

Approved

**Melrose Township Planning Commission Minutes
Melrose Township Hall
Regular Meeting of July 28, 2014**

I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

A. Call to Order: Vice-Chair Bart Wangeman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

B. Members present: Bart Wangeman, Bob Marquardt, Barbara Hanahan, and Phyllis Cotanche.

C. Members absent: Tony Pizii (excused).

D. Staff present:

Zoning Administrator Randy Frykberg and Recording Secretary Tom Mackie.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Bob Marquardt motioned to approve the proposed meeting agenda as presented. 2nd by Phyllis Cotanche. All ayes, motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bob Marquardt motioned, Bart Wangeman seconded, to approve the June 23, 2014 regular meeting minutes as presented. All Ayes, motion carried.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Possible Snowmobile Trail in the Village

Randy displayed a map of the proposed snowmobile trail that would link the Village of Walloon with the Chandler Hill parking lot on Trail 76. He also noted the Township Board has requested a recommendation from the Planning Commission, as they consider this to be a land-use issue. Project representative Matt Borisch further described the request for support and permission to use the Township-owned abandoned railroad grade as part of a DNR designated snowmobile trail that would be patrolled, with maintenance and grooming also provided. Matt noted a group of about 8, including representatives from the DNR, DEQ, Charlevoix County Road Commission, and Petoskey Snowmobile Club, are pursuing this project.

Bob Marquardt asked where snowmobiles would park in the village and Matt responded they would use the existing parking lot by the Village General Store. Randy asked if Chandler Township supports the project. Matt indicated the response has been "Generally good" although he has not spoken with Supervisor Dennis Howard yet. He noted one resident of Matz Road has expressed concern.

Randy asked about insurance against liability claims. Matt replied the DNR includes the owners of privately-owned property leased to the DNR as additional named insured parties on their policy.

The Planning Commission then discussed how the village would be accessed from the Township-owned railroad grade. The proposal is to continue along the abandoned railroad grade through property currently owned by Walloon Lake Holdings and adjacent to the Township Park. Bob suggested proximity to the park should not be a problem, but signage could be placed to discourage park access by snowmobiles. Bob also expressed concern the existing location of a fuel facility between the Barrel Back Restaurant and new hotel is less than ideal. Matt indicated he is looking at relocating this to the East side of M-75, away from the highway.

In response to a question from Bart, Matt indicated the DNR will establish and enforce speed and other regulations on the trail. Matt also noted the DNR will require a land-lease on either a year-to-year or 5 year basis.

Phyllis asked if the trail would go through any dense residential areas. Matt responded he has provided Randy with a map identifying adjacent parcels as generally DNR owned or on public roads, with no major residential development close by. He also expressed a goal of avoiding wetland areas.

Bob indicated his only concern is with the existing location of the fuel facility and encouraged it to be moved to the East side of M-75 highway.

Lyon Stevens noted his position on the Fire Department and asked how emergency medical service could access the trail. Matt responded this could be accomplished from many points and the proposed new bridge over the Bear River on River Road South will be constructed to allow EMS to cross.

Barbara Hanahan motioned, 2nd by Bob Marquardt, to recommend the Township Board of Trustees offer a lease of the Township owned railroad grade property to the DNR for use as a groomed snowmobile trail, with the strong recommendation that any future fuel service and related facilities be located East of the M-75 highway, and with the understanding the Township would be named as an additional named party on a DNR insurance policy. All ayes, motion carried.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Master Plan - Continued Discussion of Transitional Zone"

Referring to his memo to the Planning Commission, Randy described the proposal to include language in the Master Plan that will provide for a future "Transitional Zoning

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District." He noted no townships in Emmet or Charlevoix County have as large a gap as our jump from 1/3 acre R-2 to 10 acre Agricultural. He also noted that in the absence of Master Plan language any future effort to add such a district would require a Master Plan revision.

We reviewed the existing zoning map and noted half the existing Agricultural parcels do not meet the minimum 10 acre lot size. We also noted a few areas with many non-conforming parcels that are adjacent to residential lots.

Bart asked for citizen comment but none was offered. Bob and Bart both expressed a need to prepare for this potential by adding language to the Master Plan now. Barbara also expressed agreement. By consensus Randy was asked to include the language in our proposed Master Plan update.

VI. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS / REPORTS

None

VII. PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

VIII. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

IX. NEXT MEETING - Scheduled for August 25, 2014.

X. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Prepared by:

Planning Commission Approval by:

Tom Mackie, Recording Secretary

Tony Pizii, Chair

Copies: Melrose Township Board, Planning Commission Members, Township web site