

Courtland Township Planning Commission

Minutes

July 21, 2020, 7:00 PM

Held via Zoom remote videoconferencing software

1. **Roll Call:** Wood, Andersen, Nelson, Rau, and Moore present. Also present were Township Attorney Jim Scales, Zoning Administrator Colleen Brown, and three members of the public.
2. **Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda as presented by Moore, seconded by Nelson.** Motion carried 5-0 via roll call vote with all members voting yes.
3. **Minutes from February 18, 2020: Motion to approve the minutes from February 18, 2020, as presented by Moore, seconded by Nelson.** Motion carried 5-0 via roll call vote with all members voting yes.

4. **Public Comments:**

Kim McIntyre. She is in favor of the "fine art or craft" ordinance proposed in the agenda below.

- A. **Public Hearings: Rezoning to C- General Commercial.** Brown provided an overview, stating that the proposed rezonings were approved years ago but never recorded on the Township zoning map. Therefore, we need to re-do the rezoning process to update the map. The two properties involved were: (1) Continental Baptist Mission, 11650 Northland Drive, and (2) Rivertown Landscape, M&P Land Ventures, 11950 Northland Drive.

Chairman Wood opened the public hearing.

Mike Mlnarik. Questioned what happened and if he had been actually zoned RR all this time. Brown noted that the properties had been zoned commercial since 2001, but the map was not accurate.

Joyce Jones. Her property is adjacent to Continental Baptist Mission. Has no issues with the rezoning and thinks that continental Baptist Mission are great neighbors.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Wood closed the public hearing.

Commissioners reviewed the request and had few questions or comments. **Motion to recommend approval of the proposed map amendments to the Township Board by Moore, supported by Nelson and carried 5-0 via roll call vote.**

5. **Proposed Zoning Amendment regarding home occupations.** Attorney Scales provided an overview of the proposed amendment and background. The MZEA requires that instruction of fine art or crafts be allowed in the home only, this amendment would change the definition of a home

occupation to also include such instruction in an accessory building when other activities are also permitted in the accessory building.

Chairman Wood opened the public hearing.

Arn McIntyre. Was concerned whether or not the hearing was published correctly, as several of the people who were interested were not participating, and no one gets the paper any more, and the Rockford Squire has apparently stopped circulating. He also felt that the people with barns who are cut out of the barn event venue ordinance due to the acreage requirement (10 acres) should have an opportunity to use their barns, too.

Kim McIntyre. Also questioned the public hearing notice and if it was done correctly. However, she noted that she was in favor of the ordinance, or even expanding it further so that more activities are permitted in barns and accessory buildings.

Arn McIntyre noted that he was in favor of the ordinance amendment, too, but would also favor an expanded version.

Zoning Administrator Brown confirmed that she sent the public hearing notices to the Cedar Springs Post and Rockford Squire and both were in fact published.

Arn McIntyre asked what would be included as a fine art? What about woodworking, metalworking, etc.? Scales that most of that type of instruction would likely be permitted. Arn also noted that the Squire seemed to have ceased distribution and was concern about how few people seem to be notified of meetings.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Wood closed the public hearing.

Nelson asked if there would be any limitation on attendance? Wood noted that this would expand what people can do already. Rau also expressed concern over the public notice and the lack of ability to get the word out. Moore was supportive of the ordinance and noted that public notices are difficult nowadays with newspaper circulation down overall. Andersen asked what was defined as "fine art" or "craft." Scales provided some examples. The consensus was that the ordinance was acceptable as written and the commissioners were in favor of voting on it tonight, and that re-noticing was not necessary.

Motion by to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance to Township Board by Moore, supported by Andersen. Motion carried 5-0 via roll call vote.

Wood suggested that the Township look into other methods of notification beyond the minimum of publishing in the paper.

6. **Zoning Administrator Report.** Brown noted that they Township was working on an update to the Township website which will be better for getting the word out. The existing website has an email sign-up option so the township has been building a large list of resident email addresses. Brown also noted that a possible cell tower proposal might be on the horizon, but no date has been set.

7. **Township Board Representative Report.** Andersen provided a report. She stated that the board has been meeting in person with social distancing and felt that the meetings were going well.
8. **ZBA Report.** Nelson noted that the ZBA hasn't had a meeting in a while; the last meeting was in June, and the next meeting is scheduled for August 12.
9. **Commissioner Comments.** Arn McIntyre (audience member) wanted the township to find a way to better notify people of meetings. Are we getting contact information from residents? Andersen asked about what "push" notices were. Brown noted that we have about 1,500 emails on a list already and the Township will be looking at ways to get information out to residents.
10. **Adjournment. Motion by Andersen, supported by Nelson, to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0 via roll call vote.**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:57 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrew Moore, Secretary