

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION Regular Meeting</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thursday, June 16, 2011 Yankee Springs Township Hall 284 North Briggs Road, Middleville, Michigan 49333</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MINUTES</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>FINAL MINUTES</b></p>
<p>Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Frank Fiala.  <u>Roll Call: All Present:</u> Cunningham, Fiala, Jansens, Purcell, Schwennesen, Strickland, Wells.  Staff Present: Chuck Misak, John Jerkatis  R. Lippert was on sick leave.  Greg Milliken of McKenna &amp; Assoc. was not present.  <u>Visitors:</u> 7 (not including staff present)  Patricia Johns , J-Ad Graphics</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CALL TO ORDER PLEDGE ROLL CALL</b></p>
<p><b>ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA:</b>  Approved as submitted.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ADDITIONS TO AGENDA</b></p>
<p><b>MEETING REPORTS:</b>  <u>ZBA REPORT:</u> Gordon Wells: No recent meeting.  <u>Board of Trustees Report:</u> Al Schwennesen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget was amended. Nearly \$77,000 under budget.</li> <li>• The 2011-12 Budget is nearly complete. Public Hearing will take place on June 30<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>• Paul Heystek is meeting with an aide to Governor Snyder regarding erroneous FEMA flood plain information.</li> <li>• The Township Park work is due to start soon. Half of this work is paid by a federal grant.</li> <li>• The budget amount for the Planning Commission for McKenna was cut to \$10,000. Last year's amount was \$14,000.</li> <li>• Al Schwennesen would like to have discussion on how to trim 30% of this cost. (Professional Planning – McKenna)</li> <li>• Continuing with the Twp. Board report, Schwennesen mentioned a complaint about trash/debris near Archwood and M-179.</li> <li>• Frank Fiala mentioned that the Planning Commission Enabling Act will be voted on – on June 30<sup>th</sup> for adoption.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEETING REPORTS ZBA Report- G. Wells</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Board of Trustees Report- Al Schwennesen</b></p>
<p><b>ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:</b> F. Fiala mentioned the Public Hearing on June 30<sup>th</sup>.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Page 1 of 5 YST Planning Commission 6-16-11</b></p>

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Carol Kramer, of 12622 Park Drive,** said they were assured by Sunrise Shores (Boardwalk) that their home was a single residence as the others surrounding it in their development. Now the next door residence at 12610 Park Drive owned by Dale & Kay Cumminford is a rental and the source of Kramer’s complaints. Mrs. Kramer asked the Planning Commission, “Is there any relief?” F. Fiala informed C. Kramer that the township has a Zoning enforcement officer who will look into this matter. Mrs. Kramer thanked the PC for its time.

**Carol Wall, of 12634 Park Drive,** said that she had the same complaints as Carol Kramer.

**Jay VandenBerg, 10589 Gun Lake Rd.,** asked, “Is this really a township problem?” (referring to the previous comments). F. Fiala, Chairman, said that a number of the complaints are neighbor-to-neighbor issues. Fiala declined to make any further comment at this point.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Wells with support from Jansens to approve minutes of Planning Commission meeting of May 19, 2011 as presented. All ayes. MOTION CARRIED.

**MCKENNA BILLING:**

Motion by Jansens with support from Cunningham to recommend payment of May billing of \$1,395.00 from McKenna to the Board of Trustees. All ayes. MOTION CARRIED.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Boathouse Definition:**

Frank Fiala mentioned that R. Lippert sent the boathouse definition to press but not in time for this meeting. It will be covered in the next meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Review Planning Commission Priorities:**

Frank Fiala introduced the topic by commenting that the Planning & Zoning should be done closest to the people – at a grass roots level and that most everything the Planning Commission does is representative of the township population. The PC writes a master plan followed by a zoning ordinance. Fiala feels a balance must be found somewhere in the middle of “doing whatever you want” and needing a permit to paint your shutters a certain color. F. Fiala also sees the sign ordinance as a priority for the PC to work on. Fiala asked for general thoughts from the other members of the commission.

