

CRYSTAL LAKE TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING FOR REQUESTED VARIANCE
MARCH 10, 2022 – CRYSTAL LAKE TOWNSHIP HALL – 6 PM

1. Call to Order/Purpose of Meeting:

Meeting called to order by Chair George Stemple at 6:00 pm. Chair announced the meeting purpose to consider a Request for two Variances will not be taken up due to a lack of quorum of Zoning Board of Appeals members in attendance. Zoning Administrator explained that two regular Zoning Board of Appeals members must be present, and due to circumstances beyond anyone's control, only one regular Zoning Board of Appeals member is present, the Chair. The Alternate Zoning Board of Appeals Member in attendance is not considered a regular Zoning Board of Appeals member for purposes of establishing a quorum. He said it is not yet known when there will be two regular Zoning Board of Appeals members available but when so, a meeting will be rescheduled and advertised.

Zoning Administrator suggested two courses of action for the Chair: either adjourn the meeting immediately or adjust the agenda to the circumstances, that is, delete Agenda Items 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9, and take comments.

Zoning Administrator clarified that, from the emails he has received, there has been confusion about the purpose of tonight's meeting, which is solely to address the proposed sign and proposed size of storage buildings, variances which must be addressed before any proposed expansion of the Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park will be taken up by the Township Planning Commission. He said that both tonight and when the Zoning Board of Appeals is reconvened, it will be only to address the items he mentioned and comments on any other matters would be out of order. Chair and Alternate member agreed to adjust the agenda accordingly, and that, as a courtesy to those in attendance, they would take comments if any present wish to offer any.

2. Roll Call:

Zoning Board of Appeals Members Present: Chair George Stemple, Alternate Member Dean Michaels

Staff Present: Tom Kucera, CLT Zoning Administrator, and Jeannette Feeheley, Recording Secretary.

Applicant Representatives Present: Sarah Ross and Brenda Mead.

Members of Public Present: Pat Cleary, Barb Brian, Jim Brian, Bill Herd, Dr. William Northway, Bruce Walton, Sue Sullivan.

3. Call for Conflict of Interest: None mentioned.

4. Selection of Zoning Board of Appeals Positions: Agenda item eliminated.

5. Approval of Agenda: Agenda item eliminated.

6. Rules of Order for Speakers: Agenda item eliminated.

7. Administration of Oath: Agenda item eliminated.
8. Request for Variance – Article 19, Table 10-1- RV Park – Sign: Agenda item eliminated.
9. Request for Variance – Article 3.11 – RV Park – Exceed 2,000 square feet total building area limit: Agenda item eliminated.
10. Other Business:
Comments were taken from those attending:

Pat Cleary said we don't need to see a great big 20 foot sign with a light on it to make it look like something in a city. She also had comments to make about trees but as that topic did not pertain, would save those for the appropriate time.

Bruce Walton said he is a neighbor to the north and that the RV Park has been good neighbors. He mentioned something about a pole barn, said he had been on the Zoning Board of Appeals in the past and that when one breaks an ordinance, it sets a precedent and it depends on the situation. He has spruce trees that block his view of the RV Park but they are diseased and when they go, he doesn't want to look at the Park once his trees die. He has no trouble with the proposed size of the building, and if the owner uses the storage building to store the equipment he needs to maintain the Park, it seems logical. As for the proposed sign, with all the GPS and other tech locator now available to help people locate where they are going, the sign doesn't need to go beyond 40 square feet and the proposal is for 50. He mentioned the owner could bring the sign closer to the road and within the right of way to make it more visible from the street. The sign is 36 square feet now and he could make it up to 40 square feet, bring it closer to the road, and that would be sufficient. Not against the pole building if he can cover it up. If it doesn't set precedent, he has no trouble with the size.

Sue Sullivan lives nearby the Park and has no problems with the slight increase of sign size as proposed and as long as lighting meets the dark sky requirements has no problem with that, especially if it is down lighting rather than up. Proposed bath house seems definitely reasonable and also the storage building to hold equipment needed to maintain the property. More trees whenever possible she urged, and those trees that did not work out before she urges replacement. Talk about improving the landscaping around the sign is good, too.

Chair asked Zoning Board of Appeals Alternate Michaels if he had any comments. Michaels said that he also lives near the Park, and that, as far as lights go, he has MacDonald Marine and the Church nearby already with their lights. As for the sign, he understands Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) may be willing to let the sign be placed within their right of way, and Zoning Administrator confirmed such, depending on MDOT's review of sight distances. Michaels discussed the type of lights on the Church and MacDonald Marine.

Sarah Ross, Civil Engineer for the RV Park Proposal, offered that she will probably end up with a better light and that as far as direction of the lighting, they are considering pointing the light downward, and also that a timer might be put on the light, and asked that her new goal for the light and timer be included in the variance request.

Zoning Administrator urged her to, as soon as possible, send in anything new that either the Zoning Board of Appeals or the Planning Commission has not yet seen, and that they have to see what is proposed. Any sign will have to obtain a sign permit and meet the Dark Skies requirement, and illumination portion of the ordinances.

A member of the public who did not re-identify herself objected, saying that people come up here to get away from signs and that such destroys our community and the beauty of it. The RV Park has the reputation now of being a good park and it's been quiet but now it's going to expand and I can look out my window and look into the Park and that's why I'm hoping for bigger trees and just to have a bigger sign with a big light seems overkill.

Sarah Ross was asked if she had anything to add before the meeting adjourned. She said that, after discussing matters with concerned people, she has now done a 3-D rendering with trees added to the front, and showing three different perspectives of the front of the Park, and she'd be glad for anyone to see such.

Zoning Administrator urged that anything you are modifying you get it in as soon as possible to both the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Commission. She answered that this had to do with landscaping and was trying to meet procedures as advised. She also did an interior plan. Some mistake had been inadvertently made per the bath house plans but clarified it was not an issue now as the numbers have been corrected.

Michaels asked Bruce Walton again about the diseased spruce on his own property and Mr. Walton said he really doesn't want to look at an open field once his trees die. Zoning Administrator mentioned conversation about trees really not pertinent tonight.

11. Adjournment:

Chairman Stemple said the Zoning Board of Appeals would, when possible, set a time for a future meeting which will be published, and then he adjourned the meeting at 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannette Feeheley, Recording Secretary