

**Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting
Crystal Lake Township Planning Commission
7:00 PM May 24, 2023
Crystal Lake Township Hall**

1. CALL TO ORDER at 7:00 pm by Chair Greg Wright

2. ROLL CALL AND RECOGNITION OF VISITORS
Planning Commission Chair Greg Wright called the roll:

Present: Commission Chair Greg Wright
Commission Vice Chair Bill Herd
Commissioner Mike Pasche
Commissioner Lee Ewing

Excused: Commissioner Bill Northway

Staff present: Zoning Administrator Tom Kucera
Recording Secretary Jeannette Feeheley

Visitors: None

3. CALL FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

4. CORRESPONDENCE:

Pasche mentioned that they had received, for their information, a Frankfort City deed amendment to a police ordinance regarding workforce housing, and that it had been forwarded to them by the Crystal Lake Township Zoning Administrator.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 26, 2023

Herd moved that the draft minutes of the April 26, 2023 meeting of the Crystal Lake Township Planning Commission be approved without amendment. Wright seconded. All ayes. Minutes approved.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Herd suggested adding to the agenda a Discussion of Workforce Housing under Other Business. All agreed.

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

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

8. REPORTS TO THE COMMISSION

A. Chair Report: Chairman Wright said that Commissioner Northway in his absence had sent comments that he will relay when that item comes up on the agenda.

B. Zoning Administrator Report.

Zoning Administrator brought the Commissioners up to date on a situation with Dollar General. He said there had been a Show Cause Hearing in Court on Monday and the Court ruled in the Township's favor regarding repeated instances of trash from the Dollar General dumpster blowing onto residents' property. He said no one from the Dollar General firm showed up at the Hearing, \$600 in fines were imposed plus announcement of a possible temporary injunction to close the store unless and until the issue is addressed. The process in this matter had begun in August of last year. There is much turnover of Management and Staff at the store.

As for other matters, Zoning Administrator said he was getting lots of inquiries from people asking what they can do on their properties.

He also spoke about a situation in one area of the township where Front Lot owners have riparian rights on Crystal Lake and back lot owners in that subdivision as well as the general public also have rights of some access that is not riparian. It involves the roads of Molineaux, Linden and Broadway and also Lakeview Road, a platted public road that was never built and that the County does not recognize as a road because it was never built. He said it is a continuing enforcement issue.

C. Zoning Board of Appeals: Zoning Administrator mentioned that a certain resident wishes to add a large barn to his property and has applied for a variance.

Herd brought up a Facebook post on Overheard in Benzie County about a family with limited financial resources. He said some members of the community had posted a suggestion about fellow residents possibly helping the owner clean up the debris on his property. Discussion of this and similar situations ensued.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Short Term Rentals Work Session

It was reported that the Zoning Administrator and Wright and Herd had met and that the Zoning Administrator will work up an advertisement to alert the public of their plan to hold a Forum on this issue. He will send a draft of the advertisement to the Commissioners for their review. He discussed all the many venues he planned to advertise the matter. There was also much discussion about the best place to hold the Forum. Zoning Administrator was requested to see what places with sufficient room might be available.

Zoning Administrator mentioned he would not be able to attend the June 28th regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

Herd offered to moderate the Forum, will do an introduction and then solicit people's ideas and comments. It was agreed that this will not be a Planning Commission meeting and that the Commissioners may attend as members of the audience but not as Commissioners nor will they preside. There was much discussion on the fact that some issues, such as noise nuisance, are not limited to those residing in rentals but also may involve owners and their guests. There was also much discussion about the need to identify if the Township actually has a problem with short term rentals, and if

so, identification of those problems and if a short term rental ordinance would solve them. Wright mentioned that this issue had come to the Planning Commission at the request of the Township Board, and some of the Board trustees had been receiving complaints or questions. Wright provided Northway's emailed comments of his belief that short term rentals need to be addressed, and Northway's suggestions about on site or nearby management being available for timely responses to situations, and that occupancy rules be posted on site. The Commissioners had varying views on whether there is a need within this particular township where rental near Crystal Lake has always been an accepted way of life, as opposed to the City of Frankfort and Traverse City where certain problems have been identified as new to the area and growing. There was consensus, however, that the Commissioners all wanted to hear from the residents of Crystal Lake Township on this matter and hoped the Forum would be useful in this regard.

B. 2023 Capital Improvement Plan: Not taken up at this time.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

11. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Workforce Housing Discussion

Herd asked whether the Planning Commission should encourage developers to look at certain sites within the Township as suitable for development of workforce housing. Herd said if we have an ideal spot for workforce housing, maybe we should let people know we are open to possibilities such as a Planned Unit Development. Another Commissioner said he did not think the Planning Commission should publicize such, as the Planning Commission's mission, in his view, is not to invite or propose development but rather to respond to requests that come to them. Discussion ensued.

12. ADJOURNMENT: As there were no other matters before them, Wright adjourned the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannette Feeheley, Recording Secretary

Next Regularly Scheduled Monthly Meeting:

7 pm, Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at Crystal Lake Township Hall.

Date and Place of planned Forum on Short Term Rentals is yet to be scheduled.