

October 17, 2017 Working Planning Commission Minutes

Royalton Township Working Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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17 October 2017 - Approved

6:30 p.m., 17 October 2017, Chair Leslie Orvis convened the Royalton Township working planning commission meeting with members Jeff Schlaeger, Priscilla Schneider, Duane Swanson, and Gary Valvoda present.

The committee discussed the complaint of a landowner abutting Raspberry Road South. When the ditch on the east side was cleaned out, the ditch was cut through a ridge denying the landowner access to his property. The Soil and Water Conservation District was contacted and noted that the township's actions had been correct. The landowner was favorable to the township installing a culvert that would permit access to his property. A 20' culvert would be sufficient, but the town ordinance requires a 40'. The meeting's consensus was that the board could approve the installation of a 20' culvert because it would be a non-buildable wetland access. The commission also noted that Zoning Administrator John Kemen should be informed of this and involved in any decision.

Clerk Swanson distributed updated versions of the two town line road agreement drafts reflecting the concerns of Road Superintendent Dan Saumer. With a couple of grammatical changes, the commission agreed to the proposed wording. Final action will be taken at the commission's next regular meeting.

Member Valvoda updated the commission on his research into fencing ordinances of other towns and cities (or the lack thereof). Extensive discussion followed about the depth of the proposed ordinance and the differences between fencing, screening, and landscaping. Chair Orvis suggested that commission members take these three concepts and write the pros and cons of each. The commission noted that several of the fencing considerations relating to utilities/industrial/business issues could be addressed during the approval of conditional/interim use site plans. The commission then reviewed the draft statements summarizing previous discussions. An updated version of the statements accompanies these minutes.

Member Schneider distributed information about "bouncy" houses, noting that numerous injuries are sustained during their use. This information supported the board's decision not to allow them on township property.

Clerk Swanson distributed information about a new state law that permits townships to share in certain fines imposed by district courts for offenses occurring within the township. The commission will share this information with the board and will seek additional information.

Deputy Clerk Roberta Folkestad had prepared information of the application process for townships to receive grant funds for election equipment. Clerk Swanson will investigate and report to the commission and board.

At 8: 10 p.m., the meeting concluded.

Respectfully submitted:

Duane P. Swanson, Clerk/Member

FENCING, SCREENING AND LANDSCAPING:

Draft

The placement of fences, screening, and landscaping shall be subject to the following requirements, except for agricultural fences.

- a. No fence shall be permitted on public rights-of-way. [Consensus ok]

- b. No fence, screen, or structure which obstructs the view shall be located within twenty-five (25) feet of the corner formed by the intersection of street or railroad rights-of-way as measured from the intersecting property lines. [General agreement that this concept is good, and that it permits better sight lines.]

c. That side of the fence considered to be the face, opposite the side with the fence posts, shall face the abutting public or private property. [Consensus ok]

d. All fences shall be constructed of material such that the appearance is not deemed detrimental to the property values of the area by the zoning official. A fence constructed, or having the appearance, of masonry, wood, or steel must be compatible with surrounding structures. No snow fencing, construction security fencing, or silt fencing shall be allowed, except during construction. [Consensus ok].

e. [Much discussion continued: possible wording: No fence shall exceed four (4) feet in height in the front yard or eight (8) feet in height in the side and rear yards as measured from the average point between the highest and lowest grades]. [But, do we want to split this among fencing, landscaping, and screening issues? Do we want to use edge of right-of-way or something more restrictive?

f. Notwithstanding paragraphs "d" and "e" above, chain link, wire, and similar fences may be constructed and may exceed six (6) feet in height for animal control or protection of vegetation [e.g. gardens]; such enclosures do not require a fence permit. [Consensus ok]

g. In the case of a non-residential use abutting a residential use, the township board may require screening ~~up to eight (8)~~ above six (6) feet in height. [Do we want to add something about conditional/interim use?]

h. Any nonconforming fence which is destroyed or in disrepair, requiring more than fifty (50) percent of its replacement cost to repair, shall be removed and only be rebuilt if in compliance with the standards set forth in this section. [Consensus ok]

i. Any fence, wall or similar barrier which is not properly maintained so as to create an eyesore or nuisance shall be removed by owner upon action of the town board, at the owner's expense. [consensus ok]

j. All screening required by this ordinance shall consist of:

A green belt planting strip consisting of vegetative cover of sufficient width and density to provide an effective screen year around, ~~or~~. [Is this necessary? Do we need to define screening (to hide) and fencing (to enclose). Consider using "aesthetic". More discussion needed.

ITEMS NOT YET CONSIDERED:

Do we need to consider (revisit) fence setbacks from front, side, and/or rear lot lines? [Not necessary - leave out] Depends on screening or landscaping?

By our silence of a height requirement, are we assuming any height up to 6 feet (see "e") is per se approved, without a building permit? [Addressed above with 4' in front]. No consensus yet.