

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
May 25, 2021

The regular meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:02 PM at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present

Shawn Martinie  
Travis Vugteveen  
Bill Maschewske  
Lydia Brown  
Michelle Gillespie  
Steve Young

Absent

George Schippers

Also present were Township Attorney Ron Bultje, Zoning Administrator Brian Werschem, Supervisor Frank Johnson, and Annette and David Munroe.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to approve the agenda as written.

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Lydia Brown to approve as written the Planning Commission minutes of the April 27, 2021 meeting.

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Non-Commission Inquiries and Questions -- None

Reports and Communications

Travis Vugteveen reported there were no actions impacting the Planning Commission.

Announcements

Chairperson Martinie stated that we would be meeting in person from now on since the Ottawa County State of Emergency authorizing virtual meetings had expired as of 5:00 PM on this date.

Old Business

Due to the fact that the public hearing for a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment regarding Accessory Building permitted sizes in the R-1 and R-2 Zoning Districts was posted as a virtual meeting and the fact that the State of Emergency from Ottawa County permitting virtual

meetings expired at 5:00 PM on this date, the public hearing could not be held and had to be rescheduled.

A motion was made by Shawn Martinie and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to reschedule the public hearing for a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment regarding accessory buildings in the R-1 and R-2 Zoning Districts for June 27, 2021.

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

### New Business

The discussion regarding Private Roads was continued from last month's meeting. The primary concern was that a newly created Private Road on a property boundary causes the adjacent parcel to become a Corner Lot with new Front Yard requirements on the side adjacent to the Private Road in addition to the lot's original Front Yard. In one situation reviewed last month, it appeared that a proposed Private Road would also create a Through Lot with Front Yard requirements.

Chairperson Martinie reviewed the second map included in the Planning Commission materials for this meeting with scale of 1:2257. This map was an excellent example of existing non-compliant setbacks from a Private Road.

Bill Maschewske had three questions regarding Private Roads.

1. The Munroe property discussed last month has a separation from being adjacent to the proposed Private Road by 33 ft.
2. Definition of Lot Line, Front.
3. A Private Road 1 ft. off the property line.

Township Attorney Ron Bultje summarized the issues to be decided.

1. If we are going to allow Private Roads, should they create Front Yard Requirements?
2. Should they create a Corner Lot?
3. Should Private Roads have lesser setbacks than public streets?

Travis Vugteveen – What if we define Corner Lot as the intersection of two public streets only.

Township Attorney Bultje – That would be one solution. Also, Private Roads do not create Through Lots by current definitions.

Zoning Administrator Werschem stated the most confusing issues regarding Private Roads he encounters in administering the Zoning Ordinance.

1. Setback requirements for Private Roads creating Corner Lots.
2. The 20 ft. easement accessing a parcel and going across an adjacent parcel on the property boundary to create the required 250 ft. of frontage.
3. The required passable cleared width of Private Roads for less than 5 dwellings is too narrow and not consistent with the National Fire Code.

It was noted that an ingress/egress easement is not included in determining Lot Area.

Zoning Administrator Werschem is to review passable width of Private Roads with the Robinson Township Fire Chief for adequacy and report to the Planning Commission.

It was agreed that Private Roads should not create setback burdens on adjacent landowners. Bill Maschewske suggested a buffer or setback requirement for a Private Road from a property line.

Township Attorney Bultje – Proposed that a Private Road Right-of-Way either be on the lot line if both parcels are served by it or 14 ft. setback from the property line. This amount of setback would still allow a parcel that is 330 ft. wide to possibly be split if large enough.

This proposal was generally accepted. Bill Maschewske suggested still revising the definition of Corner Lot to provide relief for existing parcels with adjacent Private Roads.

Zoning Administrator Werschem stated he would review Sections 4.9A and 4.9B (Private Roads) with the Fire Chief, requesting documentation of recommended required passable widths.

Annette Munroe thanked the Planning Commission for their work on coming up with an equitable solution to current Private Road issues.

#### Pay Bills

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Lydia Brown to pay Planning Commission salaries for the month of May 2021. (One meeting, 6 members present)  
The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

#### Any Other Business

Chairperson Martinie stated he would contact Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning regarding progress on the update of the Master Plan and about conducting workshops. According to Township Attorney Bultje, it should be acceptable to conduct workshops for the Master Land Use Plan in June. It was noted that a notice could be included in the July tax mailing that could announce dates for the various workshops at no additional cost. Township Attorney Bultje suggested making each workshop a special Planning Commission meeting so that Planning Commissioners could attend with possibly a quorum present without creating a conflict with the Open Meetings Act. Planning Commissioners could still provide input as private citizens without conflict.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 9:15 PM.

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary  
Robinson Township Planning Commission