

**Village of Northport  
Planning Commission  
February 15, 2023  
MINUTES**

**Call to Order, Roll Call**

**Chair Arbury** called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Members present:** Arbury, Newell, Caudill, and Wessell. Gale via zoom.

**Members absent:** Woomer, Cavendish

**Public Present**

Several members present in person and via Zoom

**Staff Present**

Joni Scott, Zoning Administrator

**Approval of Minutes**

January 12, 2023 minutes were approved as written, **moved** by Commissioner Newell, **seconded** by Commissioner Caudill, **motion carried**

January 18, 2023 minutes were approved as amended, **moved by** Commissioner Newell, **seconded by** Commissioner Caudill, **motion carried**

**Approval of Agenda**

Chair Arbury added Master Plan – determine level of update - add to New Business B

**Correspondence**

Chair Arbury shared:

- Invitation from Kathy Garthe on behalf of the Leelanau Township Foundation to join their bi-monthly Impact meeting on February 27 from 6 – 8 p.m., via Zoom.
- Arbury shared with PC members an email from Truda Galla of upcoming trainings.

**Public Comment**

- Mary Cermak, N. Shore Dr. – asked how public comment would be gathered and if the letters in the 7<sup>th</sup> St Dropbox would be included. Chair Arbury replied, indicating that all in-person comments that have been included in minutes will be included, as well as all

letters in the Dropbox. She also indicated that individuals could continue to make comment to the Village Council as well as at a joint PC/VC meeting.

- Gerald Schatz – Suggested that moving forward, the Planning Commission should consider cooperating with the Township assessor as a way of understanding our housing stock and how it's taxed.
- Karl Wizinsky – agreed with Jerry that the Village, in its fiduciary role should be involved with Township Board of Review. He also asked if the Village allowed planting of trees under power lines.

## **Old business**

Review Planning Commission Work Document – no questions (in Dropbox)

### Zoning Update

- Review changes Articles 1 – 3: No changes needed
- Review chart of uses permitted for zoning districts – hold for next meeting
- Continue working on Articles as time permits – hold for next meeting
- Update: The Zoning Administrator updated the Board on correspondence from Arthur Mullen. We should have answers to our questions by next week, as she specifically requested the answers be put in writing.
- Next steps – schedule a special work session to continue working on the Zoning Ordinance – specifically working on incorporating answers to outstanding questions, D1 Development, and the land use chart recommended by Mullin.

### Village Owned 7<sup>th</sup> Street –

- Appraisal update – appraisals are in the Dropbox. There was no further discussion.
- Using the evaluation tool, commissioners discussed each of the three proposed uses, coming to consensus of a first draft for uses 1 & 3. After much discussion, the commissioners decided to take another look at option 2 – Partial Combo A. It was determined that commissioners had different interpretations of what uses would be allowed on the portion of the land left in its natural state. Some thought it was intended to potentially be accessible via a trail etc. Others thought the intention was for it to be put into conservation with no use. As a result, the group decided that we would go back and take a look at number 2 and re-do the evaluation – looking at it both ways. The plan is to continue working on the evaluation tool at our next meeting. (See Draft in the March Dropbox)

Commissioner Gale **moved** to extend the meeting to complete the agenda, **seconded by** Wessell, **motion carried**

## New Business

- Review Annual Report – two changes were recommended. One spelling error and a recommendation to reformat to ensure clarity that our Zoning Administrator is listed as staff, not a board member. Commission Newell **moved** that the Planning Commission present the annual report to the Village Council, **seconded by** Caudill, **motion passed**.
- Master Plan – Using information provided by Commissioner Gale in December, the group discussed what level of update is needed, or not, for our 2023 five-year review. After good discussion, the board agreed that our Master Plan should be updated, but is not in need of a complete rewrite. At our next meeting the Board will begin identifying areas in need of updating.

## Reports

- Zoning Administrator: Issued one land use permit in the past month.
- Infrastructure Committee Report: Chair Arbury shared a conversation from the last infrastructure meeting where she sought clarification as to the history of the PC chair attending and reporting on Infrastructure. The committee indicated that this began as a way for the PC chair to be aware of happenings with regard to Infrastructure. They also indicated that there was/is not a need for a report, but attendance from the chair is always welcome. With this information, Chair Arbury suggested that she will still attend, but will not be submitting a report to infrastructure and recommends that she share things that are relevant to PC as they come up.
- Trustee report: Commissioner Gale reported that most of the three and half-hour Village Council meeting was devoted to the budget approval process. There will be a special meeting on February 28 to get through the additional agenda items that weren't addressed as well as to approve the budget.
- Tree Committee: Commissioner Newell indicated that the committee is preparing for Arbor Day. Commissioner Newell **moved** that the PC ask the Village Council to support the Arbor Day Proclamation, **seconded by** Wessell, **motion carried**.

## Public Comment:

- Mary Cermak suggested that we consider traffic patterns with regard to the 7<sup>th</sup> St proposed uses, especially in light of the fact that thunder Lane is directly across the street.
- Joanne Swanson thanked the PC their hard work on the Village-owned 7<sup>th</sup> Street property review and evaluation process. She suggested, however, that more needs to be included regarding the environmental impact of doing anything other than leaving it in its natural state. Areas needing consideration include: environmental regulations, impact on water filtration, natural drainage, and wildlife. Ms. Swanson questioned why we asked who is benefitted, but didn't ask who is going to be harmed. She also

suggested that there are deed restrictions on the property that means any proceeds in excess of expenses have to be accounted for by the state and local governments. Lastly, she asked the PC to think about what has already been spent.

**Commissioner Comment:**

- Commissioner Newell suggested that water flow on the 7<sup>th</sup> Street property is something to take into account.
- Commissioner Wessell shared upcoming training opportunities, specifically Zoning Essentials in March and a Master Plan in-person workshop in Mt. Pleasant. Ms. Scott confirmed that there is funding available for professional development.

**Motion** to adjourn meeting by **Commissioner Newell, seconded by Caudill, motion carried.**

Meeting closed at 8:29 p.m.

Next regular meeting March 15, 2023

Minutes submitted by:  
Nicole Arbury