

Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting
Crystal Lake Township Planning Commission
7:00 PM April 26, 2023
Crystal Lake Township Hall

1. CALL TO ORDER at 7:05 pm by Chair Greg Wright

2. ROLL CALL AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Planning Commission Secretary Dr. Northway called the roll:

Present: Commission Chair Greg Wright
 Commission Vice Chair Bill Herd
 Commissioner Mike Pasche
 Commissioner Dr. William Northway
 Commissioner Lee Ewing

Staff present: Recording Secretary Jeannette Feeheley

Excused: Zoning Administrator Tom Kucera

Visitors: Monica Schultz with the Crystal Lake & Watershed Association

Chairman Wright said that Zoning Administrator was not able to be present and had left some hard copy materials for their use tonight.

3. CALL FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

4. CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairman Wright reported that Zoning Administrator had told him that he had received correspondence from Homestead Township that they are updating their master plan and welcomed input.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

A. January 25, 2023

Herd moved approval of the draft Minutes of January 25, 2023, as written. Pasche seconded. All ayes. Minutes approved.

B. February Regular Meeting was cancelled due to weather.

C. March 22, 2023

Herd moved approval of the draft Minutes of March 22, 2023, as written. Pasche seconded. All ayes. Minutes approved.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Since Zoning Administrator was not able to be present, it was suggested that Item 10, New Business and its sole item "Discussion of Fees and Fines", be removed at this time.

Wright then moved approval of the draft Agenda as amended. Ewing seconded. All ayes. Amended Agenda approved.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Pasche reported he is taking an additional course on top of those he has already taken of the Master Citizen Planner Courses through MSU Extension, and that their courses are now available on line.
- Monica Schultz said she is here to take notes for the Crystal Lake & Watershed Association.

8. REPORTS TO THE COMMISSION

A. Chair Report: Chairman Wright said he had met with the Zoning Administrator that morning and they talked about, among other things, the Watershed Association work with Lake Township on their plans. Also, the Zoning Administrator had been in contact with Benzonia Township about their Park development near the boat launch at Railroad Point. He said the Park that is being developed there is in Benzonia Township and the outlet is in Crystal Lake Township. Discussion ensued about this public land development as well as another development that is in private hands.

B. Zoning Administrator Report. None.

C. Zoning Board of Appeals: Chairman Wright said that the Zoning Administrator had told him he expects there to be one matter coming to the Zoning Board of Appeals in the near future.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Short Term Rentals Work Session

Chairman Wright said the Zoning Administrator had left hard copies of Elmwood Township's handling of this topic with a Short Term Licensing Ordinance, saying that Elmwood Township is similar to Crystal Lake Township. Discussion among all Commissioners about whether or not there are problems on this topic within this Township, and if there are, identification of those problems need to come before any consideration of ways to address them. Chairman Wright pointed out this is actually a Township issue, not a zoning issue, but that member(s) of the Township Board had asked the Planning Commission to look into this matter for them. One Commissioner expressed concern about the cost of any licenses that might be required and whether more bureaucracy over the citizenry is needed on this matter. Others felt strongly that the Commission very much needs to hear from the Township's public to find out if there are residents who view short term rentals an issue of concern, and if so, an identification of those issues is necessary before consideration of any recommendations. Consensus was reached to ask the Zoning Administrator to organize a Forum, rather than a Public Hearing, where the public would be invited to express themselves on this matter, and that the Forum be held either June 7th or 14th when most of the township's citizens will be in residence after the winter. The Forum will be outside the regularly scheduled Planning Commission's monthly meetings.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Monica Schultz offered her summary of the Commissioners' discussion:

1. The Housing Supply Issue impacted by Companies snapping up houses for short term rentals;
2. The Categorization of rentals – companies with no intention to live here, and families who do

live here or intend to live here;

3. The many part-time residents around Crystal Lake;

4. Nuisance issues, for which there are or can be ordinances.

11. OTHER BUSINESS: None.

12. ADJOURNMENT: Wright adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannette Feeheley, Recording Secretary

Next Regularly Scheduled Monthly Meeting:

7 pm, Wednesday, May 24, 2023, at Crystal Lake Township Hall.

Forum in June yet to be scheduled.