

Franklin Township, Portage County  
Zoning Commission Hearing  
June 17, 2021

**Members Present:** Chair Mary Organ, Mekal Banyasz, and Beth Geist.

**Others:** Jenny August, Zoning Commission Secretary.

**Call to Order:**

Mrs. Organ called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

**Minutes:**

Mrs. Organ moved to accept the minutes from the May 20, 2021 meeting. Ms. Banyasz seconded. All remaining Commission members voted yes. The minutes were approved.

**Discussion Topics:**

**Maximum Height Regulations for Accessory Buildings.**

Mrs. Organ sent out maps and guidelines to the Commission relating to small lots and information she was able to get from Portage County Regional Planning Commission. (PCRP) Mrs. Organ said since the Zoning Commission voted down the proposed amendments for maximum height for accessory buildings at the meeting last month, it is a closed topic. The discussion could come up again in the future, if a request was made by the Township Trustees, the Zoning Inspector or the BZA, and she wanted everyone to have the information and time to review it. That info on small lots might be valuable to some other topic as well—it is good to have it on hand.

**Planned Unit Developments (PUD'S)**

Mrs. Organ said there is a new development being built in the township with over 100 homes. Currently in the PUD section of the Zoning Resolution, there is no landscaping or buffering requirements to screen the high-density housing. This issue was brought to the Commission's attention by a member of the BZA. Mrs. Organ suggested that the Commission could reference chapter 9 to specify the inclusion of landscaping/buffering.

Mrs. Organ moved to ask PCRP to consider an amendment of Chapter 6, Section 601.01.A.56.N.8 to say:

**#8. Landscaping and Buffering Requirements:**

As specified in Chapter 9: Appropriate landscaping and/or buffering shall be used to screen the PUD from the surrounding properties.

With this recommendation, #8 Parking and Loading Requirements becomes #9, and #9 Minimum Living Floor Area Requirements per Dwelling Unit becomes # 10, and #10 Floor Area Requirements for Non-Residential Buildings will become #11.

Ms. Banyasz seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted yes.

Mrs. Organ also noted that in Chapter 6, on page 49 of 58, in section 3.b may have been overlooked when the minimum spacing between an accessory building and its principal building changed from 10 to 15 feet. She would like to run an amendment by PCRP to make that distance consistent within the code, as the fire department prefers 15 feet between structures.

Mrs. Organ moved to ask PCRP to consider an amendment of Chapter 6, Section 601.01.A.56.N.3.b to say:

The minimum spacing between an accessory building and its principal building (e.g. residential, commercial/office, industrial, or recreational) shall be fifteen (15) feet.

Mrs. Geist seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted yes.

**Public Comment/ New Business:** There was no public comment.

#### Medical Marijuana

Mrs. Organ told the commission that Resolution 2019-02 extends the moratorium on medical marijuana in the township and part of the resolution states that the Franklin Township Board of Trustees hereby approves and continues a moratorium on the cultivation, processing, distribution and sale of medical marijuana within Franklin Township for one year plus the time it takes the Franklin Township Zoning Commission to properly assess the practical impact and actual implementation of the rules, regulations and guidelines for medical marijuana established by the State and has had the opportunity to consider and recommend adopting zoning code regulations for the same. Mrs. Organ noted that there have been recent inquiries within the township to build/start a medical marijuana dispensary/facility, but for that to happen, first the Trustees would have to lift the moratorium, and then ask the Zoning Commission to work on regulations associated with medical marijuana.

#### Gross Floor Area

The Board of Zoning Appeals suggested that the Zoning Commission consider amendments to gross floor area so these measurements include wall space and roof overhangs. Ms. Banyasz said the footprint should include the roof overhang because it includes all the impervious surface. The Commission agreed. Mrs. Organ said the gross floor area for accessory buildings is measured differently than the minimum floor area living space cited in the zoning districts. R-1 districts require a minimum of 1000 square feet of living floor area. Ms. Banyasz said the defined footprint can impact the impervious space relating to water absorption. Mrs. Organ will email Todd Peetz of Portage County Regional Planning to see why the gross floor area is measured between interior walls, and how changing it to include walls and roof overhang impacts gross floor area.

#### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting is to be announced at a later date.

**Adjournment:** Mrs. Geist moved to adjourn at 8:25 pm with a second from Mrs. Organ. All Commission members voted yes.

Respectfully submitted by Jenny August, Zoning Commission Secretary.

Approved:

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Mary Organ, Zoning Commission Chair