



# CITY OF CONNEAUT

## HOUSING/ZONING OFFICE

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### **Planning Commission Meeting Minutes May 7, 2019**

The Conneaut Planning Commission met for their regular monthly meeting on May 7, 2019 beginning at 6:00 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Role was called; in attendance were Ms. Notte, Mr. Zingaro and Mrs. Gaugh and Mr. Sedmak. Mr. Zingaro asked for a motion to excuse Mrs. Parlongo and Mrs. Spencer. Mr. Sedmak made motion and Mrs. Gaugh seconded the motion. Roll was called - all approved – motion carries.

When the March 5, 2019 meeting was held, the meeting was recorded by a court reporter and the minutes were submitted last month as that court report. At that time, it was discovered that the court reporter only reported on the minutes concerning the O'Reilly Auto Parts portion of the meeting. Minutes of the first part of the meeting were compiled, which concerned the outdoor storage at Gateway Plaza. Mr. Zingaro asked for a motion to approve these minutes. Ms. Notte made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Sedmak. All approved, motion carried.

Mr. Zingaro then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2019 meeting. Motion to approve was made by Mrs. Gaugh and seconded by Mr. Sedmak. All were in favor, motion carried.

**New Business** – Metro Parks represented by Larry Frimerman, Bob Best, Board President and Brett Bellas, Operations Manager

Mr. Frimerman shared maps of Metro Parks with the Planning Commission Board that is a part of and a reflection of the Comprehensive Plan which is to create a connection and protection for Conneaut Creek and a connection to permit access for fisherman, people just interested in getting to the creek, hiking or walking and be able to connect the streams with downtown and ultimately all the way out to Camp Pete, so that is the big picture. We were able to obtain some grants, mostly one hundred (100%) percent grants covering all of the costs of acquisition for/through water resources restoration sponsorship through the Ohio EPA and there is a capital bill project and an "Inleiu"(sp) fee project all of which are hundred (100%) percent funding, which made it easy. This property the one we are referring too, is the only one that we have any acquisition costs associated with, just so you know it looks like we have spent a lot of the public's money and we haven't. We

have leveraged probably 1.3 million dollars through each of those totals. This is going to be an anchor for that, the plan is to have this be an opportunity for hiking and connection for your bike trail and going over the arch bridge. It is a good gateway into downtown or from downtown to what will be a really lovely setting and park.

Mr. Sedmak – Are you going to be doing renovations to the bridge

Mr. Frimerman – That is your bridge

Mrs. Brown- Jim Hockaday has plans for the bridge

Mr. Frimerman – The key is that for us to have interpretive signage and access, we will need the parking and trails and that is exactly what we are providing. With that, he asked Brett to walk the Planning Commission Board through details on parking.

Mr. Bellas – Basically the foot print of the old house that we demoed – what we are planning to do is to come in down the driveway and where the porch is from Mill Rd. to the edge of the parking lot is roughly fifteen (15) feet, that is where the sidewalk came in (showing on overhead GIS view). The front porch area will be the beginning of our parking area. The area that was disturbed from the demolishing, we will only be taking out about another fifteen (15) to twenty (20) feet going back towards the oil well and basically graveling the entire parking lot with 304 base with 411 on top and letting that sit and having a parking area. It's a very simple parking lot, just stone and it is going to shed the water toward the big tree to your left, everything is slopped that way, going into the natural run off the same way the house did.

Mrs. Brown – Jim Hockaday and Shawn Aiken (Ct Consultants) said that the gravel parking lot will be more porous than the house was.

Mr. Zingaro- Is that located in a flood plain

Ms. Shubitowski – I have heard that house has flooded numerous times

Mr. Bellas/Mr. Frimerman – I understand the basement of the house did but the gravel parking lot will not be affected by the water and it will drain off. That is the extent of the parking lot. I did send sign details and blueprints.

Mrs. Brown – Where is the sign and kiosk placement

Mr. Bellas – The kiosk will be back over here (showing on the GIS overhead) basically when someone comes to the park the first thing, they want to do is see the rules and regulations of the park and where the trails go. The entrance sign is being proposed where the sidewalk went in (in this area here – looking at overhead on GIS)

Mr. Zingaro – Will the sign have to go before ZBA

Mrs. Brown – No – it is a standard sign

Mr. Sedmak – Are you going to make that sign visible from Rte. 7

Mr. Bellas – Unfortunately the building across the street will block the visibility of the sign

Mr. Frimerman – What you will probably want is a directional sign

Mr. Zingaro – What about the Kiosk

Mr. Bellas - It is a giant information board that is standard throughout all the Metro Parks

Board – They were discussing areas that had Kiosks amongst themselves (inaudible)

Mr. Zingaro – What about the Boardwalk

Mr. Bellas – The boardwalk will come off of the parking lot and run down toward the Conneaut Creek – showing the trail of the boardwalk on the GIS overhead and its about 352 feet long. The boardwalk is pre-fab boardwalk and it sits on 12 to 18-inch plates and each plate is adjustable. We are installing one in Harpers field this year. We used something similar in Geauga County and they have had no problems. The framing is galvanized and 2X6 treated lumber going across. We will need to pound it into the ground as you are not aloud to do any drilling into it and it will be no more that twenty-four (24) inches off the ground with railings.

