Gallia County
Planning Commission

Minutes

September 26, 2024

The Gallia County Planning Commission met on Thursday September 26, 2024 with the following members in attendance: County Commissioners Jay Stapleton, and Leslie Henry, Nick Mills, Shari Hill, Tom White, John White, Cole Massie, Jacob Morris, and Josh Sherwood. Members absent: John McKean, David Smith, and Carolyn Wasch-Brown. Guests were Robert Jacks and Jeremy Kroll

Nick Mills brought the meeting to order and established a quorum at 2:24pm.

Appointment of Chairperson: Josh Sherwood stated again that his Board of Supervisors stated that they can be members of the Planning Commission Board, they do not want them to hold office positions. There was some discussion. Nick explained the duties of the position. John White nominated Tom White as Chairman. There was further discussion as to whom will be the chairman. Jay Stapleton asked if Nick Mills would be the Chairman as he is doing the work anyway. Nick responded that he is secretary and wasn't sure if he could hold 2 offices; but stated that he would be the Chairman. Nick stated that there is a motion on the floor. Jay seconded the motion on the floor nominating Tom White as Chairman. Nick asked Tom if he accepted, and Tom responded that he accepts. With a motion (John White) and a second (Jay Stapleton) on the floor, a vote was taken. All members voting yea.

January 25, 2024 Meeting Minutes: Chairman White asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes. He also added that he did not have a copy. Josh Sherwood stated that they were email prior to the meeting. Nick stated that he can start providing hard copies. Tom stated that was not necessary. Josh Sherwood made a motion, seconded by John White to approve the minutes. All members voting yea.

Business Discussed:

1-Year Expiration Time Limit (Section 305-3): Nick explained to the Board that in the past month, there have been quite a few parcel splits that are older than 1 year. He stated that some of these have been 10-15 years old. He stated that after hearing how much a total property survey costs a property owner, that he reviews the current property boundaries around the proposed split and accepts them to save the property owners money by not having a resurvey. He stated that when he took over the positions that he was told that this rule hasn't been enforced (or charging the fee for parcel splits). Nick stated that he doesn't know why someone would pay to have a survey and not finish the

process: it could be they forgot, there was a death in the family, etc. Jeremy Kroll stated that there can be many reasons why someone wouldn't finish the parcel split process. Nick stated that one parcel split he did require a new survey because it was part of a sheriff's sale, and the surrounding property had issues. Jay asked Nick why these were not enforced. Nick responded that when he took the department over, he was told that they were not collecting fees and was not enforcing the year expiration limit. Nick stated that after speaking with Adam with the Engineer's Office, we had come to a consensus that since there was no expiration date on any of the plat reviews or parcel split sheets, to go ahead and approve them. The County Engineer has been placing an expiration date on his stamp during the plat reviews. Nick also added that the Auditor's conveyance standards are being updated that will require new splits to be filed/recorded within 1 year. Robert Jacks spoke up and stated that this update is in the works but has not become official at this time. Tom asked if there was any further discussion? Jay asked that since this is already the regulations, do we even need to vote? Nick stated no, because it's already a regulation. Jay stated that we should document in the meeting minutes that the 1-year expiration time limit (section 305-3) will henceforth be enforced.

2. Digital Signature Split Sheet: Nick stated that during the parcel split process, that there have been a few instances where the split sheet, due to repeated scanning, gets degraded to the point of being illegible. He stated that he does not know if original signatures are required. He added that he has spoken with the other departments that are a part of the process and they do have the ability to sign the forms digitally. There was some discussion on the legality of digital signatures. It was decided to request an opinion from the county prosecutor to see if approving the parcel splits digitally doesn't violate Ohio Revised Code (ORC).

3. Subdivision Regulations Update Process: Nick stated that he investigated how frequently other counties have updated their subdivision regulations. He read through 22 Ohio counties and the dates of their last subdivision regulations update. The dates ranged from 2001 (Athens County) to 2023 (Clermont County). Nick also said he read through some of the county's regulations to see if we could cherry pick ideas instead of reinventing the wheel. Tom stated that we shouldn't cherry pick but should hire a broker firm to update them because it needs to happen fast. Jay asked how we would pay for it. Tom responded that there is still some LATCF funds (Local Assistance Tribal Contingency Fund). There was then discussion on how to proceed with payment. Cole stated that subdivision regulations can be burdensome and can impede development. He stated that he feels that the regulations should adhere to the ORC but be less burdensome to have more of a chance to encourage development. He suggested a firm that can develop/revise the regulations to fit our area of the state as opposed to Columbus where there is a bigger population of people. Cole also suggested having a checklist for developers to follow for minor subdivisions and major subdivisions. He stated that this can make the process easier and could encourage development. Tom suggested implementing fees for approving parcel splits. He asked Nick about where the current funding goes. Nick responded that it goes towards his salary, paper/printing

costs, any incidental travel, etc. He stated that when we (SWCD) were approached about taking over the Planning Commission Department we were told that the responsibilities were 3 hours per week. Nick stated that it's much more than 3 hours per week and that is how he based his budget request on. There was discussion on how to proceed and what the current rules state. Cole asked if the $10.00 fee (that is currently not being collected) is per split or for the entire process. Nick stated the way he interprets the rule, it's a $10.00 fee per split charged by just the Planning Commission. Leslie stated that we should inquire to Bricker Graydon to get a cost estimate on updating the regulations. Jay agreed that we should contact them. Tom stated that he would inquire with them to get an estimate. Jay and Leslie also suggested researching what other Planning Commission's charge throughout the surrounding counties. Jay asked if the Planning Commission had a bank account. Nick responded that they did not. Nick also stated that when we start charging fees that there will have to be a treasurer report. John White suggested that that with the implementation/enforcement of any fees, there should be an audit committee to ensure the account balances out each year.

Tom asked if there any more new business. There was none.

At 2:56pm Jay Stapleton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John White seconded the motion. All members voting yea.