

Ganges Township Planning Commission
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes for August 24th, 2021
Ganges Township Hall
119th Avenue and 64th Street
Fennville, MI, Allegan County

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair: **DeZwaan** called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Roll Call: Chair: Jackie **DeZwaan** — Present

Secretary: Phil **Badra** — Present

Vice-Chair: Charlie **Hancock** — Absent

Commissioner: Dale **Pierson** — Present

Commission Trustee: Barry **Gooding** — Present

Zoning Administrator: Tasha **Smalley** — Present

Recording Secretary: Jennifer **Goodrich** — Present

II. Additions to the agenda and adoption

Motion was made by **Badra** to accept the agenda, as presented. Motion was seconded by **Gooding**. Motion passed.

III. General Public Comment

Jeff **Pappenheimer**-6044 Forbidden Oak presented a few proposed requests for text amendments to the current Ganges Township Zoning Ordinances. He described changes to the Private Road Ordinance such as adding a maintenance agreement template and increasing the maximum number of parcels that can be served by a 33 ft. Right of Way (ROW) from 4 to 5. **Pappenheimer** also stated that, according to Michigan Compiled Law (MCL), existing easements should not lose their grandfathered rights due to an additional load being placed on the drive (i.e. a new parcel being created that is served by the existing easement); but should instead be considered non-conforming properties. Additionally, **Pappenheimer** wants the minimum dwelling size of 960 square feet to *be* lowered to a more modest size and the maximum size to be a set footage (for example 2500 square feet) instead of being based on lot coverage.

IV. Correspondence and upcoming meetings/seminars

DeZwaan stated that a phone call had been made to the Township Hall Re: Short Term Rentals (STR).

DeZwaan also reported that she had received photos from the **Ciesla** property Sand Mining Annual Inspection and has the letter **Pappenhiemer** presented as part of his public comment.

V. Public Hearing — None

VI. Approval of July 27, 2021 minutes

A motion was made by **Pierson** to approve the July 27, 2021 regular meeting minutes, with corrections. **DeZwaan** seconded the motion. Motion passed

VII. Old Business

1. Zoning Ordinance Discussion

The PC members responded to **Pappenhiemer**'s public comments explaining that the Private Road Ordinance had been developed over a 2 year period of public comment with the help of a Planner. They went on to describe how the Master Plan reflects the over whelming consensus of the community to maintain a rural community and stated that the references to (MCL) were being applied out of context. They went on to explain that, compared to neighboring jurisdictions, the Ganges Township Private Road Ordinance is the most lenient and allows for new housing, as the community grows, while maintaining the rural character. The PC also responded to the minimum and maximum dwelling size question stating that both Saugatuck and Clyde Township have 1000 square foot minimums and that people should be able to build bigger homes when they have larger lots.

a. Review of the changes that have already been discussed at PC meetings and agreed to:

1. Renumber pages 4-1 to 4-7 to read pages 3-45 to 3-51.
2. Move the start of Article 4 from page 3-51 to page 4-1 (the old 4-8) and renumber page 4-9 to read page 4-2. Pages 7-6 to 7-8 should be 7-1 to 7-3
4. Pages 5-2, 6-2, 7-6, 8-2, 11-1 add to Commercial Small Communication facility (subject to Section 3.36)
5. Page 12-4 C.9. ...as determined by a staked land survey bearing the seal of the licensed professional engineer or surveyor preparing the Site Plan. Eliminate C.18.
6. Page 16-5 B.4. Add – A staked land survey of the parcel bearing the seal of the licensed professional engineer or surveyor preparing the land survey must accompany the variance application.
7. Wedding barns/event centers are not allowed since they are in conflict with the Master Plan page 18 Rural Character and page 19 Agriculture/Residential section 2... would allow value added Ag related uses. The Right to Farm Act (RTFA) and Farm Market Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPS) do not consider them Ag related uses, are not protected by the RTFA and are subject to local control. Also Webster Township v. Waitz June 7, 2016 found that wedding barns are not accessory uses to a residence or farm operation. The PC decided the issue should be discussed when the Master Plan is reviewed.

8. Page 3-3 D. Change to read - A dwelling unit shall have no side less than 24 feet at the time of manufacture, placement or construction.

b. Issues to be discussed:

1. Finalize Private Road Ordinance.
2. Signs
3. Pages 2-27 and 2-28 definitions of signs.
4. Page 4-2 sign Ordinance.

c. Additional issues discussed, not included in Agenda

Badra discussed possible changes to Page 2-30 definition of a Structure – Re: setback of fences and beach stairs. The question being, should fences and beach stairs have setbacks. The definition of a Fence on page 2-12 calls a fence a structure but they are allowed on property lines. Definition of Setback on page 2-24 mentions structure as do the Setback Measurements on page 3-10.

PC also discussed Private Road Development Requirements as they pertain to new parcels and construction permits along with lot coverage pertaining to drive ways (impermeable vs permeable surfaces).

VIII. New Business — None

IX. Administrative Updates

Township Board-

Gooding reported that at the August 10th, 2021 Board meeting they discussed a replacement for the Library Representative, undecided as of yet. They also discussed replacing the Township Hall’s printer and repairs that need to be made at the 114th Ave beach access.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)-

Pierson reported that the ZBA had two requests on their agenda for the July 29th, 2021 meeting. The application for a setback variance for a Communication Tower at Camp-it was denied and the application for setback variances for an addition to a home at 6016 Cedar St. was postponed till September 2nd, so that the applicant could provide revised plans (minimizing their variance requests).

Zoning Administrator- None

X. Future Meetings Dates

The future dates of the PC Regular meetings will be September 28th 2021 and October 26th 2021

XI. General Public Comment — None

XII. Adjournment

XIII. Motion was made by **Gooding** and supported by **Pierson** to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Adjourned at 8:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Jennifer Goodrich

Ganges Township Recording Secretary