Ms. Gaugh – Is it similar to the boardwalk at the beach

Mr. Frimerman – Yes. This boardwalk is very flexible and adaptable for the setting. It can be moved if needed, water will run underneath and if it happens, the water can run over top of the boardwalk as well without damaging anything

Mr. Zingaro – Is it open 365 days a year

Mr. Frimerman – Why not

Mr. Sedmak – What is your completion date

Mr. Bellas – Once everything is cleared for permits, we will start right away

Mr. Zingaro – The Board would like it in writing from CT Consultants that the storm water calculations are good for the driveway, other than that I see no problem with this issue.

Mr. Zingaro – I will entertain a motion to approve the Metro Parks Sign, Kiosk, Boardwalk and gravel parking lot located at 431 Mill Rd., Parcel ID # 12-313-00-013-00.

Mr. Sedmak – Made motion to approve Metro Parks project

Mrs. Gaugh – Second the motion

Roll was called – All Approved – Motion Carries.

### **Old Business: Bed & Breakfast Best Practices**

Mr. Zingaro – We need a definition before we do anything else

Mrs. Hopkins – I have a resource book and printed out from the American Planning Association that is called “The Definitions for Planning” and what they have done is collected definitions from around the United States and there is no analysis in terms of what is a good definition or bad definition, they just give you examples of what other communities have used and they are for your review and consideration.

Mr. Zingaro – I looked at North Perry and it was quite interesting and simple

Mrs. Gaugh – Agreed – she liked the definition too

Mr. Zingaro – Mindy as we looked over your report, which was excellent by the way – could you give us a little background on what you found

Ms. Notte- I think there a number of properties and different types whether it is a big house or small house, a beach cottage or a traditional Bed and Breakfast ...

Mr. Zingaro- Looking at the pictures; this is Grandpa’s Castle correct

Ms. Notte – Yes that is a traditional Bed and Breakfast – I think there is a lot of diversity, there is a lot more that we thought we had once I started looking at multiple sites and I am sure there are some that are flying under the radar that are just not on websites and people know about them from word of mouth. There are a lot of people using this right now to offer more beds in Conneaut and from what I have seen, I was pleasantly surprised in terms of the condition of things as they were reflected, but not only that, but the reviews, even something that I would not stayed in myself, they still got really good reviews because they were clean, etc. I think because there is such a diverse type of properties I don’t know if it makes sense if we try to find that balance being specific as

possible and clarify what we expect from a safety perspective but have some level of ambiguity around what that type of property looks like and focus more on what we require from a safety perspective vs. a Bed and Breakfast has to be xyz...that's just my opinion on how simplified or complicated it is. If we look at the USE of these, is it a good thing, in my opinion I think it is, we have a lack of beds in town and we want to attract people, and I think a lot of times we attract people who are looking for a low cost, family oriented, low key – I like pizza, go to the beach kind of thing, its comfortable and inexpensive, and I believe that kind of resonates with people.

Mrs. Gaugh – I have family that comes from all over and when they stay here, they are looking for something that is going to be a lot cheaper than a hotel.

Ms. Notte – Most people are looking for inexpensive, but also there is a home on Lake Erie St that only talked about how great their experience was because of the host. We have a lot of fisherman, tourists coming to our area and I think we have a really great option for housing for people here, especially considering like a big hotel, although we may get that at the Lake front it is not going to cater to all the types of people that want to come here. It will cater to people that we want to attract that we haven't yet – so it is an important part of it, I think it is still the reality of our town

Mr. Zingaro- Was it mentioned before that I believe the construction crew was having a hard time finding lodging for there long stay here while they worked on the pipeline.

Mrs. Gaugh – I see they are eating at our restaurants, so it is really helping our local businesses.

Mrs. Notte – I was thinking too, how does this connect with the tourism board and what they are trying to accomplish as well and their objectives

Mr. Zingaro – Asked Kris what she would suggest the definition be

Mrs. Hopkins –Are you considering anything other than a Bed and Breakfast

Mrs. Gaugh – We have more than Bed & Breakfast we have a lot of Short-Term Rentals because a lot of people stay for like two or three weeks

Mrs. Hopkins – So I think if you feel there is a market for both kinds, I think that it makes sense to regulate both kinds because I think you get more compliance if you have the rules spelled out for everyone to follow

Mrs. Gaugh – Do we have any boarding homes that just rent out rooms

Ms. Notte – I did not find anything that rent just rooms although I would say that is something that people probably do

Mrs. Gaugh – I'm thinking they probably do that during D-Day

Mrs. Hopkins – A Boarding House is something more like you live their full time. The Bed & Breakfast and Short-Term Rentals are more transient although you may have someone temporary like a worker who is here for more than 30 days. The reason I provided the definition for family is because it is becoming more and more acceptable to acknowledge you can have a certain number of unmarried people living together that came out of places like college towns like groups of students living together. So, if you have a family definition like this that allows you to have up to four (4) unrelated individuals living together then that basically encompasses a Boarding House.

