

Synopsis
Milton Township
Draft Meeting Minutes
June 12, 2023

Members present: C. Weinzapfel, S. Ball, L. Atkinson, J. Renis and B. Pharo

Also present: Attorneys B. Derman, and 6 audience members

C. Weinzapfel called the meeting to order at 7 pm and the Pledge was recited

Agenda Approval

Add Subject: Maplehurst

Motion to approve the agenda as amended by L. Atkinson/S. Ball. Motion carried.

Approval of regular meeting minutes of May 8, 2023

Correct date to May 8, 2023

Motion to approve the minutes as corrected by J. Renis/B. Pharo. Motion carried. 5-0

Public Comment:

None

Sheriff's Report: Undersheriff Hoch

150 calls for service for May. Report on personnel status. Update on marine patrol boats and Torch Fest preparations.

Fire Department Report: Chief J. Ball

8 calls for service for May. We are on pace with the totals from last year. 186 Network/Coli had provided us internet service to Station 2. Researching phone service options. Report on general operations.

EMS Report

There is a report in the packet

Zoning Report

There is a report in the packet

Planning Report: B. Hefferan

There will be no meeting in July. There will be a public hearing for utility grade solar farms in September. Steep slopes subcommittee continues to work.

1. Winery Zoning Ordinance Amendment #2023-01. Atkinson asked Kopriva about being limited to the same STR ordinance. No. It's open. It functions like a STR but it is not. The guest quarters is intended to be a room for lodging, sleeping, and a bathroom. The rooms are to be a part of the facility they are at. It is more like a B&B. It says the guest quarters can be up to 500 sq. feet but it doesn't say how

many units can be in 500 sq. feet. Kopriva said the intent was to have only three rooms that could be a guest quarter. The changes were discussed. Atkinson said you have to have minimum of 20 acres so does that mean anyone with 20 acres could qualify if they are growing tomatoes or apples. Kopriva said these regulations are only specific to winery and cideries that have a tasting room. When the subcommittee met, they suggested looking at all of the Ag district and it was decided that we have an application for this so we should focus here. Atkinson said once you allow one use, you can't say no to the next use. I feel like we are opening Pandora's Box, here. STRs have their place, but not everywhere. We will be scattering STRs everywhere because of this. Based on our master plan, everyone wants to maintain the rural character. Atkinson said one comment a PC member made and said this is bad public policy to allow one industry to have rentals. Ball said she fears that based on agritourism, it mentioned a festival, and it would be limited to 100 people. This is an all-day event. How would you keep it to 100 people? Is there a limit of food trucks? Who will monitor that? Weinzapfel said in Marketing Events, only beverages produced by the winery will be served. The intent was to allow food there, but it does say anything about food trucks. It's not clear in the marketing events whether it's allowed. It sounds as if this is open to interpretation. Ball said she would like to make a list of questions and send it back to the planning commission. Discussion of the definition of marketing events which include a harvest festival. Pharo said it sounds like there should be some reworking of a couple things. Pharo said we should be more supportive of Ag-tourism. Weinzapfel said his concern is at what point is it a free for all for STRs. Pharo said the biggest thing for STRs is having it in residential. Ball said this is opening the door. How do you explain to the STR folks that if you have Ag land, it's unlimited? Kopriva asked if having guest quarters in there, then the board will not allow it. Pharo said he's not opposed to guest quarters. Atkinson said she doesn't understand why we would open that door. Pharo said the reason we are doing the STR is doing the commercial activity in a residential area. This is a commercial activity in a commercial area. Ag is a commercial activity in a commercial area. Atkinson said it's not farming. It's not a farming use. Pharo said it's a commercial area as opposed to the rental issue. Atkinson said now they have experienced a STR, they regret allowing it and it will become a problem. Pharo said he's not keen on festivals, but three closet sized places to stay when you've been drinking is not the same thing. Hefferan said we've been working on this since before the pandemic started and I've come full circle on it. This is where we got to after three years of talking about it. How do we support Ag and the rural character of our community? Weinzapfel asked if other townships are dealing with this. Kopriva doesn't have another township that has something like this. B&B's are allowed in the Ag district with a special use permit. That is a conversation in this language regarding item (G), that the owner of the winery must live on the property and be on the property during the rental. Weinzapfel said his concern is also with the zoning map and Ag bumps up to residential everywhere. It's not that it's viable Ag, but they adjoin. The board will continue to discuss. Kopriva went over the first page regarding the number of food trucks allowed. The rest of the language is the same except for expanding for

