeb Burge Memo” included in the meeting packet are more specific to building codes.

Dan Nowland moved to have the Zoning Administrator pursue potential Zoning Ordinance language to permit residential structures in the FF District that are smaller than currently allowed. Seconded by Bob Bourassa. The motion was approved by a vote of all ayes.

VI. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS / REPORTS: - None.

VII. PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: None.

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None.

IX. NEXT MEETING: Scheduled for April 26th.

X. ADJOURNMENT: At 6:41 PM

Prepared by

Planning Commission Approval by:

Tom Mackie, Recording Secretary

Charley Zimmer, Secretary