

Milton Township
Planning Commission
Unapproved Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2022

Members present: Chairman Hefferan, Peters, Warner, Cole, Ford, and Merillat.

Members absent: Renis

Also present: Peterson, Kopriva, Chris Grobbel and 4 audience members.

Hefferan called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Public Comment:

Mac Whitehouse said a special use permit should be required for any RV park development. An RV park should not be in a village zone. Consider storm water retention, steep slopes, and onsite roads must follow state requirements.

Sharon Hill thanked the board for considering Dr. Grobbel's proposed zoning amendment. An RV park should be taken out of the village zone. TESA has an agreement in principle with the Brewer's and Antrim County. As we consider the future of other RV parks, please consider clarity around the buffer zone and septic and environmental ground water contamination.

Ann Hubbard of the Wabigama Association said she is concerned with compliance and oversight of any new RV park developments. There should be clarity on the enforcing ordinances and process and what agencies are responsible when non-compliance arises and the penalties that could come from noncompliance.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Cole to approve the agenda. Seconded by Ford. **Motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes dated April 21, 2022:

Corrections: Pg 3, fifth paragraph, fix typo "see" to "seen"

Pg 3, second paragraph, add "it was".

Motion by Ford to approve the minutes as corrected. Seconded by Warner. **Motion carried.**

Old Business:

A. ZO 2022-02 Zoning Ordinance Amendment on RV Parks:

Kopriva gave a brief overview. Matt Vermetten said he is fine with us moving forward even though there is pending litigation. Hefferan asked from a procedural standpoint, we have been presented with a proposal to change the ordinance, are we here to negotiate with the individuals who brought this forward? Do we set it for a public hearing? What direction do we take? Kopriva said you can approve it as presented. You can ask the applicant to make changes or you can say you are not going to change the ordinance in any way.

Grobbel gave some background on the request. Only 2 of 9 townships in Antrim County allow RV parks. It is typically done in a district that is more open. Your ordinance is specific and asks

for many things. The easiest thing to do is make it a special use in AG and AR zones. There are other areas in the ordinance that could be spruced up. Grobbel discussed some of the clarity concerns that he has included such as storm water, screening berms, and adding an environmental review committee, slopes should be limited, consider allowing them only on major roads.

Noel Peters asked about Torch Grove? That is not an RV park. Hefferan said he read Clearwater's ordinance which intertwines campgrounds and RV parks. Cole asked how you define the difference. Grobbel said you have to have permits from EGLE for a campground. RV parks are more like a PUD. They can rent them or own them. You can own the space or rent the space.

Cole said in terms of the density, that was one of the considerations we had to put it in the village to preserve open space and views and we felt it would be a high density place and the village is where we would like to have density. As far as density in AG/AR, the only way that could happen would be a PRD. Under those restrictions, it would be 50% open space. There is an added incentive for clustering, you can get a density bonus. We did not take in the year round nature of what was proposed. I do not like the idea of shutting off the units and leaving them there for the winter. There are things that would start to creep in that would get away from an RV resort and start to be a trailer park. Cole discussed the possibility of having a common septic.

Grobbel said if you get over 10K gallons a day, then you get into a common system. Another question is the minimum lot size. Cole said funneling is another issues he is concerned with in regards to RV parks.

Grobbel discussed how this works in other communities. Cole asked if we really want an RV park or a campground. Merrillat said we do not consider them one in the same. Kopriva said we do not have a definition for campground, but we do have one for RV Park. Cole said one question raised is regarding enforcement. He is guessing something similar on the short term rentals in making the landlord responsible. Kopriva talked about having specific language about violations.

Merrillat asked about just taking this out? Kopriva said there was not a formal application to add it. The law requires you have the capabilities of all uses. In Antrim, half is not zoned, availability is nearby. You could remove it entirely. Merrillat said he thought we had to allow it. Warner said he believes there is a need out there. Hefferan said it is certainly a want but not sure if it is a need.

Merrillat said speaking of density, in the village zone, you can have 22 units on 10 acres without a SUP. They were going for 70 units. What is the problem with having an RV park in the Village? Grobbel said it is a different use. Why would we not allow a motel in that zone? Grobbel said this is a unit people have all year like a condo. Merrillat is having trouble moving it out of the village given a smaller park seems to equate the density. If we move it to AG, we open up a lot of the township to high density. Grobbel said no one has this use in a village. It is all in AG. Peters said he agrees with Merrillat. He would like it to be in a place where he can be near water. If we take it out of the village, it is short sighted. If it is too dense, then we need to address the density issue. Grobbel said farmland is not all active farmland. Cole said most private campgrounds are not on lakes, but they provide pools. The waterfront property is too expensive.

Hefferan said for him there are two issues. One is what zone is permitted if at all. Two is our requirements for RV Seasonal Park. I appreciate that we are starting a conversation. It is on us to do this and it is a very healthy discussion because we can always do better. Our ordinance worked but it was messy. I focused on why it is in the village zone. We did not expand the village zone. It was an in-fill. Farmland preservation is important. I do not know how we could add RV parks to the AG zone in compliance with our Master Plan. But we are redoing our master plan.

