

The Chester Township Board of Trustees met in special session **Wednesday, January 3, 2024** with the Zoning Commission in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 7:04 P.M. Chairman Craig Richter presided.

Roll Call for Board of Trustees:

Present: Trustee Richter, Trustee Radtke, Fiscal Officer Jarrett

Absent: Trustee Mazzurco

Mr. Richter began the meeting noting the Board of Trustees are in attendance at the request of the Zoning Commission to discuss the pending zoning amendment and there will be no motions.

The Zoning Commission is seeking additional clarification and looking for a better understanding and wanting to know the true benefit of putting the amendment through.

Mr. Richter said based on the questionnaires, the residents of Chester Township want to maintain the semi-rural community and they want green space. The Land Use Plan has had several revisions. It is a comprehensive plan and a guide for future development and growth put together by Township Trustees, The Zoning Commission and The County Planning Commission. Mr. Richter stated the Zoning Resolution and the map are not marked properly. The only thing the Board of Trustees is trying to do is identify the Parks accordingly. In addition to the Parks, and part of a Parks, is Cemeteries. At some point in time the Board of Zoning Appeals approved a variance for Western Reserve to use as a cemetery. Based on the cemeteries (there are two) being run by a non-profit, no property taxes are collected. In addition, once filled the Township takes responsibility of maintaining it.

The comprehensive plan needs to be updated. There is a recommendation that we improve Park Districts in our Zoning Resolution. Mr. Richter added that there is property located in the Township that is owned by the County and a piece owned by Russell Township. Mr. Chess shared the Zoning Commission spent a year and a half working on accessory buildings and was given this information on Parks only a short time ago. Mr. Chess suggested getting outside assistance to review. Mr. Richter said it was reviewed several times by other people, including legal with no feedback. Next Tuesday it will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and we will accept feedback according to Kathleen McCarthy, Zoning Administrative Assistant. Mr. Lauro added that the Board of Trustees is asking them to pass something they did not draft or write, without any research, and they are not comfortable doing so. Mr. Richter said then you pass it to the Board of Trustees with the recommendation not to do it and it will be the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Alusheff, Chester Township Assistant Zoning Inspector added getting the map to match the use is all they are trying to do. He said this does not add to or take away from any individuals property. He also shared the Planning Commission looks at what the Land Use Plans are regardless of how old the plans are.

Discussion continued about signage and it being the top of the Zoning Commission's list and again stating the Parks were just recently given to them. It was stated that the Boardman papers have been reviewed and the Zoning Commission now has questions for legal. It was suggested holding joint meetings with both Boards once a month. There is not one (1) actual document reflecting changes or questions yet from the Zoning Commission, rather a multitude of note taking by members. The Zoning Commission said this meeting has given clear direction and the Zoning Commission will be supplying the document for signage. It was suggested that the joint meetings be quarterly, however, it was recommended that maybe 15 minutes once a month would be better. Mr. Radtke suggested maybe

working on sections of signage to get the ball rolling. The Zoning Commission reminded the Board of Trustees that nothing in 20+ years has been touched regarding zoning and things are rapidly changing. The Zoning Commission states they need money. The Board of Trustees is suggesting that they again review the Boardman documents, make changes that are applicable to Chester Township, note any questions and present their findings to the Board of Trustees. It was suggested to move paragraph by paragraph. The Zoning Commission has agreed to move forward with the requests. The Zoning Commission noted that Parks were talked about in 2023 but they were not aware how fast the Board of Trustees wanted them to move. Mr. Oswick wants to know why the rush to get this passed. The Board of Trustees stressed simply that they want to get it done and they want it in the Zoning Resolution and they want to update the Land Use Plan (last updated 2008).

Ms. Cotman thinks there is a hole in the Parks Amendment. She is questioning the map and the land that will be placed into the area. She added the public may have a hard time understanding where properties are located and suggested having the map attached to the amendment. She feels it is necessary to be very clear what properties the Board of Trustees is proposing to put into a new district. A new zoning district in Chesterland she thinks is a huge deal. She sees no value in making any changes. She is suggesting that the proposed amendment be withdrawn until the map is attached. Also, the question as to why the map is not included is because the map is the 2nd part of the proposed Park Amendment. The original amendment had included a map, but information received suggested to pull back the map portion of the amendment. Mr. Radtke confirmed that identifying a Park District will not require the Township to turn over control of that parcel to the Park Board. Privately owned parcels are not automatically redefined. Only Chester Township, county and other government owned parks would be redefined as Parks.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Richter adjourned the meeting at 8:09 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Jarrett, Fiscal Officer

February 22, 2024 – motion # 2024-81
Approval Date

Craig Richter, Chairman

absent

Joseph C. Mazzurco, Vice-Chairman

Ken Radtke, Jr., Trustee

