

**LEXINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

7227 Huron Avenue, Suite 200, Lexington, MI 48450

October 17, 2018

DRAFT

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Ziegler called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Members and audience

ROLL CALL: by Secretary Merriman (Quorum Present)

Present: Michael Ziegler, Dave Picot, Alan VanderGraaff, Elizabeth Jackson,
Chip Milletics, Ruth Merriman, Tom Wilson

Absent: No one

Others: Matt Rose, Dennis & JoAnn Quinn, John Groustra, Zoning Administrator,
Davianna McAllister, and Judy Vandewarker, Recorder

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Motion by Jackson, seconded by VanderGraaff and carried with all ayes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Picot moved to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing of 9/19/2018 as presented, seconded by Milletics, and passed with all ayes.

Jackson, supported by Merriman, moved to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of 9/19/2018 as presented, which passed with all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Matt Rose addressed the group to say he has read the 2016 Master Plan of Lexington Township and believes its goal is to promote Lexington and encourage growth in the community. That, he said, is what he and his wife would like to do by tearing down the two cabins they rent out, and building four new cabins on the site directly next door to their residence. Current zoning requires that a primary residence be located on the same property as ancillary cabins. Rose said his parents purchased the property in 1978 and he has been running the business for the past 25 years.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Chairman Ziegler read into the record a letter from Tom & Lisa Quinn objecting to allowing the Roses to expand their business as commercial.
- The St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission will be holding its fall

workshop on 10/29/2018. Merriman and Jackson said they will attend. Ziegler and Wilson may attend also. McAllister agreed to register for two attendees, and told the others to go if they could, as we will be billed following the event.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: October 2018

Merriman moved to accept the ZA Report as presented, seconded by Jackson, which carried with all ayes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: Guest Cottages

Ziegler: The cottages are in the front yard area, just not in the same legal description, because it involves two pieces of property. The primary dwelling is on a separate platted lot. The fear is that if we change the ordinance, someone could put in 20 units.

Jackson: Said what concerns her is an absentee landlord, unless the primary dwelling is on the property.

Wilson: Agrees with Jackson. The other concern is that it will allow people to circumvent requirements of 1280 square feet. People could put up a guest cottage, and use it as their regular cottage. They can be very small, very cheap, and fall into disrepair when people are finished with them. To illustrate his point, he passed around a packet of pictures that he had taken of cottages in the area. As the policy is written, someone has to put cottages on their own property ancillary to their own residence. Making exceptions to the zoning ordinances would make it difficult to hold others to the requirements.

Ziegler: There remain within the township other cottages with no principle residence but they are non-conforming and current ordinance requirements would not allow expansion either.

VanderGraaff: Also owns two side-by-side lots on the lake. He has built on one and there is a cottage on the other, so he has a similar situation. He believes that if an exception is made for the Roses, it would have to be allowed for others, unless the ordinance is changed, and he doesn't believe the planning commission is ready to change that ordinance.

Rose acknowledged that he heard from four people who are opposed to allowing his expansion. Although he is disappointed, he understands the concerns, and appreciates the time and effort put into serving on the Planning Commission by its members. He

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added that he sought a legal opinion and was told the properties could not be combined because one is platted and one is not.

Milletics asked about building a new main residence on the property the cottages are on, which would bring the situation into compliance. Rose said that remained a possibility, but involved more that they wanted to do at this time.

NEW BUSINESS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dennis Quinn said he sells real estate in the community. He said people looking for a nice lakefront home do not want a home with cottages beside it. He believes cottages hurt the overall property values in the end. He believes it would do a disservice to the community to change the zoning requirements.

Groustra said he believes that amending the zoning ordinance for one case would be bad policy, no matter how meritorious the case, because some day someone else would want exceptions made for them also.

ADJOURNMENT Motion by Wilson, seconded by Jackson to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 PM, which carried with all ayes.

Respectfully submitted:

Judy Vandewarker, Recorder

October 20, 2018