

**MINUTES OF THE BEECHER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
(THE PZC)**

***Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.  
Beecher Village Hall  
625 Dixie Highway***

At 7:08 p.m., Chairman Phil Serviss called the meeting to order.

All present joined in the pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL. Members present: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema, Serviss and Weissbohn.

Members absent: Commissioner Tatgenhorst.

Staff present: Secretary Patty Meyer, Pete Iosue of Teska Associates, Code Enforcement Officer David Harrison, and Administrator Bob Barber (arrived at 8:00 p.m.).

Guest: Roger Stacey.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 18, 2021 MEETING.

Commissioner Bouchard made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2021 PZC meeting as written. Commissioner Schuitema seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema, Serviss and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

WORKSHOP: CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING CODE PERTAINING TO FRONT YARD FENCES. A memo from Village Planner Pete Iosue was provided in the packet for review.

Pete Iosue explained the reason for this workshop, and the corner lot issue with fences for properties technically having two front yards. He suggested allowing Zoning Administrator to allow for administrative variances, with conditions as needed. This would shorten the time and cost to the petitioner, yet still provide for input from adjoining property owners.

Discussion was had regarding minimum distance of fence from sidewalk, letters of support from affected or adjoining property owners, and visibility issues for neighboring properties.

It was the consensus of the PZC to allow Zoning Administrator to allow for administrative variances with the following conditions: Letters of support received from adjacent and affected property owners, fences must be a minimum of 3' from sidewalk (or equivalent distance from the street if no sidewalk is present), and fences must not interfere with pedestrian traffic, nor block vision of traffic on the adjacent street.

WORKSHOP: CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO CONTRACTOR TRAILERS PARKED IN FRONT YARDS. The existing

ordinance references recreational trailers only as being prohibited from parking in front yards and on the street for more than three days. Code Enforcement Officer David Harrison has been challenged when he tried to enforce the code on a contractor trailer that was parked in the driveway in front of a home for months. The resident claims that his trailer is not recreational and despite what we believe was the intent of the ordinance the wording allowed for this case not to get prosecuted. A memo from Pete Iosue was provided in the packet for review. Code Enforcement Officer David Harrison was present and provided an explanation of his recent discussions with a resident regarding his tool trailer.

Discussion followed regarding the definition of recreational trailers, motorhomes, etc., and the definition of a commercial trailer.

It was the consensus of the PZC to strike the word "Recreational" from our ordinance regarding trailers, in order to include commercial trailers, and provide more clarification defining a commercial trailer. Recreational "vehicles" will be also be added to include those that are motorized.

**WORKSHOP: CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO THE USE OF STORAGE CONTAINERS.** This issue has also arisen in our commercial districts where cargo containers have appeared in parking lots for additional storage by businesses. Beecher Hardware was the first to request a cargo container and was granted a five year temporary use permit by the Village Board in 2014. Last fall one appeared behind Buddys during a renovation of the building and was granted a temporary use under a building permit since they are storing appliances in the container while they renovate. A memo from Pete Iosue was provided in the packet for review. The Village Board has referred this matter to the PZC for review.

Pete Iosue explained history of cargo containers with Beecher Hardware and Buddys.

Pete Iosue also included information for mobile storage units (pods). According to Pete Iosue, pod has to be placed on the driveway and only for a limited amount of time.

Much discussion followed regarding pods, cargo containers, and definition of temporary or permanent use.

Pete Iosue stated that cargo containers can be allowed temporarily in a commercial district if the business is doing construction or in the process of moving.

Some Commissioners felt cargo containers were okay as long as they blended in to existing building.

It was consensus of PZC to allow cargo containers, as long as the container blends in to existing building. Permanent cargo containers should follow rules for other permanent structures, such as requiring a building permit, be located on a paved surface, be securely attached to the ground, and be screened from view by a fence or landscaping.

Administrator Barber arrived at 8 p.m.

The two cargo storage containers that are currently in place within the Village will be considered as a legal non-conforming use.

As a result of tonight's workshop, Pete Iosue will type up amendments to zoning ordinance, and a public hearing will be held prior to being sent to the Board.

Commissioner Schuitema made a motion to authorize a public hearing be held on all three matters discussed in tonight's workshop. Date will depend on when ordinances have been revised by the Village Attorney. Commissioner Bouchard seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema, Serviss and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

UPDATES ON PROJECTS IN TOWN. The Illiana Crossroads Business Park preliminary and final plats are not yet ready for review so this matter has been deferred until a future PZC meeting. Information was provided in the packet for review on the impact of industrial property adjacent to residential and Pete Iosue is preparing a report on this for review next meeting.

Administrator Barber reported on a recent meeting with a cannabis growth facility within the Village limits. They anticipate getting state license. Facility will not be selling cannabis in Beecher, it will only be a growth facility.

Beecher Nutrition will be opening this week in Beecher Plaza.

The next regularly scheduled meeting for the PZC is Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. If public hearing will be held, location may be changed to the Washington Township Center.

ADJOURNMENT. Commissioner Schuitema made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Bouchard seconded the motion.

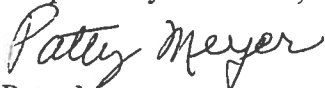
AYES: Commissioners Bouchard, Hearn, Heim, Schuitema, Serviss and Weissbohn.

NAYS: None

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Patty Meyer

Secretary