

**Dorr Township Planning Commission  
April 19, 2005 Minutes**

1. Chairman Robert Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Roll Call--Members Present: Larry Dolegowski, Norm Fifelski, Gordon Lieffers, Doug Montgomery, Deb Prenatt, Karen Slater, Robert Wagner. Members Absent: None.
4. The Minutes of the March 15, 2005 meeting were presented. A motion was made by Norm Fifelski and supported by Deb Prenatt to approve the minutes as presented. All Aye. Motion carried.
5. Changes or Additions to the Agenda  
None.
6. Public Comments  
None.
7. Old Business:

- a. Sand Mining Ordinance

The consensus of the Board was that the existing sand mining operations have not caused any significant issues in the community and should be “grandfathered” in if an ordinance is developed. Discussion ensued regarding what size, depth, and amount of sand removed per year constituted operations that would be exempt from having to obtain a permit to operate. Safety concerns, road conditions, fencing, size of banks and depths of mines were discussed. Duane Fifelski and David James provided input and answered questions about sand mining operations.

The consensus of the Board was to record the location, size, ownership, and usual amount of mining done per year for all the current sand mining operations.

Tim Johnson asked for guidance for developing a draft ordinance for review at the next regular Planning Commission meeting.

The following guidelines were given:

Current operations are exempt from the ordinance.

Operations greater than 100,000 cubic yards of sand/year must apply for a permit.

Renewal of permits would be issued on a case-by-case basis pending any problems with the operation in the community.

The current ordinance must be amended because all current sand mines are located in the Agricultural Zone district while the ordinance allows sand mines only in the Industrial Zone district.

There must be a balance between protecting the rights of homeowners as well as protecting the rights of the operators.

Sand mines must be located no closer than 100 feet from a public road.

Sand mines must be located no closer than 400 feet from a house (existing mines exempt).

Fencing may be required in certain circumstances.

Tim Johnson will review the draft and highlight items that “may” be required versus items that “shall” be required.

8. New Business:

a. Master Plan

Tim Johnson reviewed the Main Street Planning Work Plan to Update the Dorr Township Master Plan dated 4/1/05. The consensus of the Board was to follow the work plan as outlined with the hope of having completed the tasks and having a draft completed by the end of this year. A tentative date of 5/14/05 at 1:00 p.m. was set for the bus tour. The Dorr Township Board will be contacted as to their availability for the bus tour and a date will be set as soon as possible.

b. Mark Hammersma petition for a Public Hearing to reduce the minimum lot size. There was no one in attendance to present the petition.

Discussion ensued regarding the request to have a public hearing to amend the ordinance to reduce the minimum frontage of residential lots in the B-1 Zoning District from 100 feet to 75 feet and the overall minimum lot size from 12,000 square feet to 9,600 square feet in areas where sewer is available.

Tim Johnson reported that the suggestion is not unusual and makes economic sense because smaller lots spreads the cost of sewer over a greater number of residents and (in theory) reduces “sprawl.”

Norm Fifelski commented that there is an abundance of smaller (started) homes in Dorr Township. He pointed out that if the minimum number of square feet was increased the value of homes would be greater and these larger homes could be built on smaller lots without resulting in unfavorable subdivisions.

Robert Wagner reported that the Township’s attorney, Steve McKown, said the Board could vote to “deny the petition” for a public hearing. Tim Johnson and Norm Fifelski disagreed.

A motion was made by Doug Montgomery and supported by Deb Prenatt to table the petition to amend the Dorr Township Zoning Ordinances 300.901, 300.902 and 300.903 until the Board obtains clarification on whether a public hearing must be held from the Township’s attorney. All aye. Motion carried.

9. Commissioner Comments

Photographs of 7 trucks parked in the front of DMX, which indicated a E-Commercial Business was in operation in a C-Local Business zoning district, were reviewed. It was the consensus of the Board that the Zoning Administrator needs to address this issue.

10. A Motion was made by Gordon Lieffers and Supported by Deb Prenatt to adjourn. All Aye. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

The next scheduled regular Planning Commission meeting is May 17, 2005.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Karen Ann Slater*

Karen Ann Slater  
Secretary