

<p style="text-align: center;"> <b>YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP</b>  <b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES</b>  <u>Joint Meeting Of</u>  <u>Board of Trustees, Planning Commission and</u>  <u>Zoning Board of Appeals</u> </p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <b>Thursday, January 23, 2014</b>  <b>Yankee Springs Township Hall</b>  <b>284 North Briggs Road, Middleville, Michigan 49333</b> </p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MINUTES</b></p>	<p> <b>FINAL MINUTES</b>  <b>Approved Feb 13, 2014</b>  <b>As presened</b> </p>
<p>Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Supervisor Mark Englerth.</p> <p><b>Roll Call:</b></p> <p><b>Board of Trustees:</b> All Present: Jerkatis, J. Lippert, M. Englerth, M. Cook, Campbell.</p> <p><b>Planning Commission:</b> Strickland, Fiala, Cunningham, Beukema (ZBA Rep), Campbell (Board Rep). Absent: Purcell with notice. Gordon Wells has retired.</p> <p><b>Zoning Board of Appeals:</b> Schwennesen, Jansens, Mary Cook (Board Rep.), Rich Beukema (PC Rep). Absent: Paul Heystek: absent with notice. (Alternate: Chuck Biggs, absent as well).</p> <p><b>Zoning Administrator:</b> Larry Knowles, ZBA</p> <p><b>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</b></p> <p>Staff Present: A. Jansma, S. Marcukaitis</p> <p>Visitors: (0)</p>	<p><b>CALL TO ORDER</b></p> <p><b>ROLL CALL</b></p> <p><b>PLEDGE</b></p>
<p><b><u>DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL REPORTS:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>2013 YANKEE SPRINGS ZBA REPORT SUMMARY: Read by Patrick Jansens, ZBA (Vice Chair)</u></b></p> <p><b>Please note:</b> At the recommendation of the Township Attorney and the YST Board the following report on Zoning Board of Appeals activities for the 2013 calendar year has been prepared for the Township Supervisor and Board members.</p> <p>There were five meetings and 1 Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission and Board in attendance. Also in this report, the meeting attendance of ZBA members was documented.</p> <p><b>ACCOMPLISHMENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint meeting with the Various Boards</li> <li>• Completed ZBA duties with minimal expense to township</li> <li>• No court actions/contestations regarding ZBA decisions</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL REPORTS</u></b></p> <p>Page 1 of 6 YST Joint Meeting 1-23-14</p>

**DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL REPORTS:**

**2013 ZBA REPORT continued:**

The report also included a synopsis of eight (8) variance requests: Approvals (5), denials (2), and Whispering Pines (1) (Of 6 WP variance requests, 5 were resolved and 1 referred to the Health Department) and educational class participation.

Motion by M. Cook with support from J. Lippert to correct #5 (of Synopsis of Variance requests) from 6 multiple variances approved to 5 Whispering Pines variances resolved and 1 referred to the Health Department (ZBA 13-08-05-A Parcel ID 370-001-00 thru 370-021-00). ROLL CALL: Beukema: yes, Jansens: yes, M. Cook: yes, Schwennesen: yes. Yes: 4, No: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

\*This above-mentioned information will be corrected at the February 11, 2014 ZBA Meeting.

**ZBA MAJOR 2014 OBJECTIVES:**

1. Encourage ZBA members to complete MSU Citizen Planner events and attend other pertinent seminars.
2. Find ways to make Zoning Ordinances that generate numerous variance requests more compatible with needs of citizens.

**\*\*The actual 2013 ZBA Report, in its entirety, is attached to the minutes.\*\***

The ZBA report was signed and submitted at this meeting.

F. Fiala, PC Chairman commented that only eight variance requests speaks very well for the ZBA and YS Township Ordinance.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT, 2013:** by Chairman, Frank Fiala

In compliance with Michigan Planning legislation the following report on Planning Commission activities for the 2013 calendar year has been prepared for the Township Supervisor and Board members. This is a summary relating to the productive results of 19 regular monthly meetings and one joint meeting with the ZBA and township Board in attendance.

The following is a brief summary of the Planning Commission Report.

**\*\*This report, in its entirety, is attached to the minutes.\*\***

(The report was signed by PC Chairman and PC Secretary on January 23, 2014).

