

**VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2015, 7:00 PM
FRANKLIN VILLAGE HALL
32325 FRANKLIN ROAD, FRANKLIN, MICHIGAN**

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Village of Franklin Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman, Connie Ettinger at the Franklin Village Hall, 32325 Franklin Road, Franklin, MI at 7:00 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Rajaei Abbass, Karen Couf-Cohen, Calvin Cupidore, Connie Ettinger, Peter Halick, Dean Moenck, Bob Wilke

Absent: None

Also Present: Planning Consultant, Sarah Traxler, McKenna & Associates; Village Administrator, Jim Creech; Village Clerk Eileen Pulker

Ettinger welcomed a student who was observing the meeting for a class.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Moenck, seconded by Wilke to adopt the agenda, as presented.

Ayes: Abbass, Couf-Cohen, Cupidore, Ettinger, Halick, Moenck, Wilke

Nays: None

Motion carried.

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of November 11, 2015

Wilke corrected the typographical error on Page 2 “Countryside Contraction” should read, “*Countryside Construction*”.

Motion by Abbass, seconded by Wilke, to approve the Minutes for the Regular Meeting of November 11, 2015, as amended.

Ayes: Abbass, Couf-Cohen, Cupidore, Ettinger, Halick, Moenck, Wilke

Nays: None

Motion carried.

V. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Creech reported that he is tying up end-of-the-year loose ends. In January he would be looking at federal aid projects, such as road construction, and is looking into a joint application with the City of Southfield about Franklin Road, particularly south of 13 Mile Road to Northwestern Hwy. The timeline for doing the entire length of Franklin Road would probably be 2019 and with that would be the consideration of the “Complete Streets” as part of the federal aid process. He explained the matrix of the federal funding vs. local funding. Ettinger clarified with Traxler that “complete streets” (including pathways) means transportation for non-motorized vehicles. Pedestrians and bicycles would be part of the plan.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ettinger opened for public comments with no one from the public responding.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. To Receive Public Comment on the Proposed Ordinance to Amend Section 1202.02 Establishment, reduction of members from nine (9) to seven (7), of Chapter 1220, Planning Commission, of Part 12 Planning and Zoning Code, of the Codified Ordinance of the Village of Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan, and to Repeal Conflicting Ordinances.**

Ettinger opened the Public Hearing at 7:07 PM.

Al Beke, Colony Hill, had several questions, including whether the system was broken and needing to be fixed, or had meetings been canceled due to a lack of members for a quorum, or had the Village experienced a change in population. Beke noted that it may be difficult to replace the two members who had moved out of the Village, but he opined it would not be insurmountable. Also, Beke commented on the need for diversity and reducing the potential for exclusivity and questioned what the size was of Planning Commissions in other communities of similar population.

Ettinger closed the Public Hearing at 7:08 PM.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Consider Proposed Ordinance to Amend Section 1202.02 Establishment, Reduction of members from nine (9) to seven (7), of Chapter 1220, Planning Commission, of Part 12 Planning and Zoning Code, of the Codified Ordinances of the Village of Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan, and to Repeal Conflicting Ordinances.**

Motion by Abbass, seconded by Wilke to discuss adoption of the Ordinance to Amend Section 1202.02 Establishment, reduction of members from nine (9) to seven (7), of Chapter 1220, Planning Commission, of Part 12 Planning and Zoning Code, of the Codified Ordinance of the Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan, and to Repeal Conflicting Ordinances.

Couf-Cohen asked Beke to elaborate and be specific about his reference to “Franklin changing”. Beke clarified that he was asking whether the Village population has increased or decreased, necessitating the need to change the number of members required on the Commission, noting that since he moved into the Village in 1980, the majority of his neighborhood has turned over at least three-fold, bringing families with different backgrounds, needs, and perspectives into the neighborhood. Beke questioned if that type of change had brought about the need to change the commission.

Discussion ensued regarding whether or not the population numbers of the Village had changed, to which Creech replied no, the population is relatively stable. Also, surrounding communities

and the size of their Planning Commissions were discussed and it was found that all of the Commissions that both Traxler and Creech were familiar with consist of seven (7) members.

Ettinger noted that with other communities using seven (7) Planning Commission members and the fact that two (2) members had recently resigned due to moves out of the Village, changing the number through attrition, which was why she supported the change at this time.

Several items were further discussed including whether or not the individual rights would be maintained, the size of Planning Commissions in other communities, and process by which Planning Commission members are appointed, which is an appointment made by the Village President, which is then ratified by the Village Council.

Motion by Wilke, seconded by Couf-Cohen recommend to Village Council the approval of the amendment to Section 1202.02 Establishment, reduction of members from nine (9) to seven (7), of Chapter 1220, Planning Commission, of Part 12 Planning and Zoning Code, of the Codified Ordinances of the Village of Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan, and to Repeal Conflicting Ordinances.

