

# ***RAVENNA TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION***

BEVERLEY KIBLER CHAIRMAN, RUTH SCHELL,  
JENNEFIR COLLIER, LINDA FALTISCO, BOB VAIR

The Ravenna Township Board of Zoning Commission met on April 27, 2016 at 7:00 p.m., at the Ravenna Township Trustees Meeting Room at 6115 S. Spring St., Ravenna, Ohio.

Chairman, Beverley Kibler brought the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

In attendance were, R/C: Beverley Kibler, Linda Faltisco, Ruth Schell, Jennifer Collier, and Bob Vair, Carolyn Chambers, Zoning Secretary and Jim DiPaola, Zoning inspector.

On the agenda was to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2016 meeting and to review Zoning Code changes.

Jennifer Collier made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2016 meeting. Bob Vair second the motion. R/C Bob Vair-yes, Jennifer Collier-yes, Ruth Schell-yes, Linda Faltisco-yes, and Bev Kibler-yes Motion passed, minutes approved.

## OLD BUSINESS-

Jim: Well, last time we talked about signs. Does anybody have any more thoughts on heights and thoughts on the commercial signs?

Beverley: I like your idea that they have to be at least 6 foot off the ground. So the people can see under and around them.

Jim: We have one sign in town, new sign that is going to go up for the new Aldi's and it's a ground sign.

Beverley: Is it going to be a big one?

Jim: It's going to be bigger than 32 sq. ft. So they're going to have to get a variance for that, but its nice brick structure, nice base and then two pillars with the sign in between it that's Aldo's standard signs.

Beverley: They are not right on a corner though where you're not going to be able to see the other road.

Jim: Yea, they usually cut those back. The other thing is, our sign requirements from road right of way are 10 feet and that may not be enough either. Down near the end of the road, the people that have the beauty shop and tattoo parlor they want to put a pedestal sign in front of their business and if they put it 10 feet back it is just going to be on the other side of the sidewalk and they are only going to have 10 feet between the curb of where the signs going to be. That maybe something to talk about. Is 10 feet setback...

Beverley: Should it be 15?

Bob: That's from the edge of the road?

Jim: On 59 we have been going from the edge of the road, the code says road right of way.

Beverley: That is usually in between the sidewalk and.....

Jim: The road right of way on St. Rt. is not always the edge of the road. If you drive out 59 past the revised, reopened Ohio Ceramics you will see where their sign is. That is 10

feet off the right of way which is close to the front door. It's on the other side of the parking lot, because the state has a weird right of way.

Bob: On Aldi's sign, is that going to be visible...is the sign going to set this way so you can see it as you are coming down the road or do you have to be in front of it to see it?

Jim: It should be set to where you can see it from either side.

Linda: There is an Aldi's in Streetsboro and they've got theirs up on top of their building.

Jim: The one sign they do have up there does have signs on the front of their building, but they also have a pedestal base type sign that sets out front. I think out there 10 feet off the right of way is the edge of the curb on East Main St.

Beverley: The Stow one has a sign down too.

Jennifer: How tall is that pedestal going to be?

Jim: I think it is going to be at least 6 foot. I don't think it's any higher than 6 foot. Because of the square footage they are going to have to go to Board of Zoning Appeals and get a variance for the square footage.

Bob: That sign won't be required to be 6 feet up, right?

Jim: Right

Beverley: No, because we haven't passed the new zoning and let it go all the way through yet.

Jim: That is something when we started talking about signs I didn't take into account base signs like that. So that maybe something else to look at and I haven't had a change to even.... Carolyn was looking through the stuff the other day, but we haven't found anything on base signs.

Jennifer: If you are going to have a base sign that is 6 feet up you have to be shorter than 6 feet to see over them.

Bob: You could also, if push comes to shove, and we have to change it to make like what they are an exception, because they are not at an intersection where you don't have to see around the corner. If you are on an intersection then you would have to be 6 feet so the people can see through it.