more meal type food rather than snacks. Ball said she didn't have a problem with this. This is the only use that would allow a food truck to be on the property during an event. Otherwise, they aren't allowed anywhere.

Motion by L. Atkinson/B. Pharo to refer this ordinance back to the planning commission. Roll call: C. Weinzapfel-Yes; L. Atkinson-Yes; J. Reins-Yes; S. Ball-Yes; B. Pharo-Yes Motion carried. 5-0

County Board Report: by B. Hefferan

Update on county building repairs. There is a new program, Miles for Memories, through Commission on Aging for those with dementia. Sheriff Dan Bean is retiring and the county is accepting applications to fill his term. Then, a committee will meet and have someone appointed early August. The county kindly agreed to do a 40 year lease with the township on Lot 33.

Attorney's Report: by B. Derman

Update on Waring Road and the cooperative agreement with the DNR. Nothing new on sand and gravel operations at the state level. Comment on farming and the cherry industry and land preservation.

Derman recommends approving the 40 year lease for lot 33 with the county. Go out and take pictures of this site. You must maintain the property in as good as condition as you got it to preserve it for the future. If you want to do any improvements, you have to get prior written consent. This is not a part of the DNR grant application.

Supervisor's Report: by C. Weinzapfel

1. Maplehurst Natural Area Trail Loop: A study was received for a trail around the lake for \$1.2 Million. This is too expensive and we will not proceed. Parks and Rec did talk to the conservancy and they suggested doing a small footpath from the south trail connecting through the southern border. We are discussing this smaller footpath and will work with the conservancy on that.
2. Letter of Support: Village of Elk Rapids: They are looking for a grant for a streets cape project. Motion by L. Atkinson/J. Renis to sign the letter of approval. Motion carried. 5-0
3. Antrim County Notice: C. Weinzapfel discussed the vacancies at the county board levels.

C. Weinzapfel said we are also having people driving down to the lake at Maplehurst so we are looking at doing some split rail fencing and moving boulders to keep people from driving down to the lake. We are also looking at grading on the driveway. L Atkinson said the funds for this will be coming from the trust funds.

L. Atkinson said volunteers wanted to donate money to make a platform for a loon nest and we have volunteers who want to construct it.

Library Report

Minutes provided via email.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Public Comment

Don Watkins said thank you for tackling a steep slope ordinance. It's been on the docket for two revisions of the master plan and people have done some bad building design. People are leaving visual and environmental messes. All we are trying to do is to keep people from violating the laws of nature.

Karen Bargy submitted her resume for the treasurer position. Regarding wineries, other townships allow this activity to occur. Many are host occupied. Please consider this. You're tying the hands of your community. Several places north of us already do this because they aren't zoned. There aren't a lot of crops you can grow on small acreage that are going to be profitable in land use for the community. If farming is something you value, you have to consider this. Orchards are coming out everywhere. Tart cherries aren't profitable anymore.

Dennis Fitzpatrick of W. Torch Lake Drive asked, is there a problem with our zoning ordinance that allows 4444 W. Torch Lake Drive to exist. How can this happen? It's a huge house and decking on a steep hill that's been clear cut.

Approval of Bills

Motion to approve the bills by Ball/Pharo. Motion carried. 5-0

Meeting adjourned by order of the chair at 8:03 pm.

These minutes are subject to approval at the July 10, 2023 meeting. A copy of these minutes are available at miltontownship.org

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Ball, Clerk