

Franklin Township, Portage County
Zoning Commission Hearing
February 21, 2019

Members Present: Chair Mary Organ, Judy Spencer, Teresa Mullett, Mekal Banyasz and alternate Doug Hiestand.

Others: Joseph Ciccozzi, Assistant Zoning Inspector; Jenny August, Administrative Assistant.

Call to Order: Mrs. Organ called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

Minutes:

Mrs. Spencer moved to accept the minutes as presented from the January 17, 2019 meeting. Ms. Banyasz seconded. All Commission members voted yes. The minutes were approved as presented.

Discussion Topics:

Recommending the zoning amendments to the Board of Trustees

The Zoning Commissions recommended changes to the positioning of solar energy systems. These amendments were sent to the Portage County Regional Planning Commission and were approved. They are now ready to be forwarded to the Franklin Township Board of Trustees for a public hearing and then approval.

Ms. Banyasz moved to forward the revised section of the positioning of solar energy system locations to the Franklin Township Board of Trustees, with a second from Mrs. Mullett. All Commissioners voted yes.

Update on Medical Marijuana Moratorium from Franklin Township Trustees

The Franklin Township Board of Trustees resolved to continue the temporary moratorium for another year plus the time it takes the Zoning Commission to properly assess the practical impact and actual implementation of rules, regulations and guidelines for medical marijuana established by the State, and has had the opportunity to consider and recommend adopting zoning code regulations.

Discussion of Drug Rehab Facilities/Homeless Shelters

Ms. Banyasz shared some information with the Commission relating to drug rehabilitation shelters. Some of these facilities are step down homes for people that have just completed a more aggressive rehabilitation program. This is usually communal style living that includes on-site supervision and possibly counseling. A halfway house or residential treatment center could have restrictions on the number of beds in the facility according to the state rules. Housing is a very important part of treatment, just as medication and counseling is.

Medically assisted treatment facilities (MAT) are helpful with addiction and withdrawal. These facilities are generally supervised and have medical expertise on staff at all times.

There are changes coming in legislature relating to protected classes of people that could affect zoning for these types of facilities. Recovery houses are often found in R-2 zoning

districts. Protected class types of facilities cannot be denied zoning. Sometimes HIPPA laws fall into play. Some of the ways that these facilities are funded are through grant programs, self pay, or insurance.

The Zoning Commission would like to keep an eye on the new Haven of Portage County in Ravenna and see how everything works out for them.

Other Topics

Mrs. Organ reminded the Commission that in June they are to revisit the BLV districts that were added when the village dissolved to make the transition smoother. Removing these districts would mean everyone in Franklin Township would be following the same code. The Commission has made some changes to setbacks and other things that will make it easier to eliminate some or all of these additional districts.

Parking requirements in the I-2 District have some inconsistencies that could be ironed out.

Site Plan reviews for all new multi-family residential construction is only being looked at by the Zoning Inspector. Should the BZA be reviewing site plans as well?

The Commission should take a look at timing for sending recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The timing involves the Zoning Commission sending amendments to the Portage County Regional Planning Commission for their recommendations, and then the Zoning Commission reviews the recommendations and may make changes. Then before the changes can be forwarded to the Board of Trustee's, there has to be a specific amount of time to advertise for a public hearing. One solution might be to change the Zoning Commissions meeting date.

Should the Commission look at the chapter on definitions and purge out anything that is not in the township?

The Commission can review regulations for Section 420. Limiting a residential facility to eight residents may have been reduced to 4 residents. This might need to be updated.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be determined and announced at a later time.

Adjournment: Mr. Hiestand moved to adjourn at 8:35 with a second from Mrs. Spencer. All Commission members voted yes.

Respectfully submitted by Jenny August, Administrative Assistant

Approved:

Mary Organ, Zoning Commission Chair