

The Athens Township Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting February 12, 2020
6pm The Plains Volunteer Fire Department Firehouse
Meeting Minutes

The Athens Township Zoning Commission met in regular session on February 12, 2020 at 6pm at The Plains Volunteer Fire Department Firehouse, 29 Connett Rd. The normal meeting location at the library was not available.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairperson Sean Jones called the Commission to order at 6pm. Commission members Sean Jones, Rick Fernow, Mike Hornsby and alternate Teena Thornton were in attendance. Consultant Bob Eichenberg and one member of the general public were also present. Mr. Fernow agreed to take the minutes since the Commission secretary, Ken Robinson, was unable to attend.

MOTION TO ACCEPT MINUTES FOR 02/05/2020

Mr. Jones motioned that the minutes for the previous meeting appeared to be in order, and for the Commission to accept the minutes as entered. Fernow seconded. Jones: Yes; Fernow: Yes; Hornsby: Yes; Thornton: Yes

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no comment from the member of the public in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

The discussion was primarily focused on initial comments concerning Mr. Eichenberg's new draft of the zoning code, posted on 10 February 2020.

(1) Mr. Jones questioned whether all the changes that had been accepted for the 5 February 2020 draft of the code had been included in the new draft. He pointed out that some comments from the earlier draft are no longer there. Mr. Eichenberg said that his intention was to incorporate all of the comments and thought that most of them were, but that it was possible that some changes could have been missed.

(2) Mr. Hornsby commented on the complexity of Table 1 in the code. Mr. Eichenberg agreed to see if the table could be simplified.

(3) Mr. Jones lead a discussion of the flowcharts in the appendix to the code. Mr. Fernow passed around a cleaned-up version of the flowchart he prepared for App. 2a. The commissioners agreed that it was acceptable. Mr. Jones objected to the use of approximate times in App. 2b and thought some of the appendices could be simplified. Mr. Eichenberg agreed to check if times listed on the flowcharts agreed with those specified in ORC. He also agreed to redraw the flowcharts, if necessary.

(4) Mr. Jones lead a discussion about the rules for business signs. He felt that signs posted on poles were unattractive. Mr. Jones proposed amending the present version of the code to prohibit signs on posts. Mr. Fernow seconded. The vote was Jones: yes; Fernow, Hornsby and Thornton: no, so the proposal was defeated. The commissioners did agree to reduce the maximum allowed height of a sign on a post from 30 feet to 20 feet.

(5) The commissioners agreed that it would be desirable to add a section to the code giving the minimum requirements allowed for rental property. This would include items like fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and minimum ceiling height. Mr. Eichenberg agreed to check for similar rules in the Athens city code.

(6) Mr. Jones thought it would be desirable to include additional graphics in the code illustrating things like setback measurements, parking ingress and egress and locations for fences. Mr. Eichenberg agreed to look into this.

(7) Mr. Eichenberg pointed out that it would be desirable to add a minimum standard for landscaping in business districts.

(8) Mr. Eichenberg intends to distribute copies of the current draft of the code to Steve Pierson, Zach Saunders and Paul Logue (Athens City Planner) to give them a heads up and get their initial reactions. Commissioners agreed that this was OK, provided it was clear that this is only a draft.

(9) Mr. Eichenberg intends to produce a new draft of the code before next week's meeting, so it is important that commissioners post their comments on the present draft ASAP. There are already a number of comments posted on the copy of the code linked to Sean Jones' email entitled "Copy of draft resolution 2 12 20". Following next week's meeting, Mr. Eichenberg will be gone for three weeks.

Zach Saunders will be attending our next meeting, so commissioners should think about any legal issues we may need to discuss with him.

PUBLIC Q&A

There was no comment from the member of the public in attendance.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Jones made a motion to adjourn at 7:40pm that was agreed to by the members of the commission in attendance.