

**WATERVLIET CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 1, 2021**

Present: Colleen Curtis, Scott McKee, Joseph Stepich, Louis Nordell, Linda Rizzo, Deanna Heminger.

Also Present: None

Acting Chairman J. Stepich called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Roll Call was taken.

The minutes of the May 4, 2021 meeting were read. C. Curtis made a motion to approve the minutes as read. S. McKee seconded and the motion carried.

Accessory Structure Size Increase Request

C. Curtis began discussion by noting that at the May 17, 2021 regular township board meeting, several attendants voiced their desire to have the maximum size limit for accessory structures increased from 1,000 square feet to 1,200 square feet. Curtis stated that she was in favor with the request citing the fact that when her truck has a plow on the front in the winter months it makes it too long to park in their current garage and still be able to close the garage door. She also noted that standard trusses are sized for a 1,200 sq. ft. structure. L. Nordell, supporting this comment, noted that ... "You cannot go to the Home Depot or Lowes and buy trusses for a 1,000 square foot garage. They would have to be special ordered." L. Rizzo commented that if the property owner could meet setbacks she did not see what problems would be created with the size increase. J. Stepich stated that he would like to see the outcome be something that is fair for everyone.

At the conclusion of discussion, L. Rizzo made a motion to recommend amending the Zoning Ordinance to increase the maximum size of an accessory structure in the Residential Districts from 1,000 square feet to 1,200 square feet.

A roll call vote is as follows: S. McKee, yea; L. Nordell, yea; L. Rizzo, yea; C. Curtis, yea; J. Stepich, nay; D. Heminger, yea. The motion carried. When Stepich was asked why he voted no on the motion he replied; "Because I think we're creating a lot of problems for the Zoning Board [of Appeals]."

Berrien County Hazard Mitigation Survey

J. Stepich presented a survey submitted by the Berrien County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division. He explained that each municipality in the county received the survey asking local leaders to identify the most common and realistic threats within their jurisdictions so the Berrien County Emergency Management officials can better plan and respond to those threats within the county and

then he asked the Planning Commissioners to participate in the survey. When polled as to what hazards the Commissioners felt the township was most at risk of experiencing from the items listed in the survey they felt that; dam failure, drought, infrastructure failure (specifying the I-94 bridge over Hennesey Rd.), nuclear power plant accident, epidemic/pandemic, severe winter weather (specifying power outages during such an event), hazardous material transport accidents, costal flooding and erosion and pipeline accidents, among other things. Stepich stated he will submit the plan to the County on the Township's behalf.

Joint Planning Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting

J. Stepich stated that he intends to schedule a joint meeting between the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals. He stated that the two bodies should meet so that amendment suggestions, areas of concern and mutually supported strategies can be discussed and, perhaps, implemented.

Recreational Medical Marihuana

J. Stepich stated that he will contact Kristen Bearup, Executive Vice-President of Compassionate Care by Design, to explore the prospect of scheduling a township tour of their facilities. He asked the Commissioners to formulate questions of concerns they may have with recreational marihuana ahead of time.

Other Matters

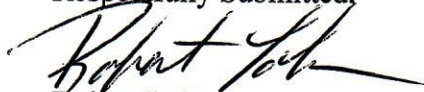
Stepich told the Commissioners that at their May regular meeting the Township Board did approve the allocation of \$25,000 toward the purchase of the wooded area northeast of the township hall. Stepich also informed the Commission that he has appointed Glen Giannetti as project manager of Phase 2 of the soccer / sports field project.

C. Curtis stated that the extant well on the future soccer field would have to be replaced and added that the owner of Specialty Irrigation quoted a price of \$15,000 for the installation of an irrigation system for the field.

With no other business to come before the Commission, C. Curtis made a motion to adjourn. D. Heminger seconded and motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,


Robert Lohr
Zoning Administrator