

APPROVED 5-6-15

Regular Meeting of Casco Township Planning Commission
March 4, 2015 - 7:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Barker, Lewis Adamson, Daniel Fleming, David Campbell, Paul Macyauski, and Judy Graff

ABSENT: Dian Liepe was excused

STAFF PRESENT: Sue West, Recording Secretary; Alfred Ellingsen, Zoning Administrator

ALSO PRESENT: Daniel Cooper, Patrick Mckearnan and Jeff Leach

1. **Call to order and review of agenda.** Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. There were no changes to the agenda.
2. **Approval of minutes of 2/4/15 Regular Meeting and 2/7/15 Special Meeting.** Motion by Fleming, supported by Macyauski, to approve the Minutes of the February 4, 2015 Regular Meeting, as written. All in favor, MSC. The Minutes of the February 7, 2015 Special Meeting were not available and will be approved at the April 8, 2015 meeting.
3. **Report from the Township Board Representative** – Graff reported on the February 16, 2015 Township Board Meeting as follows:
 - a. Kurt Katje is the new Officer. He will be working from 5 pm to 5 am; 3 days on/2 days off. This schedule will continue until April, 2015 at which time the Township Board can decide if they wish to make any changes
 - b. At the April, 2015 Meeting, a final decision will be made regarding how to spend the Township’s Road Mileage funds.
 - c. The Township Board approved making a request on behalf of the residents to the County Drain Commission to make a new district to solve the drainage problem on 71st Street, as well as 107th.
 - d. The Township approved the sale of two lots that the Township owned due to nonpayment of taxes to Gerald Becker. Each lot sold for \$100.00.
 - e. SHAES is considering a year round/area wide policy regarding fireworks. The Township Board will review the proposed policy.
 - f. The cheapest bid of \$22,000.00 for the cemetery equipment storage building was accepted. Daniel Cooper, of 7023 107th Ave., South Haven, MI, asked if the accepted bid was local. Ellingsen stated that he believes it came from the Fennville, MI area.
4. **Report from the ZBA Representative** - Macyauski reported that a Variance was granted to property on “B” Avenue to allow an addition to be built. The lot coverage will now be 25.7%. Macyauski further stated that three requests will be heard later this month for properties located on 62nd St., Blue Star Hwy., and Adams Road.

5. Report from Water/Sewer representative - Adamson reported as follows:

- a. Things are going well. There is approximately \$50,000.00 more in the checking account now compared to this time last year. The spring bond payment will be made.
- b. Discussions are still being had regarding funding depreciation.
- c. There have been two in-direct connections made. 17 RUEs are needed this fiscal year and there have been only 10 so far. Adamson further stated that an additional 7 will be hard to get. Chairman Barker asked if that 17 was needed from only Casco Township and Adamson answered that South Haven is included. Adamson further stated that any commercial construction in South Haven would certainly help. Patrick Mckearnan, of 100 North Shore Drive-North, South Haven, MI, stated that the building behind Arby's in South Haven will be a Good Will Store.
- d. Graff asked when will Meijer and Aldi's actual usage be compared to their estimates. Adamson answered 1 year after hook-up and will therefore not be done in this fiscal year.
- e. Graff inquired as to the status of the mandatory hook-ups. Adamson answered that the matter is still in the hands of the attorney. Graff stated frustration with the fact that someone can get away with being hooked-up and still not paying. Adamson stated that due to a recent sale of a home, another incident of someone being hooked-up and not paying was discovered.
- f. Patrick Mckearnan asked what is the approximate cost of a new construction hook-up. Adamson answered \$20,000.00. Mr. Mckearnan asked what is the approximate base monthly cost and Adamson answered around \$80 to \$90.

6. Resolutions requiring Planning Commission action: None

7. New Business- Small Homes – Duplexes:

- a. Chairman Barker stated that he had a conversation with Attorney Bultje and was informed that Lots of Record are on the Zoning Maps.
- b. Much discussion was had regarding duplexes, which included the following:
 - i. Chairman Barker stated that he believes that from previous discussions, there is a desire to allow duplexes and that he believes the questions that come up are lot sizes and building sizes.
 - ii. Macyauski asked if duplexes are currently allowed. Ellingsen stated that they are, but only in a small area.
 - iii. Ellingsen stated that building codes are different for duplexes.
 - iv. Chairman Barker asked if a duplex would have two separate hook-ups. Ellingsen answered yes.
 - v. Chairman Barker asked if only one side could be sold. Ellingsen answered that it could if the proper process was followed.

