Gallia County
Planning Commission

Minutes

January 27, 2025

The Gallia County Planning Commission met on Thursday, January 30, 2025 with the following members in attendance: County Commissioner Jay Stapleton, County Commissioner Leslie Henry, and County Commissioner Jeremy Kroll, Nick Mills, Carolyn Wasch-Brown, Tom White, John White, Cole Massie, Josh Sherwood, Jacob Morris, and Shari Hill. Members absent: John McKean. Guests were Paul Hutchins, and Brian Rutherford.

Chairman White brought the meeting to order and established a quorum at 2:04pm.

November 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes: Chairman White asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes. Josh Sherwood made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Carolyn Wasch-Brown. All members voting yea.

Business Discussed:

Reorganization: Chairman White explained the terms of Planning Commission Board Members. He stated that each member is appointed to a 3-year term. Tom continued by stating that our Board member terms have gotten out of line, with the resignations of Board Members over the past few years. Commissioner Henry suggested to go back in time and have the members fulfill the terms of the members who had resigned. Nick explained the history and lack of records. He stated that he was able to back track via the minutes and had sent a list to Tom with the members terms and when they expire.

Commissioner Henry asked when Adam Edwards and Brett Boothe's terms were to ex-pire. Nick replied that those terms were up in 2023. He stated that Paul Hutchins' term is up in 2025. There was discussion on which currently appointed members filled the spots of the members who had resigned. Carolyn stated that her term is up in October 2025. Tom stated that Carolyn's term is the only one that is straight.

Tom asked who the last appointed person was. Nick responded that the last appointed members are Tom White, John White, and Cole Massie. Commissioner Stapleton asked if more than 8 people could be appointed. Tom read through the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) which stated the designated number of members & alternates. Nick stated that he is not sure which members took the spots opened by the resignations. After some discussion, it was decided that John White and Cole Massie took the vacant spots left by Adam Edwards and Brett Boothe. And, to better track appointment terms Commissioner Henry stated that a motion is needed to modify the terms for John White and Cole Massie as being October 2023 to October 2026. Commissioner Kroll made a motion to approve the Board Member and term changes seconded by Carolyn Wasch-Brown. All members voting yea.

Commissioner Kroll made a motion to approve the fulfillment of Paul Hutchins' position with Tom White and to complete the term. Seconded by Carolyn Wasch-Brown. All members voting yea. After some brief discussion Commissioner Stapleton made a motion to keep the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary the same, seconded by Josh Sherwood. All members voting yea.

Robert Harrison Variance (Road Frontage): Paul Hutchins stated that he is representing his client, and they are requesting a variance for lack of road frontage. Tom stated that he was unsure what the rule was for the variance. Nick replied that 85 feet of road frontage is required without a variance. Paul added that they have the lack of 85 feet of road frontage due to the bridge and the way his property lies. Carolyn Wasch-Brown made a motion to approve the variance for the 85 feet of road frontage, seconded by Commissioner Stapleton. All members voting yea. Josh asked Paul about the building site because there is floodplain on the property. Paul stated that the building site is out of the floodplain. There was no further discussion.

Timeframe for Parcel Splits: Nick referenced email correspondence regarding this topic. He added that since we are now charging for parcel splits, he feels some type of expected timeframe should be implemented. Nick also stated that he is unsure of what to recommend because he is not sure of the Health Department's process for reviewing. He explained the process for Shari (floodplain) and himself (Planning Commission). Josh explained the process for the Health Department and what would trigger a site inspection, which can add to the timeframe they are able to review/approve the splits. Josh also added that they are required by law to do other inspections outside of Planning Commission that take priority over the split sheets.

Nick asked if 5 business days is adequate. There was discussion as to whether the entire process could be completed in 5 business days. Commissioner Kroll and Stapleton stated that they feel 5 days is kind of short. Commissioner Stapleton asked Paul his experience from other counties. Paul responded that Meigs County can be just a couple of hours, he said Lawrence and Jackson Counties are hit or miss on when he will get them back (it can be as long as 2 weeks). He also added that no other county he works in has a parcel split sheet that goes through different departments. Nick explained the history and reasoning of the parcel sheet process.

There was more discussion on a reasonable timeframe to return the split sheets back to the surveyor/owner. Commissioner Kroll stated that he likes 10 business days. Commissioner Stapleton agreed that he prefers 10 business days and added that we can revisit this if it doesn't work. Cole Massie made a motion to implement a 10-business day turnaround for parcel splits. Josh Sherwood seconded. All members voting yea.

Rules of Procedure Update: Nick read through his edits and what he thought needed to be updated. He continued by stating the committee hasn't returned their edits to him at the time of the meeting. He suggested changing the meeting schedule and if the end date of Board Member terms could be changed from October to end of December or January. Tom stated to make the changes and send to the Board so that can vote during the next meeting.

Cole Massie updated everyone of tax abatement program. He stated that it is now live everywhere but Crown City. He added that Crown City is close to adopting them. Cole added that the abatement program is a 10-year program with a 75% abatement up to **$265,000.00**. He said the Commissioners voted to adopt this to incentivize people to build in Gallia County.

Cole also stated that there is much information about this online, including the process and application. He added that everyone must follow the procedure. Cole stated that residential is the bulk of whose utilizing this program. He said that industrial **will be assessed** at on a case-by-case basis. He advised everyone to keep this on their radar. There was discussion on this program and what incorporated areas haven't adopted this. Cole responded that the villages of Vinton, Cheshire, and Centerville have not adopted this program. John White asked Cole what the abatement is. Cole responded that it's a 75% reduction up to **$265,000.00 for residential property**. Commissioner Stapleton added that you can build a barn or a garage **on residential property** and take advantage of this program as well. Commissioner Kroll stated that the Commissioners Office has sent a few people to the Auditor's Office to take advantage of this program.

Tom asked if there any more new business. There was none. Before adjourning, Tom stated that he doesn't see how the Planning Commission can function without an engineer. He continued by stating that the first person who wants to build a subdivision, this body will be hard pressed, and it can put us in a very tight spot. Commissioner Stapleton stated that it has been noted. Tom replied he just wanted to make everyone aware of this.

At 2:43pm Commissioner Stapleton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Josh Sherwood seconded the motion. All members voting yea.