

Chester Township Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

| Wednesday, September 6, 2023 7:00 PM |

Meeting Called to Order by Mr. Oswick at: 7:00 pm

Members present: Mr. Chess, Mr. Kats, Mr. Lauro, Mr. Nastasi, Mr. Oswick, Mr. Peto

Members absent: --

Admin present: Ms. McCarthy

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Oswick led the Committee in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes of August 2, 2023 as presented.

Moved by Mr. Lauro; Seconded by Mr. Peto

Mr. Chess/yes; Mr. Kats/abstain; Mr. Lauro/yes; Mr. Nastasi/yes; Mr. Oswick/yes;

Mr. Peto/yes

- Motion to approve the minutes of August 16, 2023 as presented.

Moved by Mr. Lauro; Seconded by Mr. Kats

Mr. Chess/yes; Mr. Kats/yes; Mr. Lauro/yes; Mr. Nastasi/abstain;

Mr. Oswick/abstain; Mr. Peto/abstain

Mark Purchase update on Zoning – areas of concern, opportunities, future considerations

Mr. Purchase talked about various properties in the township that had applied for and received Zoning Permits. He and the Zoning Commission discussed properties that had gone smoothly, some opportunities in the Zoning Resolution that could be clarified/strengthened and why some zoning decisions were made.

The recent increase in Zoning Fees that went into effect on September 1, 2023 was discussed. There was also a change in procedure that all Zoning Fees will now be collected at time of application regardless of application being approved or not. The Zoning Inspector will not begin reviewing an application without the payment.

Mark is working with the Board of Trustees in developing a vision for the future needs of Chester Township.

Recently the Board of Trustees approved the purchase of a software program from iWorQ for the Zoning Department. This program will help reduce the amount of paperwork that is produced in the department and help streamline processes of collecting Zoning data and the ability to access it later. The plan is to go live with the program on January 1, 2024.

Mr. Lauro suggested that when choosing a program, consider a software program that has a variety of modules that may integrate with other departments in the township. A software package that is web based and has a variety of portals would work the best.

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Work is being done to update our Records Policy to help reduce the amount of paper records that must be kept.

The group thanked Mr. Purchase for giving the Zoning update and invited him back – future meeting date TBD.

Group discussion about what Limited Home Rule is and value it may offer to Chester Township. Limited Home Rule may be very effective in helping regulate Agricultural designations.

Mr. Nastasi spoke to Mr. Purchase and Mr. Richter about the continued need for a qualified zoning consultant who may offer considerations for design aspects the group doesn't know how to answer. The need is for someone to help guide the conversation in regard to electronic signage. What is our ROI? We want to attract good businesses to our area and good zoning is one of the ways to do that.

Craig Richter - Active and Passive Parks as a Zoning District

Group discussion about adding Article 15 – Active and Passive Parks as a Zoning District to the Zoning Resolution. Group reviewed map of properties in the township that would potentially be affected and what that would look like on the Chester Twp. Zoning Map.

Group discussion continued to safely securing swimming pools. Current regulations include pools be enclosed by a 4-foot fence. Township is receiving 6 – 10 requests/year for pool cover consideration. ORC covers commercial pools and does not address residential.

Notes:

- Current Zoning Resolution says pools must be 25 feet from the well head and septic systems must be 15 feet from well head. Geauga County Health Department requires 10 feet from well head.
- Discussion of enhanced definitions for Jacuzzi's and hot tubs. When recessed into ground – a surrounding fence should be required.

Meeting Called to Close at: 8:43 pm

Approved by:

Chester Township Zoning Commission September 20, 2023

Final Review by: _____
Jon Oswick, Chair