

**Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission  
Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, January 21, 2014**

The meeting of the Elk Rapids Township Planning Commission was called to order by the Chairman Shen Smith at 6:36 pm at the Government Center, 315 Bridge Street, Elk Rapids, Michigan 49629.

**Present:** Shen Smith, Renee Mischel, Pug Sliger, Jean Derenzy, William Larson, Jim Lundy

**Absent:** Dorance Amos

**Present Township Staff:** Len Harrett, Zoning Administrator and Larry Nix, Williams & Works-Planning Consultant

**Public attendance:** 1 – Patrick Brady

**Adoption of Agenda:**

**M/S** – Mischel/Derenzy: Agenda for January 21, 2014 meeting adopted by the board unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**M/S** – Mischel / Sliger: Minutes for the October 15, 2013 meeting were approved unanimously.

**Zoning Administrator’s Report:**

- Len Harrett submitted an “Annual Report” for the Township of Elk Rapids – Zoning for 2013
- Regarding the Public Hearing for the amendment (elimination) of paragraphs 2.11-A & 2.11-B: It will be on the agenda for the April meeting rather than this meeting due to the “closure for vacation” of the Elk Rapids News and was unable to report the hearing in the paper.
- Harrett indicated that there has been a meeting requested with a representative of an engineering firm from Grand Rapids regarding a possible site condominium/Open Space Development vision for a 47 acre parcel accessed by Orchard Drive off Elk Lake Road.

The 47 acre parcel was presented in 2012 as a 7-parcel Land Division proposal. A new road was included in the plans. The development project stalled at the time that actual road work was to begin. If it is determined that some kind of development greater than the original 7 proposed lots can be achieved, and if the development is possible as an Open Space Development (Section 2.21) the Planning Commission may likely be meeting more than 4 times in 2014.

Chairman Smith questioned “How many residential units are planned for the Orchard Drive development. Harrett indicated that it was limited to 13 because it’s a private road and there are already 12 there. (25 being the limit)

Mischel asked the status of the burned out house on Elk Lake Road. Harrett indicated that the owner is being sued for removal.

**Public Forum:** One person in the audience (Patrick Brady). He declined any comments.

**Old Business:**

**Home Occupation text amendment:**

Larry Nix was asked to change the wording of the beginning of Section 2.12 to:

A home occupation may be “permitted” in a dwelling unit, provided that: (rather than “conducted”)  
The intent of this is so the home owner needs to fill out an application for the Home Occupation.

- A. Mishcel expresses concern about being sure that the home is “owner occupied”. Must be sure that the in home occupation is being run by the owner of the home and that said owner lives in the home. Harrett wanted to be sure that the Board did not write things into the ordinance that could not be enforced.

Larry Nix was asked to change Section 2.12 A as follows: Leave out any reference regarding the employess of the business, but include that the owner of the home occupation shall reside at the dwelling of the home occupation.

- B. No changes
- C. The Board has no concerns, leave as written.
- D. Sliger indicates that he knows of home occupations that exist in an accessory building. At this point, there have been no complaints. It was decided that since there has been no abuse or complaints, the ordinance will stay as written.
- E. Consesus of the board: Leave as written.
- F. Chairman Smith is concerned about the amount of cars parked in the driveway, that there should be a ratio for the size of the driveway. It was decided that if there are any complaints, the ordinance will be changed then.
- G. No changes

Chairman Smith motioned for approving section 1.03 definitions and the text for public hearing with the April meeting.

**M/S** – Derenzy / Mischell 5 approved, 1 opposed (Jim Lundy)

**Review revised Planning Commission Bylaws:**

- 2.2 Larry Nix indicates that in section the wording says “At its first regular meeting in **“September”**. As there is not a “regular” meeting in September, Larry would like to change the month to **“the first meeting of the fall”**. All Board members agreed.
- 2.3 **Remove** the references to the **“Zoning Administrator”** indicating **“Township staff”** would be responsible for public records, minutes, public hearing notices, etc.
- 3.3 Questioning that the “time limit” on the meetings possibly change to no more than 3 hours. After discussion, it was decided to leave the rule as is.

**M/S** - Derenzy/Lundy Approved unanimously with changes.

Harrett questioned Larry Nix about his Annual Report. Nix indicated it was appropriate.

**Review of 2014 Planning commission Meeting Schedule:**

Possible changes were discussed, but it was decided to leave it at 4 scheduled meetings a year. If there is a special meeting requested, then it will be planned at that time.

**Chairman Smith added to Old Business, the case of appointing a Planning Commission Secretary:**

Larry Nix indicates that the most important part of this position is the signing of the minutes for the official records.

Harrett is concerned about time sheets for the Board members as well. Chairman Smith volunteers to do it for February.

Chairman Smith proposes to the Township Board: Changing the Secretary pay to the same as the rest of the board (\$30.00)

**M/S** – Lundy/Derenzy Approved unanimously

Chairman Smith proposes to increase all the Planning board members pay to \$35.00 per meeting. Harrett suggest \$10.00 more.

Chairman Smith calls the question to request approval by the Township Board to increase all Planning Commission members pay by \$10.00 member per meeting.

Sliger is opposed, Mischell opposed, Larson opposed. Motion failed.

Jim Lundy volunteers for the Planning Commission Board Secretary position:

**M/S** – Derenzy/Mischell Motion approved unanimously

Lundy starts his position as Board Secretary by signing the minutes of the October 15, 2013 meeting.

**New Business:**

Mischell questions the October meeting minutes regarding a note to “think about” the Medical Marijuana issue.

It was decided there was a moratorium on it. It was the consensus of the board to remove it from the agenda and make no changes.

Harrett let the board know that Bill White advised him that there is some interest in the Leslie Lee property as a possible “group retreat” by the Crooked Tree Arts Council. He will keep the board informed.

**Correspondence:** None

**Public Comments :** None

**Members Comments:**

Mischell motions to request from the Township that the Planning Commission Chairperson’s stipend be raised to \$60.00 per meeting.

M/S - Mischell/Lundy 4 approved, 2 opposed (Smith, Sliger) Motion approved

**Motion to adjourn:**

M/S – Lundy/Mischell Unanimously approved 8:30 pm