

**PRAIRIE TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE JUNE 26, 2007 MEETING**

Members Present: Howard Balzer, Glen Hymer, Christopher Finn and Judy Stalter

Members Absent: Hulda Moffitt

Others Present: Connie Swisher Zoning Inspector, Dana Scott Zoning Clerk, David Lowell, Franklin County Soil and Water

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Howard Balzer, Chairman, at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes:

Chairman, Mr. Balzer asked for a motion to approve the May 22, 2007 Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes.

Ms. Stalter moved to approve the May 22, 2007 Zoning Commission minutes. Mr. Hymer seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved. Roll call as follows:

Howard Balzer: Aye
Glen Hymer: Aye
Judy Stalter: Aye
Christopher Finn: Aye

Pam Williams asked why the minutes did not reflect a conversation the Board had regarding using some of the zoning funds to use outside council to help do some of the code work?

Chairman, Mr. Balzer asked if the conversation was after the Board adjourned.

Ms. Scott stated she thought the discussion was after the meeting had ended but could check the tape.

Old Business: None

New Business: Mr. Balzer introduced David Lowell, GIS Specialist with Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District to the Board.

Mr. Lowell gave a Power Point Presentation of Set-Back Design and Riparian Set-backs. He also provided handout material to the Board of information being used by Franklin County Development Dept. for amendments to the Franklin County Zoning Code.

Mr. Lowell gave a handout to the board members and audience "The Big Darby Creek Watershed Riparian Setbacks Summary" which will be attached to the minutes for the record.

Mr. Hymer: What kind of vegetation will be in this 100 foot?

Mr. Lowell: What ever is there now. This only applies to new development.

A short discussion followed regarding the types of vegetation that will grow along the waterways.

Mr. Lowell explained what types of trees would look appealing and be ecologically good and better the streams.

Mr. Finn: That formula was it a standard formula or was it specific for the Big Darby Creek?

Mr. Lowell: That formula has changed, currently that is the formula that is in the EPA's storm water permit and the 208 plan for the Darby.

Ms. Williams: Asked if the nitrates from the farming around the Darby were being addressed.

Mr. Lowell: In some places yes, but that is part of the function for these set-backs.

Ms. Swisher explained the reason for Mr. Lowell's visit and presentation is to better inform us for our task on the implementation of the riparian set-backs into the zoning code which is required by the Darby Accord. The Articles that will need to be amended are Article 2 Definitions, Article 15 Floodplain, Article 21 Darby Creek Critical Resource District, Article 4 Non-conforming and Article 5 Administration section. Mr. Weiner with Franklin County has recommended we replace Article 21 "The Darby Creek Critical Resource District" with this new Stream Setback amendment.

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: I think we should be in line with the County's.

Ms. Stalter: I agree, that would make it consistent. We still have to do the other amendments.

Ms. Swisher: Do you want the Darby Creek Critical Resource District changed entirely or added to? The County has completed the work on their code revisions and they have suggested we change Article 21 entirely. I can meet with Ben and go over these changes I just need your direction.

Mr. Finn: What's the change actually going to be if we remove the Article?

Ms. Swisher: Not much, I did not see the purpose of omitting it. We had a short discussion about that several months ago, we can omit entirely or we can add the riparian set-back to it whatever the Board wants to do. Although we will have to make a decision on which formula to use for the set-back and for enforcement purposes it is much easier to use the floodplain maps.

Mr. Hymer: I'd like to keep it uniform with the County's.

Mr. Finn: As much as I'd like to use the equation I think it is going to be too much. I understand it and have a mathematical brain and still find it difficult.

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: I say go with the floodplain maps.

Mr. Finn: I'll second that.

Roll Call:

Ms. Stalter: Aye

Mr. Finn: Aye

Mr. Hymer: Aye

Mr. Balzer: Aye

Mr. Whyte: If Prairie Township uses that method and other Townships and Franklin County use other methods, that would really put people in a bind if they own a piece of property in several jurisdictions. Will that be a problem with conformity throughout the watershed when the Town Center starts to develop?

A short discussion followed regarding the three set-back formulas and development in the watershed.

Ms. Swisher: I still recommend we use the floodplain maps for the reasons I've stated. The Township will always have an updated FEMA map available to them and a floodplain coordinator.

Ms. Williams: How often are the floodplain maps updated?

Ms. Swisher: More frequently now than in the past. We usually get updated floodplain maps about every 3-4 years.

Ms. Williams: So that would be your most current form of reference.

Mr. Finn: He said it himself, the formulas will change multiple times, why would you want to use something that will constantly change?

Ms. Swisher: If the County uses the formula and we use the floodplain map as a point of distance, the difference cannot be much more than 10 feet. So, the Board has agreed to use the Franklin County changes, the floodplain map method and do you want to replace Article 21 or add to it?

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: I think we've decided to add to it haven't we?

Ms. Swisher: But changing the set-back within?

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: Right.

Ms. Swisher informed the Board that Hulda M. was appointed to the Board.

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: Stated he would like to appoint her secretary to the Board.

Mr. Hymer: Second

Roll Call:

Ms. Stalter: Aye

Mr. Hymer: Aye

Mr. Finn: Aye

Mr. Balzer: Aye

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: Do we have to have a public meeting for these changes?

Ms. Swisher: Yes, and don't forget now these changes will have to go to the Darby Panel also. We also have the comp plan update, so we'll send several through at once.

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: Next meeting is July 24, 2007

Mr. Whyte: The Darby Panel has no items on the agenda for July.

Chairman, Mr. Balzer: No other business, meeting adjourned.