Discussion amongst the board (inaudible)

Mrs. Hopkins – There are definitions you can add to refine the Short-Term Rentals to be a “hosted property” vs. “un-hosted property”. The hosted property is where the owner is there and un-hosted is when the owner is not there like if the owner leaves for a few weeks and someone comes and stays while the owner is gone.

More discussion amongst the board (inaudible)

Mrs. Hopkins – A Bed & Breakfast is more where someone is taking care of you and a Short-Term Rental is more you are taking care of yourself

Mr. Zingaro – So we need a few definitions

Mrs. Gaugh – Yes, I think so just to make sure everybody is covered and the safety issues are addressed

Mrs. Notte – I think if we could find some balance of how do we give ourselves the ability to regulate and take care of something if there is an issue but without being overly invasive and making it difficult for somebody to do this since we feel it is a good thing or could be a good thing overall.

Mrs. Gaugh – Would like to know how the tourism board feels

Mrs. Hopkins – What are your concerns on how the tourism board feels. Do you think they might be to much of a threat to the hotel business

Mrs. Gaugh -That it is to much of a threat to the tourism business

Mrs. Hopkins – It feeds the tourism business

Mrs. Gaugh – I think so, but I would just like to know what they think

Board agreed it would be good to have the open communication and feedback from the tourism board...more discussion inaudible

Discussion around house swapping – inaudible

Discussion with definitions need to comply with zoning

Board discussion- Bed and Breakfast typically has a sign and is a conditional use permit because they typically employ one or two people, there is parking regulations etc. where a short-term rental does not typically display a sign because it is a rental of the home and considered “un-hosted” where neighbors cannot usually tell. – That would be the distinction between B & B / Short-Term Rentals because short-term rentals are mostly done online and do not have a sign, however in Conneaut a lot of the short-term rentals have signs.

Mrs. Hopkins – All communities are required to have a content neutral sign regulation because of freedom of speech – like for sale signs, political signs, etc.

Board discusses all the short-term rentals in the area that do advertise with a sign and reviewed the pictures Mindy took of all the rentals in town.

Summarize – a Bed and Breakfast will usually advertise with a sign, employ 1 or 2 people and rent out rooms – a short-term rental does not usually have a sign, advertise online and do not have employees, and rent out the entire home.

This is a great way to help the community by bringing in outside dollars so that you are helping to improve tax dollars and they are spending money in our local businesses and restaurants. The board agrees that getting the tourism board involved is a really good idea. It makes sense to

collaborate with the Tourism Board because the Tourism Board may also advocate for similar regulations for the whole area and if everyone is doing very similar things there is consistency and having an entire county experience.

Mr. Zingaro – How do we go from the talking stage to the action stage

Mrs. Gaugh – We would like to get the definitions to counsel

Mrs. Hopkins – You will need more than a definition

Mr. Sedmak – I think Mindy should lead us on this – she has the most experience with very positive ideas than I have heard since I have been on the Planning Commission

Mrs. Gaugh/Mr. Zingaro – Both agree that Mindy is the most experience to lead this Ordinance

Ms. Notte – I'm happy to do whatever I need to help to meet the goals of our City.

Mr. Zingaro – What goals should we set

Mrs. Gaugh – Don't we need definitions first

Mrs. Hopkins – You will need the whole package

Mr. Sedmak – Everything Mindy said is the whole package, we just need you to put it together

Ms. Notte – So basically want me to take a stab at what I would recommend for you guys

Board – Yes, Yes.... everything you have said – the package is there all we have to do is put it in a ball

Ms. Notte – We are talking definition, signage, parking

Mrs. Gaugh – I would like to see you go to City Council and present it

Mrs. Hopkins – Just so you all know – you do not have to start with Council, you can start your legislation here and use the examples given and draft your regulations and requirements (parking, signage) and give them to Kyle for review

Ms. Notte – For next meeting I will do some heavy lifting on what I feel like a definition would be and highlight what I took out and put in and review it at that meeting and then take it to Kyle for review

Mrs. Gaugh – How do we make sure people have the proper insurance in place without invading their privacy

Mrs. Hopkins – I think that is something you can require them to show proof of insurance when application is made for a Business Permit – and if it is made a requirement to be inspected every

3 years – they would need to update our records with proof of insurance to have their permit renewed.

Board discussed commercial inspections by the fire department, zoning inspections and how/when they should be conducted – ex. Complaints etc ... more discussion about B & B's and Mindy's experience in Washington. The board expressed their trust in Mindy Notte and her networking skills and appreciate her going above and beyond.

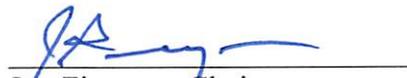
Mr. Zingaro -Entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting

Ms. Notte – made motion to adjourn the meeting

Mrs. Gaugh – second the motion

Roll was called – all approved. Motion carries – meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Time Meeting Adjourned: 7:17 p.m.

  
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Joe Zingaro - Chair

  
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Melanie Shubitowski- Cle