

WABASH COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION

*Wabash County Court House
One West Hill Street, Suite 205
Wabash, IN 46992
Telephone 260-563-0661 EXT 1252, 1267
Fax 260-563-5895
plandirector@wabashcounty.IN.gov*

WABASH COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION **BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

JANUARY 2, 2020

**Wabash County Plan Commission Board
Wabash County Court House
Wabash IN 46992**

Board Members: Curt Campbell, Randy Curless, Jeff Dawes, Patty Godfroy, Doug Rice, Christian Rosen, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel, Attorney Larry Thrush, Plan Director Mike Howard, Secretary Libby Cook

Others present: Geoff Schortgen, Charles Cunningham, Anne Plunkett, Tim Kneller

The January 2, 2020 meeting of the Wabash County Plan Commission Board was called to order by Chairman, Randy Curless at 7: 00 pm. The first item on the agenda will be the introduction of a new Board member. Curt Campbell introduced Mr. Geoff Schortgen, the new Purdue Extension Ag and Natural Resources Educator for Wabash County. With this position Mr. Schortgen will become the PCB representative from Purdue Extension in the county. Mr. Howard informed the Board that Mr. Campbell will be the voting representative for this meeting as we do not have official documentation of approval from the County Commissioners. Board members welcomed Mr. Schortgen.

Mr. Curless: The next item on the agenda is the election of officers for 2020. Mr. Curless asked if there was a motion on nominations for Chairman. Joe Vogel made the motion to retain the current officers for the upcoming year; this was seconded by Jeff Dawes, the motion carried. Officers for 2020 will be Mr. Curless as Chairman of the Board, Christian Rosen as Vice Chairman of the Board, and Libby Cook as Secretary.

Mr. Curless than asked for a motion on the minutes of the November 7, 2019 meeting. Mr. Vogel made the motion to approve the minutes as written; this was seconded by Christian Rosen. The motion carried, the minutes will stand approved as written.

Mr. Curless: The next item on the agenda is Special Exception #1. Charles Cunningham is requesting permission to place a mobile home on his property located at 4 N. Robin Rd., Sandy Beach in Pleasant Township. Mr. Howard explained that Mr. Cunningham is asking to place a mobile home on his 2 lots at 4 N. Robin Drive lots #368 and 369 at Sandy Beach. My understanding is that his intent is to place the mobile home there and over a period of years redo the house he owns at 22 W. Lakeside Dr., Sandy Beach. Mr. Cunningham stated that is correct. Mr. Howard continued, once that is completed he talked about renting or selling the mobile home, I told him that from the Board's perspective that we would not look favorably on renting it because that seems to become an issue, so he would probably have to sell it. Mr. Cunningham has been told that if he sells the mobile home whoever purchases it would need to apply for a Special Exception to keep it on the property. If the purchaser wants to move it anywhere else in Wabash County under our jurisdiction they would have to apply for a Special Exception. Board members reviewed photos of the mobile home; it is a 66' x 14' home, so he will require a variance from the setbacks. The lots there when they were developed were not designed for homes of this size. The lot length is 95 feet, and the setback from the center of the street we try to get 35 feet, with the mobile home being the length it is he will be a little bit short of that. In our ordinances if you have a rear alley you can use ½ of the width of the alley as part of your setback, that alley is 10 feet wide so he is not going to be off too much. He would have about 6 feet of the trailer that would be over what is our normal boundary of 25 feet from the rear lot line. If he uses that then he will be able to meet the front lot line requirements. Mr. Vogel asked if the alley is open. Mr. Howard said that it is not, it is an unimproved alley. Mr. Howard stated that the mobile home does meet our required minimum square footage and it does have a gable style roof. Mr. Cunningham shared an aerial of the property with Board members showing where the placement of the mobile home will be. Mr. Vogel asked if there was a structure on the property now, Mr. Cunningham replied that there is not, just a cement pad that he plans to build a garage on. There being no further questions or comments Mr. Curless asked for a motion on SE #1. Mr. Cunningham told the Board that his plans are to tear down the current home at 22 W. Lakeside Dr. and build a retirement home there. Mr. Vogel made the motion to give a favorable recommendation to the BZA for the placement of the mobile home with the variance from the rear property line setback. This was seconded by Mr. Dawes, the motion carried. Mr. Howard informed Mr. Cunningham of the hearing before the BZA on Tuesday, January 28th at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Howard gave an update on the NORAG (Speicherville Elevator) Unsafe Premise Order. Mr. Adam Keller, from NORAG could not be present for the December or January PCB meetings; he will be in Wabash on January 6 and 7th and has asked to meet