**SYNOPSIS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Whispering Pines preliminary approval findings of fact and special conditions
- Made progress on sign Ordinance update
- Denied dredging special exception use permit on Gun Lake

**DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL REPORTS**

ZBA:

Motion to correct #5 (of Synopsis of Variance requests) to 5 Whispering Pines variances resolved and 1 referred to the Health Department. MOTION CARRIED.

**Planning Commission  
Annual Report Summary by  
Frank Fiala, Chairperson**

**Planning Commission Annual Report Summary by Frank Fiala, Chairperson. (cont'd)**

**2013:**

**RESIDENTIAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS: 53**

**COMMERCIAL SITE PLAN REVIEWS: 3**

**REZONING REQUESTS: 2**

**SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUESTS: 7**

**SUBDIVISIONS, LAND DEVELOPMENT, SPLITS: 3**

**TEMPORARY CHARITABLE PERMITS: 1**

**SIGN PERMITS: 2**

**Also detailed in the PC Annual Report were:** Population changes, McKenna & Associates billing for services, Bauckham, Sparks, Lohrstorfer, Thall & Seeber, P.C. billing for services, and educational class participation of the PC members.

**PLANNING COMMISSION MAJOR 2014 OBJECTIVES:**

- Review and Update Sign Ordinance
- Support the Cuddy Drainage process & Payne Creek Obstruction
- Strongly encourage all P.C. members to successfully complete at least one MSU-E Citizen Planning event every year and to participate in other Planning and Land Use seminars
- Review and Update Article XII of the Zoning Ordinance
- Review and Update Land Use Plan
- Consider Bicycle Trail along M-179 corridor.

Frank Fiala commented that he'd be attending the MTA next week and "Strategic Planning" would be a major theme of the Educational Conference. The County uses Strategic Planning which he would like to see the Planning Commission incorporate. This involves having a mission statement or a vision for the township with goals and objectives. The county is doing this with all of its departments. The mission/vision statement is posted in all areas for employees view.

**OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Discussion occurred regarding Bike Trails:** Fiala commented that the Bike Trail programs that work very well usually have an advocate that drives the program. This person that goes to every meeting and finds any opportunity possible, be it grants or whatever, to advance the bike trail project. The Petoskey and Boyne Mountain Areas were mentioned as good examples of successful bike trail programs and should possibly be contacted for information. Cascade Township was mentioned as another possible contact as well. Also highlighting our township map with prioritized trails may be a possibility. Thornapple Township and Mike Bremer was brought up as a contact as well.

**DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL REPORTS: cont'd**

Planning Commission Annual Report Summary by Frank Fiala, Chairperson. (cont'd)

**OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Discussion regarding the Sign Ordinance:** A question was asked about progress towards a gateway sign. It was noted that the township board wasn't willing to assist in funding. Further discussion took place regarding the township having to but funds toward a sign if a gateway sign was desired. The Veteran's Memorial Site was mentioned as a place for the gateway sign. LED signs were discussed such as the Village of Middleville's sign. It was commented that an electronic sign could be a great communication tool and LED's can eliminate a lot of sign clutter. It was also noted that items could be put into the ordinance to make LED signs safe. Fiala mentioned prior times of Planning & Zoning being very restrictive in regards to the sign ordinance. Now things are changing and P & Z is looking at how the sign ordinance can be more beneficial.

**Discussion regarding Payne Creek obstruction:** It was noted that a hydrologist was hired by Payne Lake to study the situation. DNR land is involved. The problem lies in the fact that there is not a significant drop or fall south of Payne Lake. There is 18 feet of fall between Barlow and Payne Lakes. It was commented that cattails and other vegetation also slow things down.

**Article entitled, "Gun Lake Officials Struggle to Keep Up with Growth", dated 4/21/03 was distributed:** Mark Englerth, Supervisor, briefly summarized the article written in 2003. He commented about how times have changed from 2003 when the township was struggling to control growth to current times when the township asks, "How can we survive?" Now we tend to focus on a sustainable community. Englerth also mentioned the population of YS Township being the same as that of Hastings. However, Hastings has employees for the sole purpose of marketing the City of Hastings. Also, Hastings has law enforcement officers. YS Township doesn't have these types of individuals employed. Others commented that demographics have changed as well including families who are now living as extended families, and the cost of keeping aging parents and grandparents in elderly care facilities is a real issue for residents. There are a lot of needs that are here now, that weren't around ten to fifteen years ago, added a PC member. Also mentioned, Yankee Springs is the "grayest township" in the county with the average age much higher than the other townships in Barry County.

