

PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

John E. Schroeder • C. William Shaffer • J. Pepper Goslin

Monday through Thursday, closed Friday | Hours: 6:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. | Meeting: First Monday, 7:00 p.m.



ZONING WORKSHOP October 28, 2019

The Providence Township Board of Supervisors held a zoning workshop in the township municipal office on Monday, October 28, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Present were Chairman John Schroeder, Vice Chairman C. William Shaffer, Member J. Pepper Goslin, Manager Vicki Eldridge, Zoning Officer Heidi Martinez, Engineer Mark Deimler; Solicitor Melvin Newcomer and seven (7) observers.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Schroeder at 7:00 P.M followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

ZONING BUSINESS

At this time, the following zoning topics were discussed:

- **Short Term Rentals.** Mr. Deimler and Mr. Newcomer led the discussion on short term rentals. First and foremost, the decision needs to be made whether or not the supervisors wish to add “short term rentals” as a use in the zoning ordinance. If the use is added, a definition of “short term rentals” will need to be drafted. Mr. Deimler strongly suggests not allowing short term rentals in the R3 district. Mrs. Martinez stated she spoke to the township building inspector, Pete Kingsley and he said the code is still vague in this area. Currently, all short-term rentals he inspects, he uses a hotel/motel criteria. By using this criterion, Mr. Kingsley stated this would require sprinklers and other safety measures that are required in hotels/motels. Mr. Schroeder asked how this topic was brought to the forefront. Mr. Shaffer explained that he received an advisory paper describing this new use and he simply shared the idea. Mr. Goslin stated he is in favor with permitting this use. Mr. Newcomer said if this use is to be permitted, we need to add the definition of residential occupancy. Tony Nardella asked what recourse there would be if one of these short term rentals is operating now and we do not define such a use in the zoning ordinance. Mr. Newcomer stated that by not prohibiting a use it would be considered an allowance. At this time, Mr. Schroeder made a motion to visit this topic in the future if it becomes an issue and not add this use to the zoning ordinance. With no second to the motion, the motion died. Mr. Goslin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shaffer to explore simple, reasonable ways that this use can be added to the zoning ordinance. The motion carried with two favorable votes, Mr. Schroeder opposed the motion. Mr. Deimler stated that any ambiguity in the current ordinance would fall under the zoning officer’s interpretation.

- **Section 300, Access Drive Requirements (Non-Single Family Dwelling).** The supervisors are in agreement to move this section to the Providence Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
- **Section 303, Driveway Requirements (Single-family Dwellings and Farms).** Mr. Deimler suggests this section should be removed from the zoning ordinance and incorporated into a stand-alone driveway ordinance. The supervisors were in agreement.
- **Section 302, Clear-Sight Triangle.** Mr. Deimler suggested leaving this section in the zoning ordinance. He explained that this section is important in the zoning ordinance to regulate the safety of intersections especially on corner lots. The supervisors were in agreement.
- **Section 440.1, Home Occupations.** Mr. Deimler suggested that with regards to the intent of permitting sole practitioner offices as a home occupation, you add the following: Office of Medical Practitioners, excluding sole practitioners which occupy a portion of a dwelling unit in which the practitioner resides. The supervisors were in agreement.
- **Section 305.2.1, Fences and Walls.** Mrs. Martinez explained that any fence that is higher than six foot (6') requires a building permit. Mr. Deimler said a higher fence in the front yard can impede site distance to neighboring properties. Both Mr. Schroeder and Mr. Goslin were in favor of allowing a six foot (6') high fence in the front yard. Mr. Shaffer was not in favor of this change. Fencing on lots with reverse frontage would stay at six foot (6') within the front yard that does not contain vehicular access.
- **Section 305.2.2, Fences and Walls.** The supervisors were in favor of allowing fence height in a side or rear yard to be eight foot (8').
- **Section 305.4, Fences and Walls.** The supervisors agreed to not make changes to this section.
- **Section 305.5.** Mr. Deimler suggested that the height of retaining walls align with the building code. The supervisors agreed to change this section to read "higher than four feet (4')...(with the remainder of the language not changing).
- **Section 305.7, Fences and Walls.** Following a brief discussion regarding the composition of fences, the supervisors agreed not to make changes to this section.
- **Section 322, Signs.** Mr. Deimler explained that with the last zoning ordinance update changes were made to increase the size of signs. Following discussions, the supervisors agreed to allow the size of free standing signs to be increased to 100 square foot total area. Lots that have reverse frontage or corner lots may be allowed a maximum of two (2) signs with cumulative square footage not to exceed 100 square foot. If two freestanding signs are permitted, they must be placed in separate yards (along different roads). In addition, wall signs may occupy 15% of the wall area. This square footage may be allocated to different walls. Only one sign per wall is allowed. These changes will be reflected in Table 1 – Permanent Sign Requirements.
- **Section 311, Minimum Habitable Floor Area.** Following discussion, the supervisors agreed not to change this section at this time.
- **Section 411.3, Bed and Breakfast.** Mr. Deimler will review this section and determine if it should be combined with short term rentals.
- **Section 200.5.2.** Following a review of the chart, Mr. Schroeder and Mr. Shaffer were not in favor of increasing the number of lots. The supervisors would like to look at increasing the number of principal uses. Mrs. Martinez will review the information discussed at the previous workshops.

ADJOURNMENT

- With no further business, Mr. Schroeder made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shaffer, to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. The motion was carried unanimously.

PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ATTEST: _____
Vicki L. Eldridge, Secretary

John E. Schroeder, Chairman

C. William Shaffer, Vice Chairman

J. Pepper Goslin, Member