

# Otsego County Planning Commission

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Approved Minutes for November 20, 2017

**Call to Order:** 6:00pm by Chairperson Hartmann

Pledge of Allegiance

**Roll Call:**

Present: Chairperson Hartmann, Vice Chairperson Jarecki, Secretary Arndt, Mr. Borton, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Norton, Mr. Caverson, Mr. Bauman, Ms. Corfis

Absent: Mr. Hilgendorf (*excused*), Mr. Klee

Staff Present: Mr. Mouch, Ms. Boyak-Wohlfeil

Public Present: Randy Stults, Eric Lappan, Barbara Lappan

**Approval of minutes from:** October 16, 2017

Motion made to approve minutes as presented by Mr. Brown; Seconded by Mrs. Norton.

Motion approved unanimously

**Consent Agenda:** None

**Other:** None

**Public participation for items not on the agenda:**

Eric Lappan, Lappans of Gaylord, was present and was questioning the rules and regulations on signage due to their sign permit application being denied. He stated the sign was significantly smaller than some of the existing signs along that stretch of Old 27.

Mr. Mouch stated the plan review was denied because the square footage exceeded the thirty-two square feet maximum specified in the current zoning ordinance and the signs referred to have existed for many years.

Mr. Lappan stated the signs in question are newer businesses and have been reconstructed. His proposed sign is a John Deere sign, was professionally designed and will be professionally installed by Allen Industries. The new sign is taller vertically than the old one but will be smaller overall because it did not include a frame. He requested a variance for the sign.

It was stated a variance could be applied for from the Zoning Board of Appeals but the five criteria of that process would have to be met. The process was explained and Mr. Lappan was given an application for a variance along with the ordinance section pertaining to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Further discussion ensued concerning nonconformities.

**Public Hearing:** None

**Advertised Case:** None

**Unfinished Commission Business:**

1. Section 21.38 Signs & Billboards *Proposed language changes* – Send to townships

Chairperson Hartmann stated Mr. Arndt and Mr. Mouch had met and had restructured Section 21.38 for ease of use and understanding. The sign committee met and discussed the changes to the section and

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made additional changes before presenting to the Planning Commission. He asked Mr. Arndt to open the discussion.

Mr. Arndt stated the changes to the sign section were driven from an enforcement point of view and restructuring of the section easily defines what can be done in what zoning district and what conditions apply.

Mr. Mouch stated the International Property Maintenance and International Zoning Codes for the United States are formatted similarly. They are typically set up to explain 'if this happens, then this follows'. It makes it much easier for enforcing violations when each item can be addressed separately. The numbering is also formatted differently so the sections can be easily sorted in the database and with adding the extra '0' in front of a single digit, everything falls in line.

Mr. Arndt stated the City of Gaylord's sign ordinance was reviewed as well as MDOT regulations to understand signage on controlled roads. Language was also added to allow the Zoning Administrator the authority to grant a twenty percent variance on signage to prevent minor issues from coming before the Planning Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals.

It was suggested criteria be added to the authority of granting a twenty percent variance, less it be requested by everyone. Language suggestions were proposed for criteria.

Discussion continued on other items concerning window signage and banners with suggestions for changes as well. Chairperson Hartmann thanked Mr. Stults for his input on verbiage and requested the Sign Committee reconvene to address the changes discussed. Section 21.38 will be presented at December's meeting.

## **New Business:**

### 1. Section 21.12 Home Occupation – Review – *Proposed language changes– sent via email*

Chairperson Hartmann stated the formatting had been changed on the other sections being presented as well and opened discussion on the proposed changes to Section 21.12.

It was stated a home occupation could only occupy fifteen percent of the *home* and *attached garage*; it did not include any detached structures.

It was recommended by Mr. Brown to send Section 21.12 to townships for input. Members concurred unanimously.

### 2. Section 21.34 Restricted Uses – Review – *Proposed language changes –sent via email*

Chairperson Hartmann opened discussion on the proposed changes to Section 21.34.

Referring to number two under '*Exceptions*', it was suggested *snowplowing purposes* be changed to *service of the premises* because a vehicle could be used for other purposes on premises other than plowing.

Vice Chairperson Jarecki questioned compost piles in conjunction to garbage.

It was suggested stating 'Enclosed compost piles are not considered garbage'.

It was recommended by Chairperson Hartmann to send Section 21.34 to townships for input. Members concurred unanimously.

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## Reports and Commission Member's Comments:

1. Otsego County Parks & Recreation report / Judy Jarecki

Mrs. Jarecki reported Eric Drews had presented some good ideas and suggestions for the Dog Park; the Groen property transfer was still underway and moving forward; two parcels contiguous to the County Park were being appraised for possible purchase to enlarge the entrance to the park and a beach area was being considered by removing some of the grasses and brining in sand.

2. Land Use Services report / Jim Mouch

Mr. Mouch stated it was enlightening working on the zoning ordinance language trying to set absolutes for public ease of understanding and usability. He also stated a fiber optic business was moving into the old Norandex building and would provide up to one hundred new jobs. They should be opening in February.

Mr. Bauman stated Livingston Township was wrapping up their Master Plan.

Mr. Arndt stated the Kassuba Road project in Bagley Township had been completed and looked good.

Mr. Borton stated at a recent Michigan Association of Counties (MAC) meeting in Lansing, the Governor attended and presented an update of the State's status opposed to where it was seven years previously. He had offered good advice as far as managing growth in northern Michigan in terms of offering quality housing and broadband accessibility stating without that, there would not be a draw to the area.

Chairperson Hartmann adjourned the meeting.

**Adjournment:** 7:55pm by Chairperson Hartmann

Approved as Edited



Ken Arndt

Secretary to the OCPC

Christine Boyak-Wohlfeil; Recording Secretary