Beverley: You will wind up with problems if you start making exceptions. Once we get the thing passed through it should be straight across the board.

Jim: Then they can go to the Board of Zoning Appeals and they would have to have a variance on that. But, if all a sudden we have this that is not a pedestal sign anymore it's a base sign and I guess one of the first ones around here, everyone else has been on some type of a fold and I didn't know until last night when I got the stuff in the mail yesterday and looked at it and looked at their presentation last night, that is a different kind of sign.

Beverley: Is there a sign on city property? Because I know their city, township they straddle.

Jim: No, the sign, out there, the front of the building, the two corners of the building, where the two signs will be on the building is in the township. The Aldi's sign that goes up front and faced that sign is the township. The parking lot is in the township. The majority of the building is in the city.

Ruth: Are they tearing that building down and putting a new one up?

Jim: Yes, that's the thing with the base sign and I never thought of that because it has never come before us before.

Bob: There probably is none around here.

Jim: There's the one in Streetsboro, I think Aldi's has a small sign like that out front. That may be something to look at and see how they define those things. We have something new. I don't know what the terminology is on that sign. I don't know if it's

called a monument sign or what. Usually the little signs that are yay high and down on the ground are called monument signs.

Linda: Couldn't you find out from Streetsboro?

Jim: We will next week. Back to the pedestal signs. 6 feet to the base good for everybody?

Everyone yes

Jim: Then as far as overall height to the top of the sign if we make it 6 feet and it's another 4 feet above that it could go anywhere from 4 feet, the Giant Eagle sign for out at the edge of town is a good size pedestal sign. How high do you want it to go?

Jennifer: I say a max of twelve.

Beverley: That is what I would say is a max of twelve

Jim: Ok

Bob: You are talking the sign itself above a six feet, you are talking 18 feet total?

Jennifer: No, 6 feet and another 6 feet 12 feet total

Jim: 6 feet and then 6 feet more above. What we will do before the next meeting is we will get the language all written out and send it to you and then pass it and then we can start moving it on up the line. (Jim explains how it is put in the zoning code without changing the numbers on the sheets.) those changes would come right after we do the section on page 214 which is permanent signs requiring a zoning certificate. It would probably fall under number C, number 2 free standing or monument signs for nonresidential use. As far as the overall square footage 32 sq. ft. which is 4 foot by 8 foot that's the size of a piece of plywood. Is that amply enough space or should it be bigger?

Beverley: I don't think it should be any bigger than that. That is plenty big enough for people to be able to read.

Jim: With the advent of the digital signs it should be easy to change the message on that and put up what they want. So just leave No. 1 at 32 sq. ft. and No. 2 will be changed to overall height shall be no greater than 12.

Beverley: Then you will have to add to that that the bottom will have to be at least 6 foot off the ground.

Jim: Correct, anything else that you guys want to talk about on signs?

Beverley: Not until we get more information on that one that you're saying is close to the ground.

Jim: Base signs

Ruth: This pertains only to No. 2 not 3 or 4? There're all the same?

Jim: Well, No. 2 is a free standing or monument and we may have to move monument sign out of there and just break out free standing for monument. Add a section that says free standing signs to identify nonresidential and then have a monument sign to identify as residential use.

Beverley: Are you going to have to do the same thing in 3? Because that's shopping center is in that category.

Jim: That's more of a ..... we used to call it a strip mall and things like that and now the zoning code addresses that as plan business development. So, we will have to make that... we will have to define that better, we will have to define No. 3 better.

Beverley: Is that going to be something like the one that's out here on 59? I know he's gone for variance to build a building on it.

