

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
November 28, 2023

The regular meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present

Shawn Martinie  
Bill Maschewske  
Travis Vugteveen  
Lydia Brown  
Steve Young  
Michelle Gillespie

Absent

One Position Vacant

Also present were Supervisor Frank Johnson, Township Attorney Ron Bultje, Zoning Administrator Julie Lovelace, and Doug Marshall.  
The attendance sheet is attached.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to approve the meeting agenda as amended to include the Marshall/Timpe Special Use Renewal under “Any and All Other Business”.

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Adopting of Previous Minutes

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Lydia Brown to approve as written the minutes of the October 24, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Non-Commission Member Inquiries and Questions -- None

Reports and Communications

Travis Vugteveen reported the following from the Township Board.

1. A representative from Consumers Energy was present at the last Township Board meeting and stated the Campbell Plant would be closing on schedule in 2025.
2. The Sleeper St. paving project is moving forward and will begin in 2024.

Announcements -- None

## Old Business

The first item to be discussed was the draft Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment dated 10/27/2023 adding Section 13.3(R) to Special Uses in the B-2 Zoning District. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on this draft text at the regular meeting in July 2023.

Bill Maschewske – Questioned the lack of dwelling density specification in the draft text.

It was noted that the dwelling density would be somewhat self-limiting due to available space, setbacks, parking, septic, and water considerations. It was also noted that the dwelling spaces were accessory to the storage buildings.

Following extensive discussion, it was agreed to revise Section 13.3(R)(3) as follows: “Notwithstanding Section 4.23, multiple principal dwelling buildings shall be permitted per lot, subject to R-3 density limits.”

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Steve Young to recommend to the Township Board approval of the November 28, 2023 draft Zoning Ordinance Text amendment to Section 13.3(R) permitting self-storage units with dwelling units under specific circumstances.

A roll call vote was taken.

Michelle Gillespie – Yes

Lydia Brown – Yes

Bill Maschewske – Yes

Shawn Martinie – Yes

Steve Young – Yes

Travis Vugteveen – Yes

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

The next topic of discussion was the continued review of Short-Term Rentals as directed by the Township Board.

Chairperson Martinie – The question is how to deal with Short-Term Rentals. Should we create an overlay district or permit them by Special Use?

Zoning Administrator Lovelace was requested at the October 24, 2023 Planning Commission meeting to try to determine how many existing Short-Term Rental facilities are currently in Robinson Township. She reported that she could find three, however, their location was not known and this is also not a very reliable number because of the search criteria. Therefore, the goal of identifying current locations was not accomplished.

Chairperson Martinie – We need to determine:

1. Where Short-Term Rentals should be located.

2. What are the criteria for location.

Township Attorney Bultje reported the following criteria used by Grand Haven Township for their floating overlay district for Short-Term Rentals.

1. They are not permitted in traditional neighborhoods or subdivisions.
2. They are prohibited in areas not adjacent to Lake Michigan or without Lake Michigan beach access.
3. Consideration of rental history. Has the property previously been rented, were there complaints, and were there police reports.
4. The above are used in addition to the normal rezoning criteria (Three C's).

In an attempt to determine the thoughts of the residents regarding Short-Term Rentals, Township Attorney Bultje suggested an Advisory Public Hearing. Zoning Administrator Lovelace also suggested a Township-wide survey using an online survey tool.

Travis Vugteveen – Suggested all of the property North of North Cedar St. and Green St. excluding subdivisions and PUD developments be the area for Short-Term Rentals.

Bill Maschewske – Noted that the older Section Maps of the Township identified subdivisions and he has a set that can be used if none exist at the Township Hall.

The following criteria were agreed upon.

1. North of North Cedar and Green Streets.
2. Single family residential.
3. Residential Zoning.
4. Not in a subdivision or PUD.
5. Total rental duration 12 weeks or less per year.
6. No Limited Short-Term Rentals permitted.
7. Located on the Grand River. Properties not directly on the Grand River are excluded.

The consensus was to have Zoning Administrator Lovelace prepare a map that would identify all the areas North of North Cedar and Green Streets, not in subdivisions or PUD developments, Single Family Residentially Zoned, and having direct Grand River access (do not include connecting waterways to the Grand River such as creeks, other rivers, and bayous).

### New Business

As scheduled, the public hearing for several Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments was held. The public hearing was declared open by Chairperson Martinie. A summary of the draft Zoning Ordinance amendments was given by Chairperson Martinie at the request of Supervisor Johnson.

Chairperson Martinie stated the proposed amendments included the following:

1. Section 4.2(H) – Allow Gazebos up to and including 144 sq. ft. in area without their area counting towards the permitted square footage of accessory buildings allowed on a parcel.
2. Section 4.3(C) – Reduce the required distance of an accessory structure to another accessory structure or any principal or accessory building from 20 to 10 feet. Making this revision in this section was correcting an omission from a previous Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment and this change was already reflected in Chapter 30.
3. Section 20.10 – Delete the minimum required area of 15 acres for a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Each permitted type of PUD already has a specific minimum size area specified.

Bill Maschewske inquired about playhouses and after discussion, it was agreed to not include them in the amendment to Section 4.2 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Steve Young – Should we define “Gazebo”?

Township Attorney Bultje agreed and offered the following as a definition of Gazebo: “An open or lattice work pavilion used for outdoor entertaining.”

It was agreed to accept the definition and include it in Chapter 3 of the Zoning Ordinance along with these amendments.

There were no more comments regarding the proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments from either the public or the Planning Commission.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Lydia Brown to close the public hearing.

The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Steve Young to recommend to the Township Board approval of Zoning Ordinance Text amendments with draft date of November 28, 2023 to Section 4.2(H), Accessory Building, Section 4.3(C), Separation Distance, Chapter 3 to add the definition of “Gazebo”, and Section 20.10 to delete the 15 acre minimum area requirement for a PUD.

A roll call vote was taken.

Michelle Gillespie – Yes

Lydia Brown – Yes

Bill Maschewske – Yes

Shawn Martinie – Yes

Steve Young – Yes

Travis Vugteveen – Yes

The motion carries unanimously with one position vacant.

Pay Bills

A motion was made by Lydia Brown and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to pay salaries for the November 28, 2023 Planning Commission meeting (6 members present, one position vacant). The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Any and All Other Business That May Come Before the Board

The Timpe/Marshall Special Land Use Renewal application for the 2024 season was discussed.

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to permit administrative approval of the Timpe/Marshall request to renew the Special Use for 2024 for recreational vehicle parking in Section 9.3(D) of the Zoning Ordinance based on the finding that the Site Plan has not changed and there have been no complaints. The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Steve Young to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at approximately 9:00 PM. The motion carried unanimously with one position vacant.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary  
Robinson Township Planning Commission

Attachment: Attendance Sheet for the November 28, 2023 Planning Commission Meeting