with Mike to go over the items addressed in the unsafe premise order. Mr. Howard continued with information, NORAG is licensed in 3 locations in the area, in Wabash County it is Speicherville and Treaty, the third location is not in Wabash County. Doug Rice asked if the Speicherville Elevator took in any grain this past fall, Mr. Howard replied that he didn't believe so, but was not certain. Mr. Howard stated that he feels the Board should stand their ground and nothing can be stored there other than in the two bins until the spoiled grain is cleaned up, the north bunker needs to be cleaned out and the old elevator needs to be closed up, the windows in the basement need to be secured. Mr. Howard will meet with Mr. Keller and review what progress has been made.

Mr. Howard reported that due to the timing of the meeting, the 2019 end of the year report is close to being completed, we will have it for review at the February meeting.

Mr. Curless: The next item on the agenda is Timothy Kneller and Anne Plunkett. Mr. Howard informed the Board that in April of 2019 a letter was sent to Mr. Kneller and Ms. Plunkett regarding the condition of the structures and property located at 3461 N 700 W, Paw Paw Township. They do not reside at this location. After the letter was sent the PC office received a letter dated 5/7/19 with a timeline of what they were going to do toward correcting the violations and cleaning up the property, as of this meeting not much of the work has been done. A follow up letter dated 11/18/19 was sent to them reminding them of the timeline and commitment made, they responded that they would like to come to the 1/2/2020 meeting and talk with the Board. Board members reviewed the list of items to be completed and photos of the property. Mr. Campbell noted that there is a mobile home on the property. Ms. Plunkett replied that there is and it is very old and used for storage at this time. Mr. Vogel asked what their plans are for the property. Mr. Kneller said that their plans are still the same, we were just a bit optimistic on the timeline, we have removed the vehicles, moved the camper, we are preparing to take down stuff. They have talked with the Roann Volunteer Fire Dept. and the fire department can't burn the house unless the shingles and siding are removed, we have also talked with an excavating company but due to funding we aren't able to do that. Ms. Plunkett stated that they are ready to pull the garage down, get some things out of the house, and remove the siding. We are going to burn what we can, we are working to get the scrap removed; it is just us doing the work. Mr. Vogel then asked if their intent is to keep the property and clean it up, they both replied yes. Ms. Plunkett stated that their plans are to remove the house and mobile home, then place a small shed over the well at this point in time that would be the only structure on the property. Mr. Vogel asked where the couple live now in relation to this property, Ms. Plunkett said about 1 1/2 miles from the property. Mr. Rice asked if the camper and vehicles have been removed, Ms. Plunkett said that is correct and the holes that were in the back yard have been filled in. Mr. Campbell asked if there have been complaints from neighbors, Mr. Howard said yes, the original notification came from neighboring property owners. Ms. Plunkett stated that they want it down as much as anybody. Mr. Rice asked what time frame they are thinking it would be now; they stated that is very difficult to estimate. Ms. Plunkett said that an estimator told them that there is a lot that could be burned instead of being hauled off. Mr. Vogel asked Mr. Howard if a time limit was given in the letter he sent, Mr. Howard replied no, that he was going by the timeline the

couple stated in the 5/7/2019, which was to have the work done by the end of 2019. Mr. Vogel asked if the property is farmed, Mr. Kneller said not at this time but it is our intent to keep it in agriculture. Mr. Rice said that his thought would be for the Board to give a deadline that we are all comfortable with; I think it would be more appropriate for us to act at that time. Mr. Campbell suggested 90 days and for them to give an update at that time, Mr. Howard stated that he is not opposed to the 90 days, but at this time of year he feels that due to the weather we should be more realistic. Mr. Rice said he was thinking more like 6 months. Mr. Rosen suggested they get in touch with someone who does scrapping to help them out; they said they were hoping to use the scrap to help offset the cost. Mr. Rice then made a motion to give them 6 months (July 1, 2020) for completion with an update to be submitted to Mr. Howard on their progress in 90 days; this can be a phone call or e-mail to the Plan Commission office. The motion was seconded by Mr. Campbell, the motion carried unanimously. The Board thanked Mr. Kneller and Ms. Plunkett for coming to discuss the matter.