Greg Purcell: In regards to the issue of Township Zoning vs. County Zoning, and whether the township should hand Planning & Zoning back to the county, Purcell said he had some concerns. He remarked that he was an advocate for educating the residents about the implications of county zoning because this issue poses questions that exceed “yes or no” answers. A concern of Purcell’s is that Barry County has an \$800,000 deficit in the coming year. It was commented at a previous meeting that a half-time person would be needed to take on the additional Planning & Zoning of our

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Motion to approve PC meeting minutes of May 19, 2011 as amended. Motion Carried**

**Motion to approve May billing of McKenna Assoc. Motion Carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS  
Boathouse Definition**

**OLD BUSINESS  
Review of PC Priorities**

**Discussion on PC Priorities and Township Zoning vs. County Zoning.**

township if switched to Barry County. Purcell wasn't sure that it's a good trade off. Also, Purcell asked the question, "Would we get the level of service from the County? Yankee Springs is unique. People in this township have made investments in their homes and have higher expectations."

Al Schwennesen agrees with G. Purcell. Schwennesen commented that he has a problem with letting "someone off a street corner" take over. A lot of work has gone into Planning and Zoning for the Township. "Our future of Yankee Springs is right here with the people," commented Schwennesen.

Cathy Strickland agrees with the concerns previously mentioned, however, she is not pleased with how the office of Zoning is handled in our township. Asking the County to handle our zoning would be a \$60,000 savings, but a sad thing to do, but if it is the only way to improve the service of the Zoning office, then it may be necessary.

Gordon Wells agrees with some of both of the views regarding Planning and Zoning going to the County.

Patrick Jansens wasn't sure how things would work out financially with moving Planning and Zoning to the County. He said, "Sometimes I feel we are an ordinance-creating board." He hates to see it going to Barry County because it would be less mobile, less aware.

Mike Cunningham has been on the PC since January and is not fully aware of the problems Cathy eluded too. Cunningham agrees with Greg Purcell in that Yankee Springs is unique in Barry County. "With lakes and tourism, it is critical to make the decisions close to home," stated Cunningham. He also felt that there were opportunities that the PC can control financially such as having the Professional Planner attend fewer meetings. Cunningham was not sure about the tax savings involved in moving to Planning and Zoning by the County, indicating that he believed that Yankee Springs would have to pay the County to take over Zoning.

Frank Fiala attended a seminar earlier today and the main thrust about Planning and Zoning was keeping it local. Economic Development was a term used frequently. "Are we being helpful enough to people and business?", he asked. Economic development involves fostering businesses and neighborhoods and helping things grow. Gordon Wells added that Ordinances we worked on last year seemed to be against people and businesses.

Greg Purcell mentioned that the PC's work on the M-179 was helpful and brought about an upscale medical office/building. "This was something more than what we could have hoped for," commented Purcell. "Not focusing on or including Economic Development is not really doing the job," added Purcell. Purcell also attended today's MSU-Extension seminar and remarked that the Governor wants to more business friendly. "Are there things in the Zoning ordinance that are impediments to business development?" asked Purcell.

Patrick Jansens mentioned that if there was a meeting designated for members of the YS business community, he didn't think the business owners would want to come. At least four business owners on M-179 that Jansens talks to frequently feel that the township is against them. G. Purcell added that trying to connect to the business community doesn't have to be that formal. The goal is to be helpful to the business community. "Sometimes it's not what you say, but how you say it – to the people,"

**Cont.:**  
**Township Zoning vs. County Zoning**

**Discussion of Economic Development**

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added Purcell. "This (Township Hall meeting) may not be the best format for dialog," commented Purcell. Cunningham asked "How many business owners are we talking about?" Cathy Strickland said at a previous business function, sixty (60) invitations were sent out. Jansens mentioned that he remembers the meeting and business owners weren't doing all the talking. Cunningham felt that you have to blend the two. When a business comes in you have to approach each project as "how can we accomodate both needs- residential and business."