**Discussion of loss of businesses:** The loss of the "landmark" restaurant "Sam's Joint" was mentioned, as well as a lumber yard and hardware. M. Englerth commented that YS Township is still a land of opportunity. He mentioned that when Lake Michigan kicks up, a visitor has to pack up and go home for the day. "After a thunderstorm on Gun Lake, you can be back out on it within an hour," added M. Englerth. Englerth also mentioned thriving businesses such as Middleville Tool & Die which continued to employ people thru the recession and recently added a major expansion to its facilities. The addition of the Pennock Medical facility has been good for the community as well. Further discussion occurred that included the need of communication and cooperation with county resources (such as the Barry County Economic Group). The potential need for a retirement facility in the township was mentioned as well.

**BREAK: 8:22 p.m.**

**RESUME: 8:33 p.m.**

**OPEN**  
**DISCUSSION/PUBLIC**  
**COMMENT cont'd**

**OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENT: cont'd**

Fiala, PC Chair, commented that the PC would like to have a Panel of area experts present at the township hall. At this meeting, the panel members would discuss items that the PC would like additional advice on. Along with marketing ideas and enforcement advice, the PC will request information on items of Article XII. Fiala summarized these items on the whiteboard as follows:

- Lot Coverage - RLF (Residential Lakefront) and RSF (Residential Single Family).
- Lot Size -
- Non-conforming - (> 50%)
- Residential Structure - (Height maximum allowed and number of stories).
- Granny Flats - (720 sq. feet - first floor)
- Outbuildings - (Maximum sq. foot size & height, and quantity of bldgs.) OH doors.
- Fences & Decks - (Less than 18 inches). Riparian rights.
- Sideline setbacks -
- Lots, Parcels, Plat books vs. Warranty deeds -
- Lakefront setbacks -
- Outdoor wood burners
- Sheds & Boat houses - (in front yards)
- Signs - (setbacks, height, electronic, LED, non-conforming, gateway)

Fiala commented that the panel members would receive a list of items to be discussed ahead of time. The point of the meeting would be for discussion, not debate.

**Further open discussion:**

**Enforcement** was discussed. Currently, enforcement is complaint-driven. Questions were asked regarding a township official's responsibility if they see something around the township that is not right. The idea of a smaller amount of change occurring instead of turning everything upside down was mentioned. Dangerous building ordinances and run-off ordinances were involved in this particular discussion as well.

**Round Table of "Final" thoughts:** Supervisor Englerth asked those present for their final thoughts on the direction the township should be moving. A summary of those thoughts follows:

- YS Twp. needs to look at how the economy has changed and current trends.
- User friendly, more lenient
- Complaints should be handled on a softer, more gentle, basis.
- "Move with caution, but move."
- A semi-joint meeting of the boards may be needed.
- Communication seems to be of key importance.
- "If everything gets loosened up too much, our quality of life will go down."
- Ordinances may become more lenient, and others may have been affected by stricter ordinances in previous years. The township still has to proceed with its work on improvement.
- "Continuous improvement"
- Ordinances are fluid- always have been and will be. The Fire department has driven some of the ordinances and that has to be kept in mind.

**OPEN DISCUSSION/PUBLIC COMMENT**

Thanks went out to the PC and ZBA for all of their work from Treasurer Jerkatis and Clerk Lippert. Englerth thanked everyone present for their time, effort and energy put into their township involvement. He mentioned the importance of taking time to review the goals and direction of the township. Englerth also mentioned that the people that have to live with the decisions of the Township board, PC, and ZBA are the residents of the community, YS Township.

**ADJOURNMENT:** At 9:30 p.m., M. Cook motioned to adjourn with support from Campbell. Approved by all.

Respectfully submitted  
D. Mousseau  
Recording Secretary  
1-25-14

Final approval: Feb 13, 2014  
Janice C. Lippert, Clerk copy draft 2-3-14

**ADJOURNMENT**

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