

**MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE OF BEECHER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP CENTER**

JANUARY 24, 2008

At 7:00 p.m., Wayne Wiechen called the meeting to order in the absence of Chairman Nick Grutzius. A motion was entered by Kevin Bouchard to allow Wiechen to act as Chairman for the meeting, and seconded by Serviss. Motion was called to a vote and carried unanimously.

Members present: Phil Serviss, Kevin Bouchard, Wayne Wiechen, Denis Tatgenhorst and Gayle Ahrendt. Absent were Nick Grutzius, Brad Coats and Althea Machtemes.

Staff present: Bob Barber and Don Thomas.

AGENDA ITEM III: CONSIDER A MOTION OF APPROVAL FOR THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 29TH MEETING. The minutes of the November 29, 2007 meeting were presented and a motion was entered by Tatgenhorst and seconded by Bouchard to approve the minutes as presented. The Acting Chairman called the motion to a roll call vote. Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM IV: PUBLIC HEARING: CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO THE BEECHER ZONING ORDINANCE REQUIRING ALL ACCESSORY STRUCTURES TO HAVE A MAXIMUM OF THREE FEET OF DEPTH FOR EVERY TWO FEET OF FRONTAGE. A motion was entered by Serviss to open the public hearing, and seconded by Tatgenhorst. The Acting Chairman called the motion to a vote and the motion carried unanimously. This topic had been the subject of a prior workshop. Bob Barber noted that although there have never been any issues with structures being built that do not conform to the above sizing, it was felt that an amendment should be made to the zoning ordinance to prevent buildings being built with a 2 to 1 size ratio. Don Thomas reminded the PZC that under the proposed amendment, building a one-car garage would require a variance. With no testimony by the audience, a motion was entered by Tatgenhorst and seconded by Serviss to close the public hearing. The Acting Chairman called the motion to a vote and it carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM V: CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION TO THE BEECHER VILLAGE BOARD ON AN AMENDMENT TO THE BEECHER ZONING ORDINANCE CHANGING THE MAXIMUM DEPTH OF AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE NOT TO EXCEED A 3 TO 2 RATIO FROM THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING. Serviss entered a motion to send a positive recommendation to the Village Board to amend the zoning ordinance changing the maximum depth of an accessory structure to a ratio that will not exceed 3 to 2. The recommendation was based on the following findings of fact: 1) A detached one-car garage would require a variance, 2) linear-looking buildings (i.e. 20' x 40', 30' x 60') are not appropriate for residential areas. Bouchard seconded the motion. The motion was called to a roll call vote and carried unanimously.

Jay Bradarich of Landmark Construction asked to address the PZC to notify them that while constructing the new addition to the nursing home, it was found that the prior architect who had designed the updates had never done the due diligence to determine whether or not the roof over the original portion of the nursing home would be able to withstand the snow load if drifting occurred behind the new roofing façade. The architect had informed Landmark that the studies were done but when Landmark continued to press the architect for the studies, they were never provided. Landmark hired a structural engineering firm to inspect the building and was informed that the bar joists would not be capable of supporting the new drift loading without being reinforced (Letter is attached). Landmark

has since fired the architect who provided the original plans. Bradarich showed new plans for the nursing home that would ensure the safety of the occupants while still updating the look. They would change the design to create metal dome roofs in sections and install raised window fronts to make the building visually appealing. He noted that there would now only be one addition in the front, rather than two. They would do some structural renovation inside the building so that they can add the metal dome roofs without compromising the structure. The main entrance will be in front. The next phase would bring an entrance off of Church Road with a dining room addition and later, an administration wing. A later phase would be an assisted living center.

Other changes would be that the pond will now be a dry pond rather than a wet pond. There will be a canopy covering the front entrance for ambulance pick-up and drop-off.

Bradarich was informed that since this item was not on the Agenda, the PZC would be unable to vote on the topic, but that they would hear it at the next meeting. Several PZC members expressed appreciation that Bradarich had taken these steps to make certain that the safety of the nursing home residents had been accounted for.

AGENDA ITEM VI: JOINT VILLAGE BOARD/PZC WORKSHOP: COMMUNICATION ISSUES BETWEEN THE VILLAGE BOARD AND THE PZC AND WAYS TO STREAMLINE THE VARIANCE AND REZONING PROCESS. The PZC and Village Board held a workshop to try to streamline communications between the boards. After much discussion, it was decided that in the future, petitioners would approach the Village Board with variance requests for the PZC. The Village Board would no longer recommend petitioners to the PZC. They will merely hear a brief overview of the petitioners' requests, and then send them to the PZC without a recommendation, to avoid the appearance of endorsing the requests.

It was decided that applicants for a variance should be provided with an updated checklist of items they need to provide before being seen by the PZC. They should provide drawings or a plat of survey along with their \$750 fee. Most importantly, they should have to prove that their request for a variance is based on a hardship, rather than just wanting something different than what the present zoning ordinance mandates.

At a prior meeting, the PZC voted against having a hearing to amend the fence ordinance. Don Thomas advised that the PZC cannot refuse to hold a hearing. However, if the request for a hearing is deficient in some way, the PZC can refuse the hearing until the deficiency is cured.

A committee was formed including Phil Serviss, Brian Cleary and Gayle Ahrendt to close the loopholes in the fence ordinance. They will go over types of fencing and create story boards. When the committee has come up with recommendations, Phil Serviss will present their findings to the PZC; the PZC can add their recommendations, then Brian Cleary will present their findings to the Village Board and hopefully they can both reach consensus.

AGENDA ITEM VII: NEW BUSINESS. With no new business brought forth, Serviss entered a motion and Bouchard seconded that the meeting stand adjourned. The Acting Chairman called the motion to a vote and it carried unanimously. The meeting stood adjourned at approximately 8:05 pm. The next meeting will be held on February 28, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcy Meyer
Secretary