Cathy Strickland commented "I never dreamed we'd run into the kerfuffle that we did with the Sand Bar and Grill. It was very disturbing." P. Jansens said that he offered to help move the Sand Bar's sign because he felt so bad about it. Cunningham asked, "Does that indicate something that should be changed?" Jansens added that maybe a grace period should be given. C. Strickland added "Let's trust people and not use the "good ole boy excuse" that we will not make exceptions for anyone. Just saying 'NO' --that's the easy way out."

Fiala suggested that PC members take a look at the ordinances. A. Schwennesen agreed. Cunningham asked about the corridor and grandfathering in. Purcell mentioned looking at abandoned use as well as private restrictive covenants, and a minimal level of control through zoning (within limited parameters). Purcell also commented that what businesses perceive is reality to them and that we should take time to ask citizens in the business community. Fiala suggested maybe a newsletter coming from the PC. Cunningham said it would be nice to know what people are having the most problems with so that the PC could focus on those issues. Jansens suggested having something on the website. Cunningham brought up the point that not all of YS residents have internet access.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Fiala asked that each of the PC members to take a look at the zoning ordinance and come up with 3 or 4 cumbersome things to consider deleting or altering.

Cunningham mentioned that maybe it could be reported in the paper that the public is invited to write in also and maybe the PC can get a jump start. G. Purcell commented that the PC could improve its pro-active communication. Strickland recommended improving re-active staff communication when someone comes into the (twp.) office. "It's not happening in a 'how can I help you?' type of manner."and it should be much more friendly in the offices."

**Other discussion:**

Fiala plans to have the CIP- Capital Improvement Plan- ready for the PC to take a look at- at the next meeting.

The public noticing of the boathouse definition has already taken place.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jay VandenBerg, of Gun Lake Rd., thinks the PC members are well qualified and the township attorney could be used more. "Your (ZA) representation out in the township is hurting you very much. Leg work done in the township isn't helping." J. VandenBerg defined "leg work" as the person out there talking to people. "Bob

**Other discussion**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

(Lippert) is hard to like. (It's) just not working for you," commented J. Vandenberg. Jansens said that he has heard from three business owners that don't like Bob because he's abrasive. Strickland said, "He (Bob) has some great qualities -- until someone says "no" to him." Strickland said that she's received phone calls about Bob's demeanor. An example is "Bob arguing loudly with people in front of other people who are just having fun (or providing fun) on a holiday weekend -- instead of thinking -- "I should make a note of this so it doesn't happen again next year"." Strickland added that it is a communication problem: "That's my point about County Zoning, if we can't correct this problem, then perhaps County Zoning is the only answer." Jansens commented that if Planning and Zoning is turned over to the county, he suspects that things won't get any better.

Patricia Johns, reporter from the Sun & News commented that she thinks it is admirable that the PC wants to talk to businesses.

Shane Vandenberg, resident, said that he wanted to "...see how much courage we all have tonight. We have a nepotistic thing in this township that is getting out of control." S. Vandenberg asked each member of the PC to answer the question, "Should we have nepotism?" The first person asked was Greg Purcell and he responded that he was not here for a dialogue. Schwennesen didn't comment and Frank Fiala, Chairman redirected the discussion. S. Vandenberg said that the Zoning Administrator brings a issue to the PC board, the PC writes an ordinance and sends it to the Board of Trustees for approval. The Zoning Administrator's wife is on the Board of Trustees, and votes on the matter. S. Vandenberg said that there shouldn't be a husband-wife team with one voting on the issues brought by the other. This (nepotism) is not found on church boards, school boards, or in Amway or Steelcase. S. Vandenberg said he does not believe that this community needs an education on county zoning in order to put it to a vote. He added that the residents are very aware of what is going on in their township government.

Discussion followed regarding the budget amount of \$10,000 in the new budget for the Professional Planner. John Jerkatis was asked if it would be possible for the PC to know where they were at financially every month. Jerkatis mentioned that the PC gets a McKenna bill every month. Jerkatis also mentioned that with the new software that is to be installed soon; this information should be readily available. Strickland pointed out that the expenses for the PC concern more than just the Planner's amount.

Motion by Wells with support from Cunningham to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. Approved by all.

Approved by: Cathy Strickland 7/22/11  
Cathy Strickland, Secretary Date