

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MONITOR  
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
April 5, 2016

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Members present: E. Arnold, J. Bellor, D. Darland, J. Frank, C. Hoyle, M. Morin  
Members absent: R. Campbell, R. Sheppard, Planning Attorney;  
Also present: P. Lippens, Planner; Steve Hanna, Planner;

**Motion by M. Morin seconded by J. Frank to adopt the agenda as presented.**  
Motion carried.

**Motion by J. Frank seconded by C. Hoyle to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2016 regular meeting as presented.**  
Motion carried.

**Public Input**

Chairman Bellor opened and closed public comment at 7:03 p.m. with no one present to speak.

**Items for Consideration**

**Zoning Ordinance Review**

Planner Lippens reviewed the Technical Review of the Zoning Ordinance November 2015 draft.

M. Morin requested to address fences first.

**Fences:**

The following changes had been made in previous meetings:

- Permit Required from Building Department..
- Sketch plan required unless site plan is required.
- Broken down into Zoning Districts.

Discussion was held regarding whether a survey would be required in order approve a fence. Planner Lippens said that whether a survey would be required or not would be at the discretion of the Building Official after seeing the sketch. One possibility is to have the applicant bring in a sketch and a notarized note from the neighbor that he/she has been informed and agree on the property line. Approval of the neighbor is not needed. Maintenance of the back side of the fence discussion.

A “Permitted residential fence” is just a fence in a residential district.

E. Arnold noted that a fence of six (6) feet and under is allowed by right in the building code. The building inspector enforces the State Building Code. The Zoning official is to approve the sketch plan. So a fence would be inspected by the Zoning Official.

“Zoning Official” will be substituted for “Building Official” in the proposal. The Board would need to determine if a fee would be required and what that amount would be.

E. Arnold noted that our issue with fences was with barbed wire in Commercial. Surveys depend on who surveys and where they start and they are expensive. Biggest problem is with Residential fences abutting Ag.

J. Bellor thinks this is not going to happen. The Board voted this down unanimously a couple of years ago. There is no easy fix. People put up a fence because they can't/won't get along with the neighbor in the first place.

It was decided that everyone should have copies of the ordinance showing the changes in color so everyone can be on the same page during discussions.

D. Darland noted that the issues that they were originally concerned with were inconsistencies in the ordinance.

There was consensus among Commissioners that everyone should have a color copy of the changes and will bring it to every meeting in case there is extra time. Start at the beginning and go through the ordinance in sequential order rather than jumping around.

### Signs

Planner Hanna gave a quick review of Signs.

Falls under free speech- must be content neutral

Severability clause

Updated by type--Streamlined 15.04

No longer able to distinguish by business or type. All Commercial must be the same; all Residential must be the same.

Number of Signs, Temporary Signs, Square footage of signs all discussed at length.

D. Darland would like LED signs to be required to dim after sunset.

Signs—lots of discussion:

Free standing

Digital

Square footage

Wall Signs

Total Sign square footage includes digital signs.

Signs for churches in Residential district could be based on square footage of building.

Waiver— A suggested new approach to allow minor adjustment from ordinance. PC would have the ability to waive or modify any of the above standards provided that the following criteria are met:

- A waiver granted under this section shall apply for the lifespan of the signing question, but shall not be transferrable to any other sign or premises.

- The applicant provides all requested information and pays all applicable application and review fees determined by the township board.
- The proposed sign does not endanger the public health, safety, and welfare by virtue of being distracting to drivers, obscuring vision, being unnecessarily bright, being designed or constructed poorly, or in any other way.
- The sign is consistent with the character of the surrounding area.
- The sign does not block the view of other nearby signs to the extent that it would harm the ability of neighboring businesses to operate.
- The sign will not be a nuisance to any residential uses.
- A sign designed to meet the standards of the ordinance would not adequately serve the purposes of the applicant.

This would allow for signs for churches, gas stations, drive-through restaurants that cannot now, by new State laws, be granted by content or type of business.

**Communications**

**Motion by J. Frank supported by M. Morin to accept Communications. Motion carried.**

**Motion by C. Hoyle supported by J. Frank to adjourn.  
Motion carried.**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Darland  
Secretary

DD/jw