- vi.** Chairman Barker asked if we currently have any duplexes. Ellingsen answered that he does not know of any.
- vii.** Ellingsen stated that a duplex has only one tax bill.
- viii.** Chairman Barker stated that duplexes are very common in the bigger cities for residential housing.
- ix.** Campbell stated that there are some subdivisions where restrictions are listed on the property deeds, including that only a single family dwelling can be placed on the property. Further, Campbell stated that some deeds only state that there are restrictions, but do not list what the restrictions are. Macyauski asked if copies of deeds should be made a part of the site plan so that any restrictions are known. Ellingsen answered that he did not believe deeds should be made part of site plans. Fleming asked if there is any official way of catching these restrictions. Ellingsen stated that there currently is not. Graff stated that she believes it is not the Township's responsibility to catch these restrictions and Chairman Barker and Ellingsen agreed. Ellingsen stated that if one property owner in one of these subdivisions does not comply with the restrictions, he could be sued by another property owner and that this would not involve the Township. Chairman Barker stated that he does not believe that the rest of the Township shouldn't be allowed to have a duplex because some subdivisions do not allow them. Patrick Mckearnan indicated that he does not understand why the Township would be concerned if a Deed includes restrictions that are bigger than the Township's requirements. Graff agreed. Campbell stated that the Township should not issue a permit for something that is restricted on the subject property's deed. Campbell also stated that the title work to the property would list all restrictions.
- x.** Chairman Barker asked Ellingsen if duplexes could be allowed in all districts. Ellingsen stated that they could and that size would be an issue to consider. Chairman Barker asked if allowing duplexes would change the required lot sizes. Ellingsen stated that it would not.
- xi.** Macyauski asked if allowing duplexes would allow the 25% maximum lot coverage to be exceeded. Ellingsen stated that it would not.
- xii.** Adamson asked for clarification on what is a duplex compared to an addition. Ellingsen stated that the common wall in a duplex must meet a specific fire code where an addition does not. Further, an addition is considered part of the same home/conditional space.
- xiii.** Campbell stated that it seems to him that since no one is asking for a duplex, there really is no need to make a change.
- xiv.** Campbell asked what are the advantages to a duplex other than the fact that you have two meters. Ellingsen stated that some people use duplexes as rentals.
- xv.** Fleming stated that he does not see why duplexes shouldn't be allowed.

- xvi.** Campbell referred to Liepe's e-mail regarding wanting to keep the Township a certain way. Campbell further commented on Liepe's e-mail and stated that the South Haven Tribune (see Attachment 3) has talked about luring visitors into residents by the way the community is. Campbell stated that Matt Super made the comment that allowing duplexes would open up a can of worms. Campbell further stated that he believes people have been invited to live in this area under the current Ordinances for a long time now.
- xvii.** Macyauski stated that there is currently a way for someone who has the lot size and wants to make an investment to build a duplex.
- xviii.** Dan Cooper stated that he believes duplexes should be allowed and that there are other reasons to build a duplex other than for an investment. Macyauski responded by saying that there is a process that a person can go through to be allowed to build a duplex. Patrick Mckearnan stated that he doesn't believe most people realize there is a process to allow a duplex. Ellingsen stated that this is not a situation that comes up often.
- xix.** Patrick Mckearnan stated that he believes that Dan Cooper has a good point that should be given more consideration.
- xx.** Jeff Leach, of 6454 111th Ave., South Haven, MI, asked if his son could build a duplex on his five acres. Ellingsen stated that he could through site plan approval.
- xxi.** Campbell asked if overlay zones would be an answer and Ellingsen stated that this is not an issue for overlay zones.
- xxii.** Ellingsen stated that most townships allow duplexes.
- xxiii.** Dan Cooper stated that if the 25% maximum lot coverage requirement and the setback requirements are met, a duplex should be allowed.
- xxiv.** Macyauski stated that if duplexes were allowed in certain areas along the lakeshore, he believes parking would be a bigger problem.
- xxv.** Fleming asked if anyone is against allowing duplexes in the AG District. Chairman Barker answered no. Fleming asked if anyone is against allowing duplexes in the rural district. Chairman Barker answered no. Fleming asked where is the problem. Macyauski answered in the low density areas.
- xxvi.** Chairman Barker stated that he would like Ellingsen to write a proposal to allow duplexes in all zoning districts and that same could be discussed at the next meeting. Macyauski asked if Patrick Hudson would need to be involved in writing this proposal. Ellingsen answered that he didn't think so.
- xxvii.** Campbell asked if the 1,000 sq. footage requirement could be split for a duplex. Ellingsen stated that a duplex is a 2 family dwelling, each requiring the 1,000 sq. foot minimum.
- xxviii.** Campbell stated that he does not believe the Township should go down the path of allowing duplexes in all districts
- xxix.** Chairman Barker asked all the Commissioners whether or not they think Ellingsen should draw up a proposal allowing duplexes in all areas for further

