

These are the minutes of the January 26, 2006 Planning Commission master plan work meeting.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 by Chairman Shields.

Present: Myers, Heasley, Shields, Demaray, Davis, Coffey, Mark Sisson.  
Bob Jones was also in attendance.

Absent: Parmelee

Mark Sisson started the meeting by reviewing soil suitability maps for the township which were broken down into six categories. (Prime farmland, best suitable for housing, etc.)

Discussion revolved around requiring private septic systems for high density. Shields asked if there are legal ramifications if we require public or private wastewater treatment facilities vs the County Health Department approving other minimum standards?

Mark didn't think so. These private septic systems are coming out more and more and the need to require them to preserve water tables and conditions in the township is a logical requirement. We have a ticking time bomb if we allow high density with each house having their own septic and well. What will happen down the road?

The question came up on whether to actually rezone properties or amend wording and standards...Bob said that amending the wording is by far the best way to go. Complaints will be one after another if we actually rezone

We also reviewed future land use designation vs. zoning description.

Home Occupation and Special Use Provisions - changes to the zoning ordinance. The PC went over the handout from Mark. This will create an "Isolated Small Rural Business" section. Discussion revolved around home business and where to allow what. Options reviewed to sort by included: 1) zoning, 2) minimum acreage 3) notification to 500'-600' rather than neighbors only within 300'. Discussion also revolved around home occupation vs. hobby - when does a hobby become a business?

The question came up if the Township Board should approve to follow through on "businesses" that don't come forward within the 1 or 1-1/2 year time frame that we allow for an existing business to register with the Township before enforcing the new requirements. Because if a new business has to apply for a SUP and then points the finger at an existing business in the township that is out of compliance, what resource do we have? Mark will talk to Jim Pitsch and Al will talk to Earl about this. The PC needs township board approval before going forward on this issue.

Coffey motioned to adjourn, Davis seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Cris Heasley, Secretary  
Salem Township Planning Commission