

HOPE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINTUES
April 20, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norton at 6:30 pm at the Hope Township Hall, 5463 S M43 Hwy, Hastings, MI. Pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Members Present: Bob Norton, Junior Homister, Craig Jenkins, Roger Pashby.

Members Absent: Jim McKelvey.

Others Present: Planning Consultant/Zoning Administrator Nathan Mehmed and Victor Palmrose at the Township Hall.

Agenda: Motion by Pashby, support by Homister to approve the agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

Meeting Minutes: Motion by Homister, support by Pashby to approve the March 16, 2023 meeting minutes. All ayes. Motion carried.

General Public Comment: None.

Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Section 8.4:

- a. **Introductory comments.** Norton asked Mehmed to give a brief overview of the text amendment language. Mehmed reiterated that several variance requests before the Zoning Board of Appeals had prompted the Planning Commission to consider this amendment. The amendment would modify Section 8.4 of the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to nonconforming lots of record. If adopted, the amendment would eliminate the requirement that a structure located on a nonconforming lot of record be no closer to any roadway than a straight line connecting the nearest building on each side of the lot. Further, the amendment would clarify that all buildings on nonconforming lots of record meet at least 50% of the setback requirements for the district in which they are located.

- b. **Acknowledge written comments received.** Norton announced that there were no written comments received.

- c. Open public hearing to receive comments. Norton opened the public hearing at 6:45pm.
- d. Close public hearing. Hearing no comments, Norton closed the public hearing at 6:45 pm.
- e. Deliberation and motion. Norton expressed that this would solve a reoccurring issue with a standard that doesn't make much sense for lakefront lots. The Planning Commission agreed, and reiterated that the lakeside requirement of the standard still makes sense to protect lake views. Motion by Homister, support by Pashby to recommend approval of the text amendment to Section 8.4 to the Township Board. All ayes. Motion carried.

Annual Report Draft: Norton presented the annual report and gave an overview of its contents for consideration by the Planning Commission. He explained that the annual report had been drafted with the assistance of Tonkin and Mehmed. No changes were identified. Motion by Pashby, support by Homister to approve the annual report and send it to the Township Board for review. All ayes. Motion carried.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Discussion: Mehmed explained that he had several additional housekeeping text amendments to discuss with the Planning Commission. The first is related to Victor Palmrose's accessory dwelling approval from March. Mehmed explained that a Consumers Energy employee who was at that meeting and also happens to be on the Zoning Board of Appeals, shared with Mehmed that the existing Ordinance requirement that prohibits separate gas and electrical meters may be in conflict with the gas code. Palmrose spoke up and mentioned that PCI also had an issue with the combined metering for electrical. Norton asked what the purpose of the standard was. Mehmed explained that it was likely to prevent an accessory dwelling from becoming its own separate residential use on the property, independent from the principal dwelling. Homister asked if they are covered in other ways if this is eliminated. Mehmed explained that the Ordinance is comprehensive and they still have plenty to lean on should there be a concern. The Planning Commission agreed to eliminate the standard. Norton asked if the formatting could be fixed. Mehmed indicated he could include that.

The second text amendment is related to Section 10.18 and yard encroachments. Mehmed explained that the Ordinance doesn't specifically allow for stairs above ground level to encroach a setback. This would include stairways to lakes or docks, despite many currently existing in the Township. He also explained that the ground level standard for decks, patios, and walkways isn't clear in regard to how much they

can encroach and should be clarified. Jenkins indicated that he was under the impression that ground level decks were already permitted anywhere. The Planning Commission agreed that the proposed changes presented by Mehmed made sense.

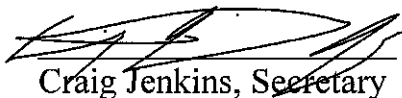
Motion by Jenkins, support by Homister to set a public hearing on the described text amendments for the May 18th Planning Commission meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.

Election of Officers: Norton indicated that it was time to elect officers. Motion by Pashby, support by Jenkins to keep the officers as they are, including Norton as Chair, Homister as Vice-Chair, and Jenkins as Secretary. All ayes. Motion carried.

Zoning Administrator/Planning Consultant Nathan Mehmed: Mehmed explained it has been very busy and that permits and inquiries are up. He expects a few site plans or special exception use requests in the coming months. He also explained that he does not yet have a complete application for the Miller Road mine site.

Adjournment

Pashby moved to adjourn meeting, support by Jenkins. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm.


Craig Jenkins, Secretary

05.11.23
Date