**Town of Gnesen Planning Commission**

**February 15, 2023 Minutes**

**Members Present:** Carter Williams, Pete Bergman, Matt Thibodeau, Kevin Middleton, Joe Ferguson, Sherri Underthun, Kathy Buran; and Sarah Blix and Hannah Jurek Planning and Zoning Secretary.

**Members Absent:** Dick Delano, Carol Jacobson

**Others Present:** Gary Juten, Dennis Campbell, Jay Haller, Marcia Haller, Josh Wing, Joanna Wing, and Nancy Poppenberg

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** A motion was made by Pete to approve the agenda, second by Kevin. All vote in favor.

**APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 18, 2023 MINUTES**: A motion was made by Sherri to approve the January 18, 2023 minutes, second by Joe. All vote in favor.

**CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

**MN Power – Carey Cove:** After much discussion the **p**ublic hearing will be set for Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 6:30 pm. This public hearing would approve the plat as presented from MN Power. MN Power will provide residents with information.

**Rice Lake Road Rezone-** Public hearing set for March 27, 2023. A letter of extension was sent given the public hearing was outside the 60 day window, the minutes reflect that it was the owner that scheduled the time therefore the extension wasn’t necessarily needed, however, letter was sent just in case.

**STR Application –** After some discussion about the STR Application that the Town Board approved of at the February 13, 2023 meeting, some concerns were that the final draft of the application was passed over the Commission. Although the sub-committee did have a hand in creating the final draft that was presented and then approved by the Town Board. There was discussion about the process, primarily involving the health department license or insurance requirement. The Town will not be policing that, for the lack of man power to do so. It will be on the applicant to meet those requirements since they are already state rule. It was asked if there will be a list of all the STR that will be available to the Commission members. There will be a master list in the Clerk’s office.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**60 Day Rule –** Discussion was had about the 60 day rule. By MN Statute the Township has 60 days to approve or deny an application, and the discussion was about how does one keep track, who is in charge of keeping track. It was stated that there needs to be a legitimate reason to ask for an extension. The topic will put on the agenda in old business for the March meeting.

**Subdivision Application -** Tabled until March.

**Carol’s Corner –** Carol wrote a letter to the Commissioners with some great information regarding zoning issues. One that peeked interest was where Carol suggested a process for documenting changes the Commission made to the ordinance. There was some hesitation on how that could be implemented at this point. But here suggested were appreciated, and it was suggested to table until next month so Carol can be here to talk about her letter. Joe made a motion to table until next month, seconded by Sherri. Motion carried.

**7155 Island Lake Falls Road – Josh Wing –** Josh and Joanna Wing were in front of the Commission about a year ago asking and then granted a variance to add on and build on the existing structure that was grandfathered in due to its proximity to the lake shore, the structure was 30 feet away. At the end of January a fire started at the nearly completed home, burning more than 50% of the structure down, by Minnesota Statute, the grandfather clause to build the structure where is stood is now in void, and therefore the Wings must build within the required setbacks for their lot. The Wing’s were in front of the Commission at this meeting looking to get a variance to build in the exact footprint of the home before the fire. After much discussion and sympathy for the Wing family, no decision was made at this meeting, the Wing’s were asked to present their plans with the suggestion of building as far from the lake as possible to try to have the lot be closer to conformity, but concerns of disrupting the topography of the land was an echoing issue. A public hearing was set before the March Planning and Zoning meeting on March 15, 2023 at 6:30 pm.

**BOARD MEMBERS REPORT:** The Town Board on Monday night approved to make Commission Members employees, paying per meeting. Commission Member would get $40.00 and Commission Chair $60.00. With that, there is the expectation that the Chair Person be present at one of the Town Board meeting, and if not the chair person, co-chair. There is also an expectation of more commitment from the Commission Members, understanding meetings can be difficult, but its nice to have everyone there. Gary also relayed that the Board is entertaining the idea of drop from a 9 Commission Member board to a 7 Commission Member board. History has shown that Gnesen did operate with a 5 member Planning and Zoning Commission Board. Gary did make it very clear that there is no one telling anyone to step down, if there is a member that wants or is willing, that would be okay. But the discussion on dropping down the size of the board is still on going.

**ZONING OFFICERS REPORT:** A property owner off of East Van Road looking to put up a storage facility. He is in the beginning stages of figuring out the layout for he is zoned to be able to do so. The Deputy Zoning Officer posting will close at the end of this month. Nathan will set up interviews with the, so far, 2 applicants.

Next P&Z Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 7:30 pm.

A motion was made by Kathy to adjourn, with a second by Carter. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Jurek, Planning and Zoning Secretary Matt Thibodeau, Planning Commission Chair

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Date Date