

Ford River Township Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting minutes  
Meeting date August 4, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Nelson.

Present were: Mr. Wellman, Mr. Fettig, Mr. Ciminskie, Mr. Lipens.

Also in attendance: Twenty citizens and Supervisor Fountaine.

**Public Hearing** – Ness – private airfield.

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:02. Comments were requested.

- I live close to the property and feel it is unsafe. The owner of the plane does not personally own all of the land being used. There is no proper control of access to the property, There have been four crashes of small planes in July with one starting a fire.
- Melinda Carlson – I own property along the proposed airstrip. I bought it for peace and quiet. I have 40 acres and planes cause noise and safety issues.
- Erickson – This is like what I have in Bark River. There is not much noise. The Bark River landing strip is 1,356 feet long.
- Mark Ankevich – Flight mechanic – one of the recent crashes was because the plane was loaded overweight, another flew into a transformer. The Ishpeming crash did not cause a fire. The plane proposed for this landing strip can take off in 300 feet. Planes are required to be certified for noise.
- Ness – There will be very limited use of this landing strip. Perhaps once per week. There is little noise. There is a video available (shown to Planning Commission members)
- Melinda Carlson – There is more noise at take off? Yes – only lasts a few minutes. (Ness)  
This is landing close to my house. I am concerned with the noise and the safety. Why not use the airport, which is only a few minutes away? Answer (Ness) The plane has special landing gear and tires that are not good on pavement – they are made for grass. Tires wear faster on pavement. There is also extra cost for a hanger. What about fuel in site? (Ness) I will be bringing fuel in 100 gallons at a time on my truck.
- We are planning on putting a house on property near the landing strip. 200 feet on each side is not enough land.
- When the Planning Commission contacted the FAA they stated that it could be done on the proposed 466 feet but it was risky.
- A question was asked if this was allowed to be done on an easement or if the property needed to be owned by the applicant?
- One end of the proposed landing strip is a heavily populated area.
- The Township ordinance requires that all property owners on a private road must approve any special use. All property owners have not agreed to this use of the property.
- Question (Ness) One person on a private road can stop this activity? Yes according to the Township Ordinance.
- Question – Why did Ness put all this time and money into the field without the required permits? Ness – This is no different than other recreational vehicles – like a four-wheeler.

With no other comments or questions the planning Commission went through the requirements in section 604. Article A. had a motion and second that the standard was met but only two votes agreed and three denied. Articles B, C, D, and I, did not attain a motion that the standards were met.

With five of the nine standards determined to not be met there was a motion by Mr. Fettig to deny the Special Use because of a failure to satisfy the standards in Ordinance section 604, A second by Mr. Lippens. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Lippens-yes, Mr. Wellman-yes, Mr. Nelson-yes, Mr. Fettig-yes, Mr. Ciminskie-abstain.

The public hearing was closed at 7:35.

### Public Comment on agenda items –

-Is the airfield dead? No- the issue can still be taken to court.

### Minutes

Planning Commission meeting minutes of July 7, 2016 minutes were approved on a motion by Mr. Fettig, seconded by Mr. Lippens. Unanimous.

### Permits –

1. Lynn Laporte E5154 Hwy M35 009-064-040-00 Turning an existing deck into a 3 seasons room 14'x24'
2. Barb Flath 5355 Portage Point 009-530-104-00 Replacing old garage w/ new garage 40'x45'
3. Jason Wery 1909 F Road 009-110-008-10 16'x24' accessory bldng
4. Dan Weber E5054 Hwy M-35 009-064-056-00 12'X20' accessory bldng w/ 4' porch
5. Waldsmith Vacant parcel 009-126-001-30 24'x24'-1 story w/ loft

### Unfinished Business –

**Preparation for ordinance change –** (other issues have been settled and are not included as unfinished.)

1. Definition of a Private Landing strip and ordinance requirements – **Additional new language has been proposed to the language already evaluated.**

5. Changes to 412 “lot of record.” Change to “any new lot.” **OK.** Change 20’ easement to 66’

\*Remove all of 607-A and renumber all of the remainder of 607

\*Remove definition #82 (This needs to remain because it is referenced in section 406)

\*Change current 607-C to add the word “new” 607-C becomes “All new private roads...” Ordinance needs to agree with the Land Division Act as to number of houses that creates a Private Road as opposed to a shared driveway. Change private roads to 3 or more homes not 5. **New Discussion – the vehicle code defines private road as more than one home. Is the vehicle code pertinent to zoning and land use?** It was discussed and determined that the ordinance would remain at three or more for private roads.

7. Solar power collectors, Special use permits required – Freestanding solar collectors require permit. Definition of “freestanding solar collectors.” **OK** (Free standing means having internal/integral supporting structure) Wall or roof mounted solar panels are a permitted use. Still unanswered, should house attached solar panels require a permit? Get new language and opinion from CUPPAD. **New Discussion –** This should apply to all buildings not just residences. Solar panels would be a permitted use if flush with the roof or wall. If there is a change to the roof or wall a permit is required.

Supervisor Fountaine will get a clean copy of all the proposed changes for the Board.

-Wayne Caron Permit violation. On hold per Judge Parks until October. The house has been torn down.

### New Business –

-The cell tower permit approved last year is still not complete. The ordinance has only a required start date, not a completion date. They plan on completion by March 2017.

- Questions on Fishery Point property

-A fifth-wheel is parked there and is being used for a living space. This is allowed in R-1 for a limited time during a construction project. A permit is required.

-The awning violates the side set back. Require that the awning not be extended.

-A snow fence has been erected - this does not meet the aesthetic requirements as well as it not being a permitted fence. It was also noted that the posts used in this fence create a significant danger to those doing construction.

- There is a potential buyer for Brothertons Resort. They were at the Township Board meeting to make sure they would be able to continue to operate the resort if they bought it. This is a grandfathered operation and is allowed to continue.

**Communications** – None

**Public Comment** – Lisa Hammerberg introduced herself. She is running for the position of Township Clerk.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Ciminskie second by Mr. Lippens. Unanimous.  
Adjourn 8:35.

**Parking Lot items**

Monitor / review the Master Plan. (Review in 2019)

Marihuana Ordinance - review as law is clarified.

Wind generators

Create a list of non-conforming private roads.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Ciminskie". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.