

Franklin Township, Portage County
Zoning Commission Hearing
May 18, 2023

Members Present: Chair Mekal Banyasz, Mary Organ, Beth Geist, Glenn Luttner and Greg Huck.

Others: Zoning Inspector Joe Ciccozzi, Trustee Glenn Russell, and Secretary Jenny August.

Call to Order: Ms. Banyasz called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes from April 20, 2023: Mrs. Geist moved to approve the April 20, 2023 meeting minutes with a second from Mrs. Organ. Mr. Luttner and Mr. Huck abstained. All other commissioners voted yes. The minutes were approved.

Welcoming new Zoning Commissioner Greg Huck:

Mr. Huck was introduced and welcomed. He gave some background as to why he wanted to get involved in the zoning commission. Many family members are from here and he wants to be involved in the betterment of his community. Ms. Banyasz and Mrs. Organ explained the process that the zoning commission follows and the timeline for amendments.

Discussion Topics:

REVIEW OF PORTAGE COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION'S (PCRPC) RECOMMENDATION OF TEXT AMENDMENTS/ADDITIONS IN CHAPTER 6, SECTION 601.01.B.56.N.5.b. AND RELATED TERMINOLOGY AS DEFINED IN CHAPTER 13, AND SPECIFIED IN 405.06, SPECIFICALLY THE TERMS; ACCESSORY USE, ACCESSORY STRUCTURE, AND ACCESSORY BUILDING.

Ms. Banyasz said this came about because the Board of Zoning Appeals was unclear as to how to identify this section as it relates to buildings or structures, and specifically decks. Last month the commission sent proposed language to PCRPC to consider, and their recommendations have been received. The commission reviewed and agreed with the recommendations. Mrs. Organ moved to forward the following proposed amendments to the Board of Trustees for approval:

1). Subheading for Chapter 6, Section 601.01.B.56.N.5.b will change from "Accessory Buildings" to "Accessory Buildings and Accessory Structures".

2). In Chapter 13- Definitions, add or amend definitions as follows:

- **Accessory Building:** An additional building, separate from the principal building, located on the same parcel of land. Please refer to 405.06 for additional guidance.
- **Accessory Dwelling Unit:** A separate housekeeping unit, complete with its own sleeping, cooking, and bathroom facilities, that is substantially contained within the structure of a single-family dwelling, but functions as a separate unit.
- **Accessory Structure:** Anything constructed or erected, more than 15 square feet, the use of which requires location on the ground, or attachment to something having a fixed location on the ground. An accessory structure is subordinate to and detached from the principal building, located on the same lot as the principal building, the use of which is incidental and accessory to that of the main building or

use. Among other things accessory structures include, but are not limited to attached and detached garages, outdoor hydronic furnaces, residential wind energy systems, solar energy systems, handicap ramps, decks, gazebos. Please refer to 405.06 for additional guidance.

- **Accessory Use:** A subordinate use of a building or other structure, the use of which is located on the principal lot and incidental to the use of the principal building or other structure or use of land. Please refer to 405.06 for additional guidance.

Mrs. Geist seconded the motion. All commissioners voted yes. The motion passes.

New Business

Ms. Banyasz asked if anyone has suggestions on how to minimize these meetings while maximizing the time spent here. She thinks the “homework” that we have been doing by giving everyone things to research saves time and helps us prepare for the meeting. Mr. Luttner agreed and said there are going to be topics that will take several meetings to get through. Mrs. Geist said she thinks it is helpful to understand what the Trustees are looking to get accomplished when topics are passed on to the zoning commission to work on. Knowing the townships vision and strategic plan would be helpful. Ms. Banyasz said PCRPC would like to get all Portage communities tied into the Portage County Comprehensive Plan. Mrs. Organ said she likes the homework concept, and she usually tries to bring preliminary information on topics to save time, especially forwarding them out in advance. She likes the collaboration and thinks they work best as a group. She would like us to use the big screen for wordsmithing.

Affordable Housing in Franklin Township

Mrs. Geist said part of the problem with making housing affordable in our township is because of the university. Landlords and property owners know they can charge a lot because students need a place to live. Mrs. Organ said the Trustees seem to prefer rural. Ms. Banyasz asked how we protect our type of township without having a “not in my back yard” attitude, and how much longer can we remain rural? Mr. Luttner said maybe PCRPC can help us with this when we work on our township plan. The Trustees put a moratorium on tiny homes. Mr. Russell said it was not so it can be researched, but just in his opinion, to stop a tiny home development from coming to our township. Mr. Huck said there is a place in Detroit MI that had a great tiny home opportunity for people that needed help. The difference is that they were in a city and could walk everywhere they needed to. It seems like a city might be a better host to a tiny home community more than a township would be.

Next Meeting: The next meeting to be announced.

Adjournment: Mrs. Geist moved to adjourn at 8:10 pm with a second from Mr. Luttner. All Commission members voted yes.

Respectfully submitted by Jenny August, Zoning Commission Secretary.

Approved:

Mekal Banyasz, Zoning Commission Chair