Jim: We made him go under a plan unit development. Which is probably going to court. The week the Board of Zoning Appeals did give him permission to put the planned business development in but the adjoining said they are going to take the Township to court because he doesn't think it's right and he does have a case. Because to the west of

that property is a wetland and the court told him to put the road west and the gentleman contacted the Army Corp of Engineers and they are hot because if he puts the road in where it should go he will take out half of the storage buildings half of each single one. That decision of going back to court. But, they also said they were going to appeal our decision so I can't issue any certificates to anybody to do anything until that 30 days from that period is up and if he doesn't, I already told the adjoining property owner that I don't have a choice but to issue a conditional use certificate. Then he would have to come back with plans and everything to build the stores. He has pestered us for years that he wants an onsite managers quarters and the zoning code doesn't allow that because where he is at it is general commercial and there is no residential allowed.

Ruth: What area are we talking about now?

Beverley: Cost U Less storage.

Bob: Didn't he have to move his driveway that is on the east side of the buildings now because of that swamp?

Jim: His driveway was originally on the east side and that's where the other guys claimed he had an easement to build a road. When he started to put the concrete pads in for the driveway the neighbor was complaining that they are not built to county road standards so he couldn't drive on it. What the neighboring property owner is, is trying to get this guy to pay for his road back to his property and right so the guys says no, I'm not going to pay for a road back to your property. They are claiming that is where the original easement was and when the court looked at the documents and sorted everything out, they said nope we are going to put it on the west side of the building, but they put it on wetlands.

Bob: I think, if I'm not mistaken, that was McCoy property years ago.

Jim: He was the last owner before this guy. The easement supposedly goes back a while. If he puts his building where he wants he'll have that sign in the front yard but he can't use that sign to advertise his place, so that is a mess.

Beverley: So they put small signs above each shop of what they are.

Jim: That is what he was saying what he want to do, is put a standard size sign above each shop and make each shop owner responsible for changing the sign. That's smart and he should do it that way. Anything else on signs? I sure don't have anything until we get some of this stuff typed up and it will have to go before Reginal Planning and they will take a look at it and compare it to other Zoning codes that they have access too and they will send recommendation's back.

Beverley: Doesn't the Prosecutor look at it too?

Jim: No, The Prosecutor doesn't have to.

Beverley: Ok, but the Trustees have to after it comes back from Reginal?

Jim: Yes, then if they don't like something they send it back to you guys and you guys send it back to them. The next thing I want to talk about is something we call Flag lots. It's in a conditional use on page 154. A flag lot is exactly what it says. We define this is technically the frontage. (draws a flay lot on the board) We defined that good and defined everything else good but we have to define....

Beverley: The right of way in

Jim: How wide should it be?

Bob: Per driveway?

Jim: Yes, most of the time it is a driveway, that's pretty much it. We don't have anything that specifically says how wide it is and I've had two inquires, the sheriff's so far about a flag lot and they're saying how wide is the pole for the flag?

Bob: What would the lot be used for? Is it going to be used for a business then it should be double wide. If it's residential, probably 10 feet.

Jim: That's the thing, how wide should that be? Most of the time surveyors want to know and of course the property owners want to know because they want to put a driveway in and there is people that want to sub divide lots but their lot is back here and someone else's lot is up front. Without that pole it's a land locked lot and they can't build it.

Jennifer: If residential you have to have a two way capability.

Jim: You should, but we also have to have the ability to get a fire truck down there.

Bob: The driveway has to be a minimum of two feet, right

Jim: We don't have anything that says that. Ours says that you can pretty much put it right up to.....

Bob: A driveway?

Jim: Yes

Bob: That is not what I read in here. This was brought up to me two weeks ago, she was inquiring of how close to the property line can a driveway be and how close can a fence be. The fence can be on the line, the driveway has to be in two feet. I forget what the thing was. I found it in the index.

Jim: There is a chapter of off street parking. It has something about driveways.

Bob: I wanted to ask you about that if that is right.

Jim: Somebody on Lovers Lane called about that the other day and they have about three, four lots out there and one of them right now is landlocked. They wanted to know if it was a buildable lot and I said no, because there is no access to the right of way. They said well how do we do that? I said well, you make a sidewalk and the guys went oh, I didn't know you could do that. I said yes, you can and he says well how wide does that strip have to be and I went, I don't know. There is a spot out on Beechwood and there is four poles the lots are here and here (points to the map) and I think they are about six feet wide, everything, every single one of them and it's a good thing the neighbors get along. If they had one person that there that was a pain he would park his boats and things in the between the two driveways and half would be on the other persons property.

Beverley: There is a property on Lovers Lane that the one is 42 acres and the other is 22 acres and neither one of them has more, well, the one is probably one and a half lot wide and the other is two lot wide. But it all faces on 14.

Jim: With everything, are you talking about the Webb property?

Beverley: I don't know, are they up on 14?

Jim: They are on 14 and they also butt up against Lover Lane

Beverley: They've got that divided into two pieces.

Jim: The third parcel is on Lovers Lane and when I looked at the tax map, the tax map doesn't show three parcels it shows five and I ask the girl that was doing this the other day, did somebody have the lots redone, because I don't have a record of it.

Beverley: Well, they have it divided into three parcels right now.

Jim: That is what they will auction it off as. She said she talked to Kiko' and they said no, the property was resurveyed and done into three parcels. State law says the Zoning Inspector has to sign it and I went back and looked through and I could find anything.

Bob: (Still looking for section on driveways) Discussion follows on where to find it.

Jim: I gave you Randolph's code on flag lots and they have it just like ours does with a nice picture

Jennifer: So the property on Dawley, across from me, it goes back to about the woods, the oil guy, directly across from me there is a drive, it's not a real drive it's dirt, it goes

back into the woods and whoever, I thought it was the Ravenna oil guy, bought the whole back section back there.

Jim: It could be a flag lot

Jennifer: It's got to be there is no other access.

Ruth: Is that the same thing as the right of way?

Jim: No, that's different. Somebody with a landlocked lot an existing one, not a new one, can have, like Mr. McGee is trying to get out here, access. You can have a written agreement with somebody that you can have access across their property.

Ruth: In Charlestown, my sister has one and her lot is behind somebody else. Somebody had to make a right of way to get there.

Jim: When they grant an easement like that as with most things the person you make the easement agreement with you may get along with and at some point in time you get a person that will say I don't care if you have an easement, I'm putting a fence up there and then you are kind of stuck, where as a creation of a flag lot prevents that. Like we are talking a flag lot for a commercial verses a residential then yes it should be wider. A drive should be at least 26 feet. Our driveway in commercial areas are 24 to 26 feet, that is what ours are. A gentleman that lives on Lovers Lane that is residential low density which means that the frontage has to be 100 feet, so the flag part of that, that has to be at least 100 feet wide it can't be any narrower than that and another thing in our code says that the pole can't be longer than 900 feet.

Bob: I would think if you are going to set a length on something like that you should have at least 15 feet. If you are going to build back there, if you put 10 foot drive in you're not going to get a truck back there with supplies. You have to have 15 feet and it might not be wide enough for that.

Jim: Then you have to be able to maintain it too. So you would think you need a buffer on each side so that you wouldn't be going on your neighbor's property to maintain your driveway if you had to dig it out.

Bob: If you had to plow it, snow plow it where you going to put the snow?

Jennifer: so if you said it had to be 2 feet off the property line then 16 feet minimum width you are giving them an extra 2 feet to deal with it.

Jim: 20 feet sounds like a nice round number to deal with. We can add that to the code if you like. We have to have something to tell these people when they start surveying that there is a minimum width here.

Bob: Also, what happens if you have sewer and water that has to go to the street? You sure don't want it under the driveway. Water you can get by, sewer would be taken a little bit more, you have electric going back probably be over head and not underground.

Jim: Yes most places anymore so you need that 20 feet at least 20 feet and then for a commercial in defer you need more than that.

Beverley: Probably 30 or better.

Jim: Our minimum road width for something like that is 24 feet.

Beverley: I would almost go 40 then for commercial.

Jim: Yes, you should. Let me see what I can find over the next while. The other thing I want to ask you guys is we have a lot to work on. Would you mind going two months from now for our next meeting? That would give us a chance to try and find the commercial stuff. I want to ask Regional Planning to what they have on commercial flag lots and that. So do you want to make the Residential flag lots, what size? What width?

Bob: I would say 20 feet or 25 whatever.

Beverley: And commercial 40.

Jim: One of the things that is going on in developing especially in commercial end of it is builders use to be willing to do everything, put roads in and all kinds of things and build the road to public standards and turn them over to the political entities they sit in. The trend is now to spend as little money as possible and get around that some developers have created private roads and private roads don't have to be built at the standards. What the case in point is Westwood Village. If you go in Westwood Drive we require at the time the main drive was put in to be built at county standards, but if you go to the condominium section not the Forest Ridge section the Westwood Condominium, all their roads are sloped to center and there is a center direct there are no curbs or anything like that and those road are not built to county standards and therefore the township said we are not taking the road. So they have to make payments and they are finding out what a pain it is.

Bob: The only thing I can see good about that is when it rains real hard you're not going to get water in your house, because it all runs to the center of the road other than that they're terrible.

Jim: They are and they at least have the foresight to make a fill. Westwood Drive is up to county standards. That's the trend out there and I think the township in order to protect itself by getting stuck with roads that are substandard need to have requirements that access roads are put in by the developer and not the township and if not we are not going to. The Board of Zoning Appeals won't even hear it unless those roads are built to county standards. We are going to have an issues with Get Go. Get Go is being built out there at Cotton Corners but it runs off of Hazel which is a township road. Until now Hazel has been lightly traveled so the township hasn't done a lot of maintenance on Hazel. Well, the developers getting kind of worried because he knows that where his construction stuff is going and he asking about the township agreeing to some kind of a maintenance thing.

Beverley: The construction equipment is going to tear up the road.

Jim: It's going to tear up the road real bad. We basically told them you tear it up, you fix it. One of the things we used to have in the Zoning Code for developers was performance bond. For some reason the Prosecutor was telling, back when we did this in 2008-2009 telling everybody you can't enforce that. So we pulled it out of the Zoning Code, but we need.... if we go back to where the Board of Zoning Appeals hears all these development type things they have the ability to tell them to do certain things.

Bob: Flag shaped lots, the lot must have a minimum of 60 feet continuous frontage.

Jim: Yes, the lot must have.

Bob: That's the top part.

Jim: Top part yes.

Bob: It can't be smaller than 60 feet at any point?

Jim: Right, but I think it also has to conform to the Zoning Code of that area.

Bob: Comply with the zoning districts minimum acreage requirement and setback requirements

Jim: What that means is when you go to put a house back here you have to treat this just like the road is here and your front yard setback, side yard and rear yard and I think it says in there you can't count this piece as a part of that acreage too. At least it shouldn't be.

Beverley: Especially if it's in the county where you are going to have a septic. You've got to have a certain amount of acreage.

Jim: Yes, that is going to be another whole thing.

Bob: There again if there's emergency equipment going in. If you have a ten foot tank.

Jim: The thing with the flag lots and that. I'll run it past Regional Planning and I meet with them the second Wednesday of the month is when we have our meetings and I'll bring up flag lots to Todd and see what they say. For now 20 foot residential and 40 foot commercial. That's good because we need to put some standards on some of that big stuff. That's all I got folks.

Bev: Do we have a motion for adjournment then?

Ruth made a motion to adjourn

Linda: Second it

The next meeting will be June 15, 2016

Meeting adjourned at 8:00

Respectfully submitted by

Carolyn Chambers  
Zoning Secretary

cc: Trustees (Coia, Artz, Gibson)  
Zoning Inspector (DiPaola)  
Zoning Commission (5)  
File