review. Commissioners answered as follows: Chairman Barker – yes, Fleming – yes, Adamson - yes, but that he is not sure it is needed, Campbell – no, Macyauski – no, Graff – no. Chairman Barker stated that since there is a tie, no further action by the Planning Commission should be taken at this time.

c. Regarding Small/Tiny Homes:

- i.** Chairman Barker read e-mails from Dian Liepe dated February 10, which also included a response from Graff, stating Liepe’s thoughts regarding small/tiny homes. Same is attached hereto as Attachment 1.
- ii.** Graff summarized her e-mail dated February 18, 2015 regarding documentaries she saw on television about small/tiny homes. Same is attached hereto as Attachment 2. Graff further stated that these documentaries made it apparent to her that young people have different needs from older people and that different people have different monetary reasons for the types of homes they want.
- iii.** Macyauski stated that stick built small/tiny houses can be attractive and as long as the 25% lot coverage requirement is met and as long as they are on a foundation, they should be allowed. Chairman Barker asked Macyauski if he believes they should be allowed in all districts and Macyauski answered yes.
- iv.** Fleming stated that as long as building codes are met, he believes small/tiny homes should be allowed.
- v.** Fleming asked if there are minimum requirements for room sizes. Ellingsen stated that there are. Macyauski stated that by code, the only required rooms are a kitchen, a bathroom and a bedroom. Fleming then stated that the building code could then set the minimum building size.
- vi.** Campbell stated that he believes that allowing small/tiny homes would not be good for the existing property owners.
- vii.** Fleming asked how it is determined what harm is done to the people who don’t want to look at small/tiny homes compared to those who want them.
- viii.** Macyauski stated that there are currently some old homes that are small and that they are being maintained.
- ix.** Campbell stated that after all this time, we shouldn’t now make this change and that he is against moving forward on this issue.
- x.** Campbell submitted a copy of an article from the South Haven Tribune dated February 15, 2015 for review. Same is attached hereto as Attachment 3.

8. Old Business: Review Special Joint Training Meeting

- 9. Public Comment:** Chairman Barker asked for further public comment. Patrick Mckearnan submitted two drawings of small homes (attached hereto as attachment 4) that meet code. Mr. Mckearnan further stated that he has a nice home that meets all his and his wife’s need and that it is 850 sq. foot which wouldn’t meet the current Ordinance. He further stated that he talked with a Tax Assessor and

was informed that they first make their assessment based on the property value and then consider the value of the home. Mr. Mckearnan also stated that residents have had to comply with the current Ordinances all this time and that this hasn't been an issue because people usually want to build bigger, not smaller. Mr. Mckearnan also believes that small/tiny homes should be allowed for environmental reasons. Campbell stated that he respects Mr. Mckearnan's opinions, but disagrees. Jeff Leach stated that he believes a person should be allowed to build a small/tiny home if they wish.

