

The Rootstown Township Zoning Commission met in regular session on Monday, September 15, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. at Rootstown Town Hall.

Present: Karen Henry, Chair  
George Tishma, Vice Chair  
Rob Swauger  
Bob Moses  
Theresa Summers, Alternate

Also present:  
Zoning Inspector Mark Tirpak  
Zoning Assistant Jordan Michael

Audience: See attached list

Chair, Karen Henry, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. and asked everyone to stand to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chair, George Tishma, asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting. Bob Moses seconded. The vote was as follows: Rob-yes, Bob-yes, George-yes, Theresa-yes, and Karen-abstained. The motion was passed 4-0-1.

Karen asked if the board had reviewed the proposed changes to the section on parking RVs and campers. The board said yes. Karen asked for copies to be handed out to the audience members. General discussion took place reviewing the work session and a reading of the proposed changes. Rob asked if the rear setback is based on current regulations. The board said yes. Zoning Inspector, Mark Tirpak explained the side setback would be 0 feet and the rear setback would remain 20 feet. The driveway setback would also be changed to 0 feet.

Karen asked audience members for input. Bob Latimer asked about the non-see-through fence requirement. Bob Moses answered that the previous requirement was for the vehicle to be screened, and it didn't elaborate. This is so the neighbor doesn't have to look right at a vehicle that's sitting on the property line. George said it's a compromise. Some communities do not allow parking on the side but Rootstown is more rural than them. Some vehicles are in excellent condition but others are not. Bob added that the fence rule applies to lots under one acre. Audience member Renee Smith asked if this is aesthetics. George said yes. He added that people could still get a variance and that many will be happy with this change. Rob Swauger said it's a public safety issue. Some driveways can barely fit a boat or RV which makes it hard for a neighbor to look out of their driveway. Audience member Nic Hemrick asked if these changes will be enforced for everyone or just the twelve or so who received violations. Mark explained that more people would have received violations if the trustees hadn't put a stop to it.

George said the current rules have been in place for 25 years and followed the standards of other communities. We're changing it to the sides, which is a little bit of a compromise. Renee said Ravenna and Edinburg do not have rules like that. Jordan said he had copies of Ravenna's rules and handed them to the commission. George said that's why Ravenna looks like a junkyard in some places. Nic asked when these changes will take effect. The board said nothing's voted on, this is just from last month's work session which was only a starting point. They're now asking for opinions and thoughts. Nic asked what the process is and where does it go from here. The board said it goes to Regional Planning and the prosecutor, then back to

the commission for a public hearing, then finally to the trustees. George said nothing's written in stone. Nic asked if the community at large will be notified. The board said they would be for the public hearing. Audience member Kathy Latimer asked if they can be grandfathered in. George said they shouldn't want to be grandfathered in because they were violating the rules in the first place.

George asked, what's the difference between looking at a boat/RV and looking at the house? The screening requirement cannot be limited to vehicles that don't look aesthetically good because that is subjective. Rob said for fences, when you mow, it will eliminate potential conflict between neighbors. George called for a motion to accept the proposed changes. Bob seconded the motion. Karen added that it would go to Regional Planning and Chris Meduri. The motion was passed 5-0. Rob re-explained the chain of events going forward.

Audience member Nic Hemrick asked if the audience had any impact on their decision. The board said yes. Bob Moses said it had impact the first time around when they agreed to allow side parking. Half the people who showed up at that meeting aren't here today, probably because they're happy with that change. The rest can apply for a variance. Karen said Regional Planning and Chris Meduri may have suggestions for the board when it comes back. George said the prosecutor and Regional Planning prefer all the communities to be the same, but in this case the board is being more lenient than other communities.

Karen asked if there was any new business. Mark said NEOMED needs rezoned. Karen asked Mark about Muzzy Lake and its residents wanting to show up to a zoning meeting. Mark said they will need rezoned too. Jordan explained that all the houses there sit on one lot. George asked who approved that and how long ago. Audience member Van Black said it happened a long time ago. Everyone agreed the prosecutor will need to be present at that meeting. Karen asked to be notified of issues like this in advance so the commission isn't blindsided. George wants to make sure