Grobbel said you need to come to consensus on this with the zone. Now you should bring your ideas to the next meeting. It would be a benefit to go deeper. We can talk about them and go through them.

Warner said he had a discussion with Matt Conrad about the Elk Rapids Master Plan. We were talking about some sort of collaboration. It makes sense to me if we are talking about the shoreline and the how that is managed.

Hefferan asked Kopriva that he has a proposal in front of him, but this is not a public hearing. Kopriva said you could go to a public hearing so a decision is made. Kopriva said it is a two part issue. The district question should come first.

Cole said it would be premature to move it into AG at this point. There are too many conditions for it to function there and then try to get those conditions worked out. If it goes there, it must be a whole package. Cole asked if we leave it in village for now or do we pull it out entirely while we decide what we want to do. Grobbel said from a process standpoint, only the board can make an amendment to the zoning ordinance. Your job is to make a recommendation. A public hearing is not a decision point. A rezone has to go to public hearing by law, but you are making a recommendation to the township board.

Kopriva said you do need to make a decision. Peters said we can make a motion to approve or deny the proposed amendment.

Pg 14 of our packet gets into amending 1605. Hefferan asked Kopriva to compare page 14 to our current ordinance. Kopriva suggested looking at page 13 table and going down the line.

Merillat said it should be left in the current zone of Village. Warner said we should consider Ag. Ford said it should be left in the Village, but then amend the requirements. Cole said leave it in the Village. Peters and Hefferan also said it should be left in the village.

Now we will look at the language. Kopriva suggested members come back and look at existing language and see what should be added or changed.

I/L: Cole said that 25% would be taken up with community utilities/bonfire pit. It also strikes me as each campsite owns a part of that. Merillat said if you take the max and it is 50% of the parcel and you have to put roads in. He does not have a problem with the language, but his issue is usable space and to define that better. Discussion of open space versus usable space. Cole said maybe usable natural space. No major disagreement on 25%. Cole suggested removing the specifics of playgrounds, courts. Cole suggested the wording usable natural space and excluding

roads, buildings, etc. The exclusions will be hammered out by Kopriva.

M: Merillat said this should also go somewhere else in the ordinance. If it is good for this, it is good for other things to.

O: Cole said 50% on the boundary line could be 1000 feet. He is thinking something within x feet of the entry access is more of what he had in mind. Merillat said there could be multiple access roads. Hefferan said noise is something we have not talked about in regards to screening. Grobbel said you want to make sure the noise does not bother the neighbors. It would be a site by site determination. Hefferan suggested for him, screening should be street level rather than from above as was discussed in the prior RV park issue. Merillat said it refers to 3.11. That part is good, but what about noise. Discussion about having a berm. Grobbel suggested leaving it up to each particular site to be determined. Discussion of 1602 Special Use Permit and how it deals with noise.

P: Good

Q: Good

R: Good

S: Merillat said it should not be separated out. It should be for all developments. Grobel said it should be in here until you have a steep slopes ordinance. Is this use compatible with a steep site?

T: Hefferan said this looks like a subcommittee. There may be better language more related to review by an engineer. Kopriva said she feels this needs more to it. Decision made to remove T.

T4. There should be clarity regarding when permits are received before approval to construct. Hefferan said regarding 1605M, maybe we are missing something there. Hefferan said he would like people to get their permits before they get to us. Kopriva asked if should this should be for all areas of the ordinance or just the RV park.

Other items brought up in public comments:

Hefferan said if issues are brought up with concerns on enforcement, those should go to Kopriva.

Grobbel said do we want to revisit the minimum lot size? What about road size? What about shoreline funneling? Hefferan said he does not feel prepared to discuss those issues tonight.

Merillat asked about the minimum lot size in regard to density. 1.5 units per acre. 3 and above is on municipal sewer. Cole is concerned about a hilly location and look at the acres but the majority was not usable because it was hilly. Grobbel said if you include the 18% steep slopes, then you come up with your number of sites based on usable acreage. Merillat asked for the lot area? Grobbel said he would need to check with the surrounding areas.

Planning commissioners should think about items not considered in this ordinance and send Kopriva an email before the next meeting so she can get that out so members can consider it before next meeting.

Mac Whitehouse said a letter was received that talked about parking and perhaps that should be considered. Hefferan thanked Whitehouse. Cole asked about a common area for parking boat trailers. Grobbel said there is typically a common area for that.

Hefferan said the letter includes the idea of retaining parking on site. We will come back to this next month.

New Business:

None.

Reports:

A. Zoning Administration Office Report.

Kopriva provided a written report for members to review.

Township Board Report.

Cole said nothing to report.

ZBA Report.

Hefferan said the ZBA met and denied a variance request at the Torch River Shack for an exterior stairway and deck.

Discussion of Coastal Resilience grant opportunity for the Master Plan.

Planning Commission Updates:

A. Steep Slope Committee: March 31, 2022

This subcommittee has not met, but minutes from the prior meeting were included in the packet.

Future Meeting Considerations:

Next Meeting, June 16, 2022.

Meeting adjourned by order of the chair at 9:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Merillat