Motion to adjourn by Campbell, 2nd by Macyauski. Meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm

Minutes by Susan West, Recording Secretary

Next Meeting: April 8, 2015 at 7:00 pm

Attachment 1: E-mails from Dian Liepe dated February 10, which also include a response from Graff

Attachment 2: E-mail from Graff dated February 18, 2015 regarding tiny homes

Attachment 3: Copy of an article from the South Haven Tribune dated February 15, 2015

Attachment 4: Two drawings from Patrick Mckearnan of house floor plans for small homes that meet code

Subject: FW: Casco TWP PC March Agenda

From: Bruce Barker (brucebarker@hotmail.com)

To: graffj@i2k.com; brucebarker@hotmail.com; clerk@cascotownship.org; davecmich@yahoo.com; paulmacyauski@yahoo.com; skwirely@frontier.com; paul.macyauski@pinnaclefoods.com; lou@lasrpm.com; suewest.casco@yahoo.com; sixliteraldays@gmail.com; liepe@msu.edu;

Date: Thursday, February 19, 2015 10:13 AM

FYI for all

From: liepe@anr.msu.edu
To: graffj@i2k.com; brucebarker@hotmail.com
Subject: RE: Casco TWP PC March Agenda
Date: Tue, 10 Feb 2015 19:04:12 +0000

Our population is getting older and some may not want a 1000 sq. ft house – it is big for most people – yes the duplex thing may work for some and maybe building on to a relative's house may work for some – but believe it or not there are some folks without relatives.

I think we may be discriminating against singles or young families and older folks by the 1000 sq. ft. minimum. The single trailers we have in the township are older but for the most part they have been well taken care of. As with regular homes they do need up keep.

Whether it is a single wide trailer or a "small home" why should we dictate to a person they must have something bigger than they can take care of? I have seen the smaller "older" homes throughout the township and some of these look charming - - but why couldn't I build a new house the size of 750 sq. ft rather than fixing up an older home? There are times when I think my motorhome is just the right size for me – and I'm guess that is around 400-500 sq. ft.

So we want to keep the township a certain way – well we have smaller homes and we have trailers.

Was this discussed at all on Saturday? I'm wondering about getting more comments – especially from either young adults and couples as well as older single adults. But maybe we don't have too many as they can't afford to live here?

Dian

Life is not about waiting for the storms to pass..... it's about learning to **play** in the **snow**.

From: Judy [mailto:graffj@i2k.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 1:32 PM
To: Liepe, Dian
Subject: RE: Casco TWP PC March Agenda

Dian,

Thanks for your thoughts. I assume you mean that we should consider 'requiring less than 1000'---correct? Tell me more.

Judy

From: Liepe, Dian [mailto:liepe@anr.msu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 10:33 AM
To: Bruce Barker; Judy Graff; Cheri Brenner; Dave Campbell; Paul Macyauski; Alfred Ellingsen; Paul Macyauski; Lou Adamson; Sue West; Dan Fleming; Dian Liepe
Subject: RE: Casco TWP PC March Agenda

I will not be able to attend the March meeting as I will be at our 4-H Program Coordinator's Conference March 4-5 at Kettunen Center near Cadillac. I support having Duplex's in most areas of the Township. I still have a concern with the 1,000 sq. ft or more. My own house is 1100 sq. ft and if it was just me it would almost be too much of a house. Since our population is getting older I think we need to look at this. I know we have discussed this and probably need to continue....

Dian

Life is not about waiting for the storms to pass..... it's about learning to **play** in the **snow**.

From: Bruce Barker [mailto:brucebarker@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 8, 2015 10:05 AM
To: Judy Graff; Bruce Barker; Cheri Brenner; Dave Campbell; Paul Macyauski; Alfred Ellingsen; Paul Macyauski; Lou Adamson; Sue West; Dan Fleming; Dian Liepe
Subject: Casco TWP PC March Agenda

Judy

From: Judy <graffj@i2k.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 4:31 PM
To: Bruce Barker; Dave Campbell; Dian Liepe; Lewis Adamson; Paul Macyauski; Samuel Fleming
Subject: small houses

Planning Commission members,

I found 2 documentaries on cable TV (FYI channel; ch 266 on Directv) on small houses:

Tiny House Nation
Tiny House Hunting

I watched several episodes and here's the summary:

1. Young couple in Rochester, NY wanted a tiny house of 210 sq ft: downsized from 1600 sq ft to pay off college loans and to have \$\$ to travel; \$30,000 budget; prefab shell customized inside; 1 floor.
2. Young couple in CA; wanted 224 sq ft; big campers; their money is in their business.
3. Couple with 2 kids in MN got 207 sq ft to save \$\$ while going to school; teach values to their kids; wanted a movable home to go where his business as a teacher took him; movable home gave them freedom and options.
4. Dad with son and dog in OR; could live in 150 sq ft; he wanted to save his \$\$ and not rent; didn't need much space; \$50,000 budget.

