

Milton Township
Planning Commission
Unapproved Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2022

Members present: Chairman Hefferan, Renis, Warner, Cole, and Merillat.
Noel Peters arrived at 7:08 pm.

Also present: Chris Grobbel and 6 audience members.

Members absent: Bob Ford.

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

Public Comment:

Terry Roote is happy we are looking at the RV park ordinance. He is concerned with the ordinance needing additional enforcement. He feels there may be additional complaints from his neighborhood. How will things be enforced? It should be required to have someone living on site.

John Spevasek of Chippewa Trail said he would like the commission to discuss the density of an RV park within the ordinance.

Fred Gulik asked about a meeting that happened and he has sent a FOIA.

Peggy Doty of Fairmont Drive said it should be required that there is adequate clearance between the units for clear paths for fire personnel.

Gary Doty of Fairmont Drive. Any RV park should be sized at 15 acre min at 3 units per acre. This would be in line with other area parks.

Chris Grobbel thanked the board for the RV park ordinance review. He commented on the items the commission has updated and noted some areas of concern which is the minimum lot size, density, parking, noise, prohibition of site clearing until all permits are in place.

Linda Spevasek submitted a memo about how sound is so unique and it travels unabated unless there is distance and blockage. The idea of berms is often used. A berm will help with noise.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Renis to approve the agenda. Seconded by Warner. **Motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes dated June 16, 2022:

Minutes approved as presented by **unanimous consent.**

Old Business:

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

Kopriva said she made a few changes which were highlighted in purple on the digital copy. She discussed the new changes.

Cole is concerned with 8 sites per acre and the density that creates. He is also concerned about the language about leaving the site vacant. What does that mean? Can things be left, but not people? He is also concerned about noise and decibels and explained decibels.

Warner asked for clarification in Section A, 2 of 3, who issues the permit and what it allows to be done. Kopriva said some agencies will not issue a permit. This means they will get a letter in place of a permit. This would be for all site plan reviews.

Merillat has a question on U, 2 of 3. Does it preclude any RV park from the previous site? Kopriva said she is not sure. We do not know what the grade was there before. Do we have 18% slopes in the village of Kewadin? Kopriva said it would only preclude the portion of the property that is 18%.

Renis said he is also concerned with density. Merillat said in the village zone you are allowed two units per acre which can be duplexes. We have that doubled to 8 for a seasonal RV park. 3 is too small. Renis said it seems like it is a requirement that you must put 8. Any developer will maximize.

Cole said if we are looking at a 10 acre site and 40% is taken up with roads and open space, then you really only have five acres to place the RVS. Does that mean that we get four or eight per acre per usable RV space?

Hefferan said he is hearing an issue that needs to be addressed is density. The one RV park proposed was down to seven sites per acre. Not sure how we get to a defensible number. There is not a lot of large parcels in our village zones. So if we go down to 4, how many 10 acre parcels are in the village zones? He is not comfortable with 8 but not sure how we get a good number.

Renis said if the site was flat, that would be different but it leads into our next discussion on steep slopes and what can be built on steep slopes. I understand the issue but I am not sure how to fix it.

Kopriva said this is a situation where if you were to do duplexes, you could have four. At the same time, you are still using an average of 8 sites per acre, you are not saying "buildable" acre. Perhaps we could go to a buildable acre definition. Not sure there is a right or wrong answer. You do not have to have any density in there. It needs to be defensible.

Cole said perhaps if you look at usable or buildable acres. That might be a better way to look at it after you take out all of the stuff that has to be there.

Hefferan suggested tasking Kopriva to review the information received and propose a defensible density number less than 8 per acre.

Merillat discussed the concept of a motel in the village zone. Peters said it is not feasible unless you have public utilities. It is cost prohibitive because of the amount of water you would have to retain on site. Kopriva will look at the ordinance and work to come up with something.

New Business:

A) Steep Slope Committee Update:

Kopriva gave a brief history of the committee. The committee is looking at drafting language for an ordinance. She would like to make sure that is what the planning commission is looking for. Should we write an ordinance? If so, the committee came up with a breakdown of 15% or less, you can do anything you can do now for that portion affected. If you are between 15-25%, we talked about getting an engineer's review since the structure needs to be built appropriately and to make sure you are protecting your neighbor and the hill is not moving. Over 25% would be no development on the site. It would stay in its natural state. Warner suggested a soil density or core boring. The committee is in support of going forward with an ordinance. Merillat asked if the committee has come up with health/safety/welfare reason for the new ordinance. Kopriva said it is protection of the neighbors and community as a whole. Merillat asked what is the reason for the steep slopes ordinance is and why does the township need to get involved in this? He does not see the compelling interest to do this especially for single family dwellings. Peters said he knows where Merillat is coming from for homes. Merillat asked if the township can preempt a forest management plan. If we are going to say you cannot cut your own trees, we need to review that. If something had to go through site plan review, then Merillat could be on board, but not single family dwellings. Peters said he agrees regarding a single family house, because the builder, architect will have liability in the construction of the house. It is a slippery slope. Renis said they were considering a checklist to make sure the person building was thinking about these things. Hefferan said the master plan refers to steep slopes and is his basis to move forward with this. The committee will move forward with drafting an ordinance.

Reports:

ZA Report:

Kopriva provided a list of permits issued. Kopriva also discussed short term rentals and Host Compliance. The commission did not meet on June 24th in regards to Gulik's question. Kopriva said she is working on storm water language in the zoning ordinance. There are some inconsistencies in the ordinance language.

Township Board Report:

Cole said the board adopted the amendment for the change in the escrow policy and the change in ZBA board members by adding the alternates.

ZBA Report:

Hefferan said that no meeting was held.

Planning Commission Updates:

We did get a notice from the Village of Elk Rapids that they will begin working on their master plan.

Hefferan said as many know Tom Cole is retiring from the board in August. He has provided years of service to the nation and to his community. It has been a pleasure and we will miss him and we thank him for his service.

Future Meeting Considerations:

Hefferan will not be in town for August 18th. The commission agreed that the meeting for the 18th will be canceled and the next meeting will be September 15th.

Meeting adjourned by order of the chair at 8:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Merillat