

**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 25, 2003 MEETING  
TUESDAY AT 3:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Howard Balzer, Neil Distelhorst, Glen Hymer, and Hulda Moffitt.

Members Absent: Joyce Benedetto

Others Present: Tracy Hatmaker, Township Administrator  
Connie Swisher, Township Zoning Inspector

Call to Order: Chairman Howard Balzer called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes: Moved by Neil Distelhorst, seconded by Howard Balzer, and unanimously approved to table approval of the Minutes of the October 28, 2003 Meeting until the December meeting. Instead of being mailed to Commission members prior to November 25, the October Minutes were distributed at the meeting. As a result, additional time was requested for review.

Old Business: Residential Conservation Zoning Districts

In order to align existing zoning code with the Prairie Township Comprehensive Plan, the addition of three residential conservation zoning districts to the Township Zoning Resolution is being proposed and is the subject of ongoing discussion. Although the Comprehensive Plan is a detailed development guideline, it does not have the status of an enforceable legal document. Therefore, in order to codify the development principles set forth in the Comprehensive Plan, they must be incorporated into the Zoning Resolution.

DISCUSSION MATERIALS

Mr. Hatmaker and Ms. Swisher provided the Commission with materials intended to be the basis for a discussion agenda that will lead up to the writing of new Zoning Resolution text.

- *General Outline:* applicable to all three residential conservation districts (see table on page 2); and
- *Development Standards Outline:* one scenario applicable to each of the three districts.

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Residential Conservation Districts PUD Overlays	Map Code (CP-p.26)	Transitional Area	Open Space	Base Density
Rural	White	No	60%	0.2 du/acre
Low-Density Suburban	Blue	Yes	50%	1.0 du/acre
Medium-Density Suburban	Yellow	Yes	40%	4.0 du/acre

Highlights of main talking points on the two outlines follow:

Residential Conservation Districts Discussion Outline	
Section 1	Overlay Area Description
Section 2	Definition of Terms
Section 3	Conservation Design Approach
	A. Conservation Development Design Objectives
	B. Incorporation of Objectives into Project Design
Section 4	Density
	A. Determining Density in Conservation Districts
	(1) Base Rural
	(2) Base Low-Density Suburban
	(3) Base Medium Density Suburban
	B. Development Bonuses
	(1) Level #1 Bonus: Density Bonus – up to 10%. Open Space Reduction – 4%.
	(2) Level #2 Bonus: Density Bonus - up to 20%. Open Space Reduction – 8%
Section 5	Planning and Review of Residential Conservation Development
	A. On-site Meeting
	B. Preparation and Submission of Development Plan
	C. Pre-hearing Meeting with Technical Staff
	D. Trustees or Zoning Commission Hearing
	E. Subdivision Review by Franklin County
	F. Zoning Compliance Application and Approval
Section 6	Development Standards (see separate outline)
Section 7	Ownership and Maintenance of Open Space
For complete details, please refer to original source documents.	
Source Documents:	
Title:	Conservation Districts Discussion Outlines
Author(s):	Tracy Hatmaker and Connie Swisher
Date Issued:	November 25, 2003

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DETERMINING DENSITY

The discussion at the meeting focused primarily on determining density for the conservation districts. Density standards presented in the outline for the Zoning Commission's consideration are as follows:

*Density for Base Rural*

- Option 1: an applicant may use a base density of no more than 0.2 dwelling unit per acre (1 unit per 5 acres); or
- Option 2: an applicant may prepare a "yield plan" showing that an additional number of units, up to an equivalent of 0.4 dwelling unit per acre (1 unit per 2.5 acres) could be developed on the property given current Franklin County Board of Health guidelines.

*Density for Low-Density Suburban*

- Base density established by the Comprehensive Plan is 1 dwelling unit per acre.

*Density for Medium-Density Suburban*

- Base density established by the Comprehensive Plan is a maximum of 4 dwelling units per acre.

DEVELOPMENT BONUSES

The outline introduced the concept of density and open space bonuses, which can be earned on one of two levels in each of the conservation districts. Each level will stipulate a percentage that density may be increased and open space decreased--provided that the developer provides prescribed administrative and design amenities that offset the increase in dwelling units and decrease in open space. The purpose of development bonuses is, where appropriate, to integrate flexibility and negotiability in the zoning code.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Swisher and Mr. Hatmaker counseled that a critical task for the Zoning Commission is to establish minimum development standards for each residential conservation district. These standards will drive future development in the Township and differentiate it from that occurring in nearby Columbus.

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Members of the Commission were asked to study both outlines, especially the development standards for each district, in preparation for discussion at the next meeting.

New Business:            Change of Meeting Date

Moved by Howard Balzer, seconded by Neil Distelhorst, and unanimously approved to change the next meeting date from Tuesday, December 23 to Tuesday, December 16, 2003 at 3:00 p.m. (no time change). Because of attendance issues related to the holiday season, the meeting was moved ahead one week.

Announcement(s):      None

Next Meeting:            The next meeting of the Zoning Commission will be Tuesday, December 16, 2003, 3:00 p.m., at the Township Hall, 23 Maple Drive.

Adjournment:            Howard Balzer adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Submitted by:            Hulda Moffitt, Clerk

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