Wanted to get this info to you before our March 4 meeting.

Judy

City lures visitors who become residents

When you choose to "Think Local" you must start by looking at our city in general. Perhaps you have lived here all your life, or possibly chose to move here at some point. Some local residents who now call South Haven home may have started out as boaters, enjoying the marinas, public ramps, gorgeous waters, fishing, sailing, kayaking, wakeboarding, and such. Your time in South Haven became so wonderful that it sparked a desire to make this your permanent residence. South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce Director Kathy Wagaman was one of those – renting a slip for her sailboat in the harbor in the late 1980s, and dreading the trip East to her home in Battle Creek. At last in the late '90s she was privileged to make this her year-round home.

South Haven becomes home to many retirees who have made this a vacation destination for many years, and still others came as temporary contractors working for Entergy or New Covert Generating plant, and fell in love with the area. Whatever your reason for being here, residents of this community are fortunate to have city leaders who understand that the infrastructure, aesthetics, parks, beaches, and walkways must be given priority in order to continue to make South Haven a community that compels people choose to live, work, and play in.

The City of South Haven has worked hard to secure over \$6 million in grant funding for many important projects that continue to improve our community. In just the past 5 years



File photo by Jody Warner

South Haven Department of Public Works employees unload benches to place downtown in this 2012 photo. In the spring, workers from the street and parks departments will begin the process of getting downtown ready for the busy summer tourism season by placing more trash receptacles, benches and bike racks downtown. Flowers will also be planted in late spring in the many planters in the central business district.

these include:

- **Electrical Improvements** – upgrading and replacing existing electrical facilities and installing new at necessary locations. Replacing individual services to homes and tree removal and trimming as necessary.

- **Street Repairs** throughout the city, including portions of Center Street, Kalamazoo

Street, Wilson Street, Bailey Avenue, Wells Street, Dyckman Avenue, and neighborhood streets near Lincoln School.

- **Downtown Revitalization Project Recently Completed** – this included lighting, streetscaping, new water and sewer, bump-outs for outdoor dining, planters and seating.

- **Connecting the Van Buren Bike Trail with the Kal Haven**

Trail and building new restrooms and parking at the trailhead at the corner of Huron and Kalamazoo Streets.

- **Completion of the Williams Street Upgrade** with walkways and lighting, making it attractive to walk from pierhead to pierhead.

- **The Dyckman Bridge Re-Build** now underway

- **Elkenberg Park** – Neighborhood & community parks such as this provide pleasant spaces for folks living nearby.

- **Facade Restoration** of downtown buildings to keep the streetscape appealing.

- **South Beach Revitalization** – enhancing the walkways, parking, handicap accessible

- **Tot Lot Improvements** – New handicap accessible restrooms and playground equipment, soon to be finished – again, this provides a wonderful greenspace for folks in nearby neighborhoods.

A great deal of effort goes on behind the scenes on behalf of city employees, and we are fortunate that the City of South Haven employs 75 fulltime, 20 part-time, and 40 seasonal employees, who then recycle that income back into our community, supporting local businesses.

The Chamber wishes to show appreciation to our city for its support to the Chamber and other event planners of events such as the National Blueberry Festival, Harborfest, Light Up the Lake Fireworks, Icebreaker Fest, Craft Fairs, and more. These events are intended to foster tourism and funnel revenue into our community, but could not occur without the help with crowd control fencing, police and fire services, planning assistance, and event approvals from our City.