Mr. Curless: The next item on the agenda is information for our February 6th meeting. Mr. Howard stated that there has been some conversation and e-mail back and forth concerning the population study that was completed for the City of Wabash and Wabash County through the Economic Development Group and Mr. Keith Gillenwater. In discussion it was determined that it would be good to have Mr. Gillenwater come and give a presentation on that study as well as the summary. One thing brought out in the study is housing and development in the rural county. I have invited several community members to sit in and listen to the presentation, including staff from the Wabash County Health Department, local surveyors, Farm Bureau, Young Farmer Leaders, etc. Mr. Dawes stated that we (County Commissioners) are currently dealing with the Northcliff Housing Addition, they are in the city zoning area, but the problems are dealt with by the County. Mr. Howard stated that he is not opposed to development in the rural county, however he understands that the Commissioners have said that there is not county funding available for infrastructure and roads. The number one priority of the Wabash County Comprehensive Plan is to protect agricultural land.

Mr. Rice asked how close we are to having the new County Ordinance approved. Mr. Howard stated that County Attorney, Steve Downs has the Draft for reviewing. Mr. Dawes stated that the County Commissioners want Mr. Downs to read through the document to be sure the county is covered. Mr. Dawes said that the State of IN is requiring the county to come up with a Drainage Ordinance. The Drainage Board is currently working with an engineer to develop the ordinance which Mr. Downs is also reviewing now.

In other discussion:

- Mr. Vogel stated that he would like to see the Drainage Board handle the permitting of ponds in the county. He stated that he feels the Plan Commission Board could recommend the setbacks as far as safety from roadways and property lines, but we get requests at BZA meeting sometimes 2 or 3 at a time for a pond. We can't act on these request until we get an all clear from the drainage board. It mostly deals with drainage and we don't know where the county tiles are located. It looks to me like they could use the setbacks and they wouldn't need an S. E. as long as they meet the setbacks. Then the Drainage Board could take care of the drainage board review as they see fit and the PC or BZA would not have to juggle schedules to meet drainage board reviews. It is

important that they aren't going through or interfering with a county tile. Another issue we get into is the type of soil and if the pond will hold water. We are not specialized on what type of soils would allow the pond to fill and retain water.

- Mr. Howard stated that the USDA and NRCS used to work with property owners on ponds, they would work check soils, and aid with pond development. Back then the state provided some funding that could be used to help build a pond. That source is no longer provided and the ISDA and NRCS no longer participate in pond development to the extent they used to. The PC amended the zoning ordinance for pond development because of the pond constructed on the Northwest corner of State Road 16 and 150 E. Mr. Howard stated that he agrees that the key consideration for ponds is where are the tiles and how does it affect drainage of the surrounding area.

- Mr. Howard informed the Board that Patty Godfroy has agreed to fill the vacancy on the BZA due to the retirement of David Schuler. Ms. Godfroy has decided to relinquish her position as the Liberty Township Trustee at the end of January. She will continue to serve on the PCB and BZA until a replacement is named for the Trustee position, then should the new Trustee wish to serve on the PC Board as the trustees representative Patty would still continue to serve on the PC Board replacing the seat of retiring David Schuler. In the event that the new Trustee would decline serving on the PC Board the Trustees would need to appoint a new representative.
- Update on complaints, Zoomers information has been given to County Attorney, Steve Downs and he is working on that.
- Mr. Curless presented outgoing Board member, Curt Campbell with a plaque in honor of his 10 years of service to the Plan Commission Board. Mr. Campbell thanked the Board and said that he has enjoyed his years of serving the Board, sometimes it has been challenging but he hopes we are making a difference for the county.

There being no further business Mr. Curless asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Rice made the motion to adjourn; this was seconded by Mr. Rosen. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Libby Cook
Secretary, Wabash County Plan Commission Board

mth