

Notes taken by Jeannette Feeheley at a gathering
the evening of Jan. 26, 2022, at Crystal Lake Township Hall

There being no quorum present for the Jan. 26, 2022 scheduled meeting of the Crystal Lake Township Planning Commission, an official meeting did not occur. Commissioners were unintentionally unaware of the change in COVID phone & zoom attendance allowances at the time. Draft Minutes that were taken therefore do not officially exist, and all business transacted did not happen.

At the Feb. 23, 2022 meeting of the Crystal Lake Township Planning Commission, Commissioners corrected these matters. In addition, out of courtesy for attendees and those involved, they asked that one matter that did not involve any action taken, that of discussion regarding the RV Park Special Land Use Application -- be provided not as official Minutes but as notes, and that such notes be provided to the regular email distribution list.

Those present at the gathering were: Greg Wright, Dr. William Northway, Bill Herd by telephone, Tom Kucera, Jeannette Feeheley, Barbara Brian, Jim Brian, Steve Church, Becky Church, Sarah Moss, Brenda Mead, Craig Fiederlein, Miya Ingle of 7 & 4 Up North Live News, Amy Ferris

Following are Notes (please excuse the use of titles as the gathering was not an official meeting):

Wright said this is not a public hearing on this issue but rather, as it is the first time we've had a chance to look at the application since the last meeting, we're just trying to get a handle on the proposal, and we're very interested in comments from those here tonight. He asked the Zoning Administrator to summarize where we are.

Zoning Administrator spoke on the process at this point and that discussion is kind of deferred until the Zoning Board of Appeals can rule on the requests for variances submitted today regarding the 2000 square foot limit on accessory buildings. At this point, we don't have a Zoning Board meeting scheduled, and depending on the availability of Board members and alternates, the Board will not be able to meet before the middle of February at the earliest. After that point, we'd look at scheduling a public hearing for the RV Park. If the Zoning Board approves those variances, the approval may include conditions which would mean the site plan may have to be revised. We scheduled this public forum for tonight to allow for public input at this point, and this meeting today has been publicized on the township web site and an announcement was put into the Record Patriot and also letters were sent to all the adjacent property owners.

Kucera said the next step is to try to get the variance requests processed as quickly as we can so that we can then proceed to the special land use permit. He said the original RV Park had been envisaged for 133 spaces and water and sewer had been installed for such. As a result of the Special Land Use Permit granted back then, the spaces allowed were reduced to 67, then a lawsuit and consent judgment further reduced the allowed spaces to 57. However, the intention had always been to have a phase 2 to increase the size of the Park to some amount. The consent judgment required that phase 2 would have to go through the same process as the original Special Land Use Permit application, with 127 final spaces rather than the original 133, or, an additional 70 spaces to the current. To accommodate those additional spaces, the RV Park wants to put in a second bathhouse and a 5000 square foot storage building and an open storage area on the east side, which he said he assumed would be to store people's boats and trailers and such. He is not sure how, if a renter leaves his RV in a space all winter or not, how the rental agreements work regarding storage in the storage area, but whatever are the RV Park's Operating Rules for open and closed storage spaces, they will need to be reviewed by the Planning Commission during the Special Land Use Permit Application review process.

Wright called next for comments, if any, from the Commissioners and said afterwards, he would ask for comments from the public in attendance. Commissioner Herd mentioned the January 24th email he had sent the Planning Commission on the question of storage, that he does not have a strong opinion one way or another but when we addressed RV storage on private property a few years ago, there were some pretty strong sentiments expressed by the public, so that's one area we need to look at. Among other matters he mentioned was his thought that there needs to be a better architectural plan for the entrance area. He asked what is going to be stored in the storage areas and for how long. He asked his email be included in these Minutes. Zoning Administrator said he would also post Commissioner Herd's comments on the Web Site.

Wright said that it has been ten years or more since the RV Park was built, and the size had been greatly reduced from the original request, and he asked about the legal agreement signed ten years ago among three parties and what that means at this point.

Zoning Administrator said the Consent Judgment contemplated that there would be a Phase 2 but that any Phase 2 development would have to go through the same Special Land Use Permit (SLUP) process that Phase I went through. He said there's nothing in the consent judgment that bars expansion but that the SLUP process would have to be undergone to obtain approval of Phase 2 plans. He said the township attorneys looked at the consent judgment and agree with this assessment. He confirmed to Wright that it is a brand new application that needs review by the Commission, and needs to be seen if appropriate under the Township's Master Plan, and a discussion is needed about conditions of operations that may be added to any new permit. He said a review of the existing permit should also be done to ensure of consistency with any Phase 2 permit granted and he is in the process of doing such a review in preparation for his staff report to the Planning Commission.

Northway asked the identity of the three parties to the consent judgment and was answered, the RP 2.5 group of property owners, RV Park Owner Roger Mix, and Crystal Lake Township.

With the conclusion of Commissioner discussion, Wright invited anyone present among the public in attendance to make any comments.

Sarah Ross, Civil Engineer for the Project, gave a review and presented site plans on an easel for all to see. She spoke of all the permits she had obtained from the many and various public agencies involved. She said the documents filed for the variance have all the information requested about the accessory buildings. She said camper and boat storage is envisaged for park occupants. She said they are adding a tree to every occupant space and are working to improve trees at the entry and that a larger, lighted sign would help improve the entrance. She said they look forward to a Public Hearing and are grateful to Zoning Administrator Kucera for working so well with them.

Craig Fiederlein said he is not only an attorney but also a member of the community of the Park, that they are good members of the community and following all the rules and doing what is necessary. He said they just ask this be set for a hearing, that they submitted what they thought was a complete application and are still waiting now months later for the necessary public hearing. He said everything is in compliance with all requirements and there's no reason for delay, that they have provided everything the Township wants. We've submitted requests for the variances needed. We do need a new and better entry sign. He said as anyone in this community knows, we have to look at the Dental Office Building to know where to turn. We have been dealing with Tom and the 2.5 group, and there's been several versions of the plan, and we believe we've addressed all concerns, and we thank you for your time but we really ask that this move forward and be set for a hearing.

Township Supervisor Ferris asked Mr. Fiederlein that she got the impression that you've been asking for

a hearing, and do you feel there's been some mistake on our part, the Township's part, that your request for a hearing has not been set so far? Mr. Fiederlein referred her to the Commission for an answer. Wright explained that it wasn't until our last meeting that we could take up anything related to the application and we were not able to review that because it had been received so recently. So this is the first time that we've been able to start sorting out some of these issues, and we don't have a full Board here tonight. We're going to do it as fast as we can. Supervisor Ferris thanked him for the clarification. He asked if there were further comments from those in attendance and there were none. Wright thanked the commenters and addressed the RV representatives present and said the Commissioners understand that you have timelines and the Commission will do what we can.