

Chester Township Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

| Wednesday, June 5, 2024 7:00 PM |

Chester Town Hall

Audio Recording on file

Meeting Called to Order by Chair, Mr. Oswick at 7:12 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Kats, Mr. Lauro, Mr. Oswick

Members absent: Mr. Chess, Mr. Peto

Admin present: Ms. McCarthy

Zoning Inspector present: Mr. Alusheff

Pledge of Allegiance

Committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of May 15, 2024 as presented.

Moved by Mr. Lauro; Seconded by Mr. Kats

Mr. Chess/absent; Mr. Kats/yes; Mr. Lauro/yes; Mr. Oswick/yes; Mr. Peto/absent

Motion approved

Mr. Alusheff discussed potential Zoning Resolution Amendments

ZC-2024-3 Zoning Forms – Discussion/review of current Zoning Resolution and requirement of data/records that are required for all Zoning forms. Suggestions received from Geauga Planning Commission of an informal review were discussed and implemented. Current DRAFT of potential Zoning Forms, Form 1 and Form 4 reviewed and compared to existing Form 1 and Form 4. New Form 1 will have a version for Residential Only and another version for Commercial Only. Also looking at reducing paper trail by using more electronic files. Information can now go automatically into iWorQ program.

Group discussed the opportunity for a lazy Zoning Inspector to abuse the form(s). The iWorQ database will help keep this in control. Final review by the Board of Trustees being required was put in place to help control this possibility. Also, the BZA may require additional information if the BZA Board feels it is necessary.

Zoning Department is looking at getting a scanner to scan existing documents into electronic records. Once Township Records Retention Policy is adjusted, Zoning will be able to eliminate a lot of redundant paperwork.

ZC-2024-4 Fences – Currently the Zoning Resolution details requirements of a fence but is silent on the need for a fence permit. Suggestions received from Geauga Planning Commission of an informal review were discussed and implemented.

ZC-2024-5 Pool Setbacks – Reviewed the current Zoning Resolution which has various setbacks for septic tank, leach field and well head. To bring current Zoning Resolution more in line with Geauga County Health Department regulations, all required setbacks will be moved to 10 feet.

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Discussion on side yards and what can be done. This could be a good question for the Land Use Plan resident survey. Zoning Commission is in full support but believes there are residents who do not want accessory buildings in side yards. Board asked Mr. Alusheff to look at prior amendments submitted for consideration and see if there might be something they have missed.

Temporary signs in the Commercial District. Temporary signs in Section 9.04 references temporary signs as allowed in all districts. Conflicting information in Section 9.06 – Signs allowed in Commercial District says temporary signs may only be up for 14 days and only twice a year. We want to be careful not to hamstring small businesses, but moderation needs to be considered as well.

Mr. Alusheff will be visiting business owners over the next couple of months to introduce himself and answer questions commercial landlords may have. For some business owners, they may not know about the regulations and a visit may help to answer some of those questions. We want to be careful to treat all business owners equally.

Brief discussion on ways to encourage uniformity amongst businesses – especially in signage.

Since the beginning of using iWorQ, the Zoning Inspector has sent 52 violation letters sent to homeowners for various reasons. Most homeowners have acknowledged there is a problem and are trying to do something about it. The key to success is the follow-up. 39 of the cases have since been resolved. Five of the 39 were resolved by referral to the prosecutor's office. 34 of 39 have been resolved in-house and the township is a bit better off for it. 13 are either ignoring contact attempts or are too new to be considered yet.

NEO Planning Workshop announced. Need to RSVP by June 11, 2024

Next Meeting

- Confirm July meeting schedule.

Meeting Called to Close at: 8:11 p.m.

Approved by:

Chester Township Zoning Commission August 21, 2024

Final Review by: _____
Jon Oswick, Chair