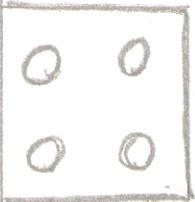
The Think Local initiative is a partnership of the South Haven Tribune, South Haven Area Chamber of Commerce and advertisers listed below

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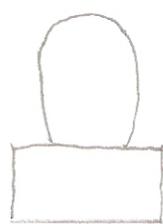
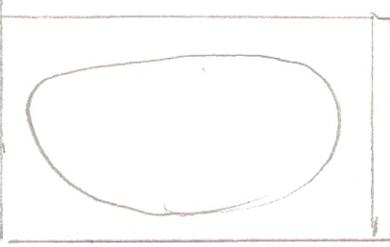


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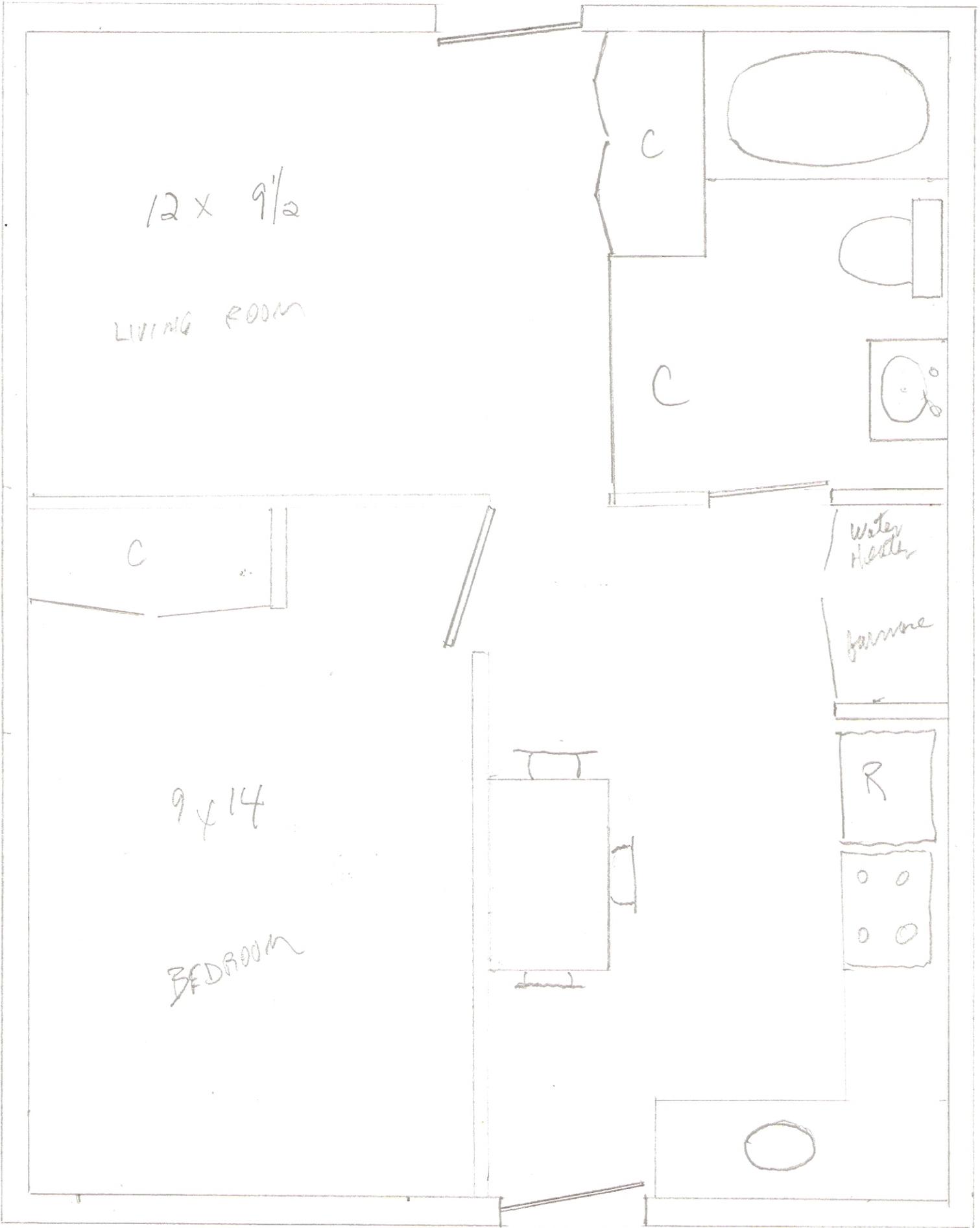
Trash
Box

TV
50"



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