Ayes: Abbass, Couf-Cohen, Cupidore, Ettinger, Halick, Moenck, Wilke

Nays: None

Motion carried.

B. Composition of Complete Streets Committee.

Ettinger explained that this committee was still in the formative stages, however, the title had been changed from “pathways” and “sidewalks”, as those terms have been polarizing labels in the past. At the last meeting it was decided that it would comprise of two (2) members each from Planning Commission, Historic District Commission, and the Main Street Franklin group. Discussion ensued regarding other members of the committee, for which it was determined that while a public meeting, everyone would be notified and could attend, but only those chosen would be members of the committee. Main Street Franklin’s involvement in the committee was discussed, and it was determined that, final committee appointments have not yet been agreed upon and future discussion with the Village President will determine who for Village Council may serve on the committee. There was a general discussion about what issues and activities might be considered in the future, and a vision statement was recommended for this committee. The upcoming election year and possible bond issues on ballots were discussed. The “complete streets” concept was discussed further noting that state and federal requirements will be connected to any grant projects, but locally raised money would not be.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consider Proposed Lot Split Application for 27115 Wellington.

Ettinger introduced the item by summarizing those documents included in the PC packets, stating her opinion she found the application complete with a couple of small exceptions, which could be easily taken care of. She complimented Traxler on her review and recommendation of the application as was stated in her letter, dated December 1, 2015. Ettinger made special note of the table Traxler included, entitled, “R-M District Regulations”.

Eric Bean, owner of the property, was in attendance and available to answer any questions.

Set back dimensions of each of the proposed lots were discussed with Traxler. Mr. Bean stated that he was considering building on one of the lots, and may have an interested purchaser for the remaining lot.

Mira Stakhiv, Crestwood, expressed her favorable opinion of Franklin, stressing how its' large properties help define the charm of Franklin Village and that that was one of the main reasons she and her husband chose to come to the Village, many, many years ago. She agreed that the PC can comply with the law and regulations but it might set a precedence. She mentioned that she had been present at the Village Council meeting when Mr. Bean's demolition application for the existing house on the property was approved. A couple weeks ago it was brought to her attention that the two (2) lots in question were listed for sale on a public real estate web site, pending approval of a lot split. She questioned whether it should have been advertised before approval had been given. She and her husband bought their property with the understanding that this particular area was zoned for bigger properties and would remain as such. She is opposed to this lot split. She felt that "The town that time forgot" would slowly not be there anymore, if this lot split moved forward.

Mr. Bean replied that he had advertised the sale of the lots, contingent upon the approvals necessary.

Al Beke, Colony Hill, asked Moenck his opinion of what the action of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) might be in the instance of a variance being requested for the odd shaped lot resulting in a split. To which Moenck replied that ZBA is not inclined to approve self-imposed hardships.

Traxler noted that the ZBA has specific standards that it must adhere to a hardship or practical difficulty would need to be proven in order for the ZBA to be able to consider a variance.

Motion by Wilke, seconded by Cupidore to recommend approval to the Village Council for the Lot Split Application for 27115 Wellington.

Commissioners discussed their sympathies with the surrounding neighborhood, the size of the lots determine the size of the houses constructed, and that each of the lots will result in 1 acre parcels. Further discussion included the current requirements for Zoning, with which this application complies, and what may be future actions of the Planning Commission and or the Village Council to change zoning requirements or to implement a moratorium of lot splits. The stipulations of the Village's Master Plan were discussed and it was determined that while it contains guidelines, the actual Zoning Code is what is applicable in this instance. Notification requirements of the meeting were discussed, and it was noted that a public hearing was not warranted and regular notification of the meeting had been provided. Commissioners noted that lot splits have a significant impact on the Village and the estate size lots are what make Franklin unique, adding that future actions should be considered that would block more lot splits. The difficulties of building on lots with two (2) front yards were discussed, noting the frequency with which owners of properties such as those have appealed to the Zoning Board for variances.

Ettinger called the question.

Cupidore requested a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Abbass	Nay
Couf-Cohen	Aye
Cupidore	Aye
Ettinger	Aye
Halick	Nay
Moenck	Aye
Wilke	Aye

Motion carried.

X. BUDGET REPORT

Cupidore clarified that there were no other invoices currently to be addressed.

XI. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

A. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting, January 20, 2016.

Ettinger and Wilke will not be able to attend the meeting.

Moenck asked Traxler that once the Council approves the membership changes from nine (9) to seven (7) that she adjust the By-Laws accordingly, including the “supermajority” language. He asked Creech to also look at the language of the Zoning Board to ascertain that it is also corrected.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Couf-Cohen supported by Moenck to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Abbass, Couf-Cohen, Cupidore, Ettinger, Halick, Moenck, Wilke

Nays: None

Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Beke, Recording Secretary

Eileen H. Pulker, Clerk