

Chester Township Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes

Combined meeting with the Board of Trustees

| Wednesday, February 28, 2024 7:00 PM |

Chester Town Hall

Audio Recording Available

Board of Trustees Meeting Called to Order by Mr. Richter at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Mazzurco, Mr. Radtke, Mr. Richter

Also present: Mr. Purchase

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

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

Members absent: Mr. Kats

Also present: Mr. Alusheff Admin present: Ms. McCarthy

Pledge of Allegiance

Committees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

Mr. Richter let audience members know that the only things the Board of Trustees may discuss at this meeting is what is listed on the Agenda.

Mr. Onderdonk of County Line Road presented his concerns about his neighbors to the east, the Abate's. He said, they are running a huge mulching operation and hiding behind the agricultural exemption. The Onderdonk's have worked with a variety of Zoning Inspectors over the last two years. The Abate property is not zoned commercial, but they are acting like they are commercial. Producing mulch is not agricultural. Using NearMap aerial views, he showed piles of logs, mulch producing machines and mulch. He said, the sound is deafening. It comes from semi's, pickup trucks, dump trucks and trailers.

Trucks are coming from other municipalities such as Shaker Hts., Mayfield Hts., Lyndhurst, Pepper Pike and dropping off their logs. Not sure how they are getting away with this.

Mr. Onderdonk was invited to the Board of Trustees meeting on March 7th to continue his conversation.

Electronic Signage

Group recap of prior meetings regarding electronic signage. It had been suggested deleting the electronic reader board definition and adding electronic changeable copy signage as a definition. The Zoning Commission asked the Board of Trustees if they agreed with the direction of the Zoning Commission.

Discussion on *line 2.a.iv* of page four of Exhibit A led to questions on how light emitted should be measured. Various professional sources have given advice on why this should be left alone. Too strict a standard could end up with nuisance charges violations.

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Ground signage is allowed for every business in the commercial district. If frontage is more than 400', it is possible to have more than one ground sign.

The cost of electronic signs was discussed. Group decided to leave the wording on *Exhibit A line 2.a.iv* as: *No such sign shall be of such intensity as to create a distraction or nuisance for motorists* and add the following phrase: as determined by Chester Township Zoning Department and/or Chester Township Safety Forces. Concern was that as previously written it was too subjective. Would those who put up electronic signs under current zoning and were "too bright", would they be grandfathered in under future zoning? Answer was, yes.

Signs going in now and into the future will be able to have the light intensity dialed down. Specs will be checked when submitted for this feature. Several videos of various animated signs in the area were shown.

Group looked at Exhibit A line 2.a.viii and determined without scrolling, animation, flashing, blinking or other movement or noise should be deleted.

Initiating proposed electronic signage amendment timeline was discussed. It was determined that the amendment would be initiated tonight, and documents will be signed later in this meeting.

Attached Garages

Group review of last meeting and the choices being considered for attached garages.

Samples were done on one- and three-acre mock lots with possible buildings and displayed on monitor. Focus needs to be more on very large lots such as 35 acres. This consideration does not apply to small lots which are constricted by setbacks, wells and leach fields. Doesn't seem realistic. A resident needs to own multiple acres in order to put on a very large attached garage. There is no wording in our Zoning Resolution or any other Geauga County township that limits the size of an attached garage.

We are looking at the possibility of "what if" someone tries to put on another large, attached garage. No other Geauga County township regulates garage size as far as we know.

Makes most sense to drop information into chart 5.01.17 rather than adding language. Started with size of garage may not be larger than first floor of attached structure. If you want a larger garage, it would need to be an accessory building.

The height of the home helps regulate the height of the garage as well.

Consideration given to deleting this line in 5.01.02 F: Attached garages shall not be considered accessory buildings. Discussion on whether people would rather see one large attached garage or several free-standing accessory buildings.

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The Zoning Commission looked for direction from the Board of Trustees exactly what the BoT would like to see changed regarding attached garages. Should the size of the lot factor into a large, attached garage which may be connected to the house? Are we not happy with just the height restriction? Should the regulation be written to the size of the existing home on the lot? Does green space need to be adjusted? ZC Board doesn't see the need to restrict residents with large lots. Consensus was the 35' height restriction seemed reasonable. Lot coverage remains to be resolved.

It was brought up that the phrase, "attached" needs to be defined as "above ground". Also, the definition of breezeway was discussed. Consensus was that an open breezeway does not require footers nor would it suffice to connect an attached garage to the permanent structure. Current definition of breezeway as defined in the Zoning Resolution was read out loud and the group agreed that definition did cover all the bases.

Group considered "attached garages" as possibly only being affixed to the permanent dwelling. A breezeway, whether enclosed or not, would not suffice. It would help eliminate some of the "gappy" stuff.

Board of Trustees meeting was closed at 8:52 p.m.

Initiate Electronic Signage Resolution

Mr. Lauro read the proposed amendment into the record for Board discussion. The proposed Zoning Resolution change was discussed, and the Zoning Commission agreed to move forward.

Mr. Lauro moved to adopt the following motion – (Form 22); seconded by Mr. Peto.

"That an amendment to the Chester Township Zoning Resolution, identified as number ZC-2024-2 consisting of four pages, marked Exhibit A and attached hereto and incorporated herein as though fully rewritten, be hereby initiated by the Chester Township Zoning Commission this 28th day of February 2024."

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

Mr. Oswick moved to adopt the following motion – (Form 27); seconded by Mr. Lauro

"That the Chester Township Zoning Commission conduct a public hearing on the proposed amendment, identified as number ZC-2024-2 to the Chester Township Zoning Resolution as attached hereto on the 20th day of March 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Chester Town Hall."

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

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Mr. Oswick read the form Notice of a Public Hearing – (Form 29)

“Move to approve public noticing the public hearing for ZC-2024-2 of the Chester Township Zoning Resolution in the Legal Notices of the Chesterland News print edition on March 6, 2024 and the Geauga County Maple Leaf print edition on March 7, 2024 and to have the amendment available for public examination at the Chester Town Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from February 29, 2024 through the end of all Public Hearings 2024. After the conclusion of the public hearing, the matter will be submitted to the board of township trustees for its action.”

Mr. Oswick read (Form 30) below:

“The Chester Township Zoning Commission hereby submits the attached copy of the motion for a proposed amendment, identified as number ZC-2024-2 to the Chester Township Zoning Resolution together with the attached text pertaining thereto to the Geauga County Planning Commission this 28th day of February 2024.

Members present signed Form 30:

Mr. Oswick; Mr. Chess; Mr. Lauro; Mr. Peto

Meeting Called to Close at: 9:02 p.m.

Approved by:

Chester Township Zoning Commission April 3, 2024

Final Review by: _____

Jon Oswick, Chair