

Town of Gnesen Planning Commission
April 16, 2025 Minutes

Members Present: Carter Williams, Sherri Underthun, Matt Thibodeau, Carol Jacobson, Kevin Middleton, Pete Bergman, and Dick DeLano, Rick Hogenson, Zoning Officer, Mike Polzin, Zoning Officer and; Sarah Blix, acting as Planning and Zoning Secretary.

Members Absent: Joe Ferguson, Kathy Buran

Others Present: Nancy Poppenberg, Town Board Liaison; Sara Rowe, Jay Haller, AJ Jensen, Nathan Horyza, Randy Dulinski, Scott Carlson, Mike Rowe

Approval of the agenda: A motion was made by Carol to approve the agenda, seconded by Kevin. All vote in favor.

Approval of March 19, 2025 minutes: A motion was made by Carol approve the March 19, 2025 minutes, seconded by Kevin. All vote in favor.

VOTE OF NEW OFFICERS: There was a vote for new officers. For the Chair position Carter received 4 votes, Sherri 3 votes. Carter won as Chair for another term. For Vice Chair Sherri, 3 votes, Dick 2 votes, Matt 2 votes. Sherri won as Vice Chair.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION: Nathan Horyza attended tonight's meeting to discuss Ulland's Oscar Pit hot mix plant. Nathan said he had turned in a complaint and questioned if anyone from the Commission had any questions. Carter informed Nathan that Rick has the complaint and is working on it and will provide a report when his research is complete. Rick explained to Nathan that he sent him a letter earlier today requesting a 60-day extension as the complaint is quite extensive. Nathan questioned when the 60-day extension would expire to which Rick said he did not know off the top of his head, but it is stated in the letter that was sent out today.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Attendance – There was discussion about the bylaws and Commission member absences. Carter said at this time there is no allowable number of absences mentioned in the bylaws. Carter said at one time three absences were discussed. Carter also questioned whether absences should run April to April or January to January. Matt mentioned that the bylaws were discussed in 2024 and what is stated in the bylaws now is what the Commission wanted and voted on. Currently there are no number of absences stated in the bylaws because the Commission decided to let the Town Board Supervisors use their judgement and treat each case individually and then come up with a fair decision. Carter said he is not in disagreement, rather he just wanted to make sure that all Commission members know that absences need to be called into the office so that the P&Z secretary can ensure there will be a quorum for the meetings.

Stewart Camp – Mike reported that the Stewart family sent the office a letter in response to the request for the family to send a list of assets and ownership to the township. Mike mentioned that the family continues to claim they are grandfathered in, however they have been unable to prove this. The family did state they would attend the May P&Z meeting. Kevin said there have been other residents in the past with multiple campers on their lake property and they were asked to remove those campers. Kevin said something needs to be done and this issue needs to stop being drug out. Carter said he personally would be open to reasonable movement of things off the property but will make his final decision once he hears what the Stewart family has to say. Sherri asked if the Town Board Supervisors could be present at the May P&Z meeting. Nancy will bring this question up at the next Town Board meeting. Matt read from the ordinance the definition of a campground into the record, *"An open-air recreation area where temporary shelters, such as tents, recreational vehicles, and travel trailers, are intended to provide short-term occupancy."* Rick questioned if all Commission members are ready to move forward in May when the Stewarts are in attendance rather than just having the meeting become a bargaining session. Carter asked if prior to the May meeting all Commission Members could think about all the information that has already been provided and start to determine how they would like to proceed.

David Humes – Rick said that April 9, 2025 was David’s deadline for contacting him but he failed to do so. Rick said that earlier today he delivered David an official zoning violation letter for his property on Normanna Road. Matt questioned what the exact zoning violations were. Rick said the violations were the following:

1. Shipping containers in waterfront districts
2. Junk, salvage, wrecking yard

Randy Dulinski questioned if the township received a complaint on this issue to which Rick said yes, he did receive a complaint.

Cannabis Ordinance – Sherri said using the St. Louis County cannabis ordinance and changing it to fit Gnesen and incorporating the changes that Rick suggested would work and then could be presented to the Commission for review. Matt said he saw what Sherri and Rick had created, made a few other changes, and said it could be presented as is. Pete said that all members really need to review the proposed ordinance prior to approving anything. This will be put on the May agenda for further discussion and review.

Ordinance Changes - The following proposed ordinance changes were presented and discussed:

- OR-25-15 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.03 Definitions – Add the following standards to the definition for Accessory structure or use.
 1. Only one such structure on a lot in SR and RR zones.
 2. A modular structure may be allowed with more than one (1) modular unit with an engineered roof. A CUP will be required for this.
 3. Modular structures may be allowed with a building permit or an IUP.

Sherri made a motion to scratch this ordinance change, seconded by Carol. All vote in favor.

- OR-25-16 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.03 Definitions – Under Remodel B increase the acceptable roof height from 2ft to 6ft.

There was discussion about exceeding the overall height requirement of a structure. Matt said this is just a definition and that the ordinance states the controls which will ensure that property owners do not exceed the maximum allowable height. Rick suggested removing the line that reads, “*or increase living space.*” Matt made a motion to approve the change with Ricks suggestion of removing the line that reads, “*or increase living space,*” seconded by Sherri. All vote in favor.

- OR-25-17 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.03 Definitions – Under the definition of Road remove the word “*public.*” Carol made a motion to accept as presented, seconded by Kevin. All vote in favor.
- OR-25-18 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.03 Definitions – Under the definition for simple splits remove the word, “*Public.*” Sherri made a motion to accept as presented, seconded by Dick. All vote in favor.
- OR-25-19 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.101 – Under Q change, “*Private Drives*” to “*Access*”; change the word “*and*” to “*or*” and remove “*improved public.*” Sherri made a motion to accept, seconded by Kevin. All vote in favor.
- OR-25-20 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.114 – Under B 5 change the word “*and*” to “*any.*”
- OR-25-21 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.123 – Remove line A 6 which reads, “*No additions (barring a deck) have been added to the principal structure since the implementation date of the appropriate setback standard, and the original structure existed before setback requirements were established.*” There was discussion about if this section is removed then the entire section needs to be renumbered. Sherri made a motion to accept with the addition of renumbering the entire section, seconded by Dick. All vote in favor.
- OR-25-22 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.123 – Under section B remove “*and 6*” to correspond with ordinance change OR-25-21. Sherri made a morion to accept as presented, seconded by Carol. All vote in favor.
- OR-25-23 – Ordinance #10 – Section 10.123 – Under G 7 change “*County Assessor*” to “*Qualified Individual;*” change “*shall*” to “*may.*” Dick made a motion to accept as presented, seconded by Sherri. All vote in favor.

NEW BUSINESS:

Gravel Pit Review Criteria – Carol mentioned that since all the CUP’s have now been recorded members from the Commission should really look at each individual gravel pit and since they all have different conditions create a specific review form for each pit. Carol said this should be done and ready for the August gravel pit

reviews. Carter said that the new forms really need to be done by July so that they can be presented to the Commission for review and then sent out to the pit owners prior to inspections. A motion was made by Carol to proceed with this, seconded by Kevin. All vote in favor.

What to do when a STR Licensee Moves Out of the Township? – Sarah said a current STR license holder no longer lives in the township and questioned how the Commission would like the office to document that as the permit would no longer be valid. After some discussion it was decided that a form be created to attach to the permit in the file stating the permit holders are no longer residents of Gnesen and so therefore the permit is null and void.

Scott Carlson Variance – Scott Carlson presented his variance request to the Commission. This public hearing was scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at 6:30pm.

ZONING OFFICER’S REPORT: Nothing more to add.

BOARD MEMBER’S REPORT: Nothing new to add.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

Next P&Z Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at 7:00pm.

A motion was made by Sherri to adjourn, with a second by Dick. All vote in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:48pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Blix, acting as Planning and Zoning Secretary

Carter Williams, Planning Commission Chair

Date