

Douglass Township Planning Commission
 Public Hearing Minutes
 Nov.29, 2023
 7:00 pm

Call to order Chairman Rick Baldwin called the hearing to order at 7:00 pm.

Pledge Of Allegiance recited

Roll Call

Present: Eric Tester, Jon Bailey, Melissa Bannen, Rick Baldwin, Matt Moorman, Mike Swan, Kathy Craig

Absent: None

Purpose of Public Hearing: Rick Baldwin read the following:
 to gather public input on the following zoning issues that are often being brought before the Zoning Board of Appeals:

- Pole barns on vacant property (chapter 2.02.5)
- Height of pole barns (chapter 2.02.A.6)
- definition of front yard/rear yard of lakes (chapter 2.02.5.A and 2.16.A)

Public Comments: opened at 7:02 pm and closed at 7:20 pm

Pole barns on vacant property (chapter 2.02.5)

| Citizen | Comment |
|--------------------------|---|
| Eric Silm, Beechwood Dr. | Questioned if this is for the county or just the township. (Dave Kelsey stated each township is different). Reports that in Clinton county, they allow this as it is easier to get financing. He favors allowing pole barns on vacant property. |
| Archie Jeffery | He favors allowing pole barns on vacant property. |

Height of pole barns (chapter 2.02.A.6) (currently 14 ft side walls and 20 ft. peak)

| Citizen | Comment |
|-------------------------|---|
| Holly Huff, Coral Rd | She reports that you cannot keep a camper outside on property but cannot build a pole barn tall enough to store it. This causes people to pay money to store their campers elsewhere. Supports increasing height. |
| Eric Silm, Beechwood Dr | Questioned if the township does not allow barndominiums currently. (The township does not allow it currently). Reports |

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| | that they would require extra height/footage to get the rooms in. Also questioned if this was for residential only. (It is, agricultural is exempt). |
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Definition of front yard/rear yard of lakes (chapter 2.02.5.A and 2.16.A) Rick Baldwin shared info from attorney regarding lakes and front and rear yards: Usually front has larger setback, allows for storage closer to road, some areas allow both to be called front yards.

| Citizen | Comment |
|----------------|--|
| Dave Kelsey | States that it would create a problem if there were two front yards as it would mess up the accessory buildings. |
| Owen Beechy | Commented the front yard being lakeside. |
| Eric Silm | IS it possible for a landowner to declare which would be the front yard when getting a permit? Could an attorney come up with language to make that work, without it impeding neighbors. |
| Dave Kelsey | The Zoning book reads that the front yard is roadside except for lakes. People don't want sheds/buildings built to block the view of lakes. |
| Eric Silm | Owns lakefront property and bought a parcel across the street from it to build a pole barn eventually. It is currently two parcels but would accept it if it had to be one. |

Further commission discussion

The members of the planning commission discussed the following issues and options: lake properties have a need for building pole barns on vacant parcels, increasing height of pole barns, keep definitions of front yard as is, adding a seasonal storage exception, leave as is and let variance process address concerns, put a stricter application process in effect, placement of pole barns on residential vacant property, and the possibility of requiring minimum acreage/graduate sizes for building a pole barn on vacant property.

Adjourn

Eric Tester made a motion to adjourn the public hearing, seconded by Mike Swan. Ayes: 7 Nays:0 Motion passed and the hearing adjourned at 7:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Craig
Douglass Township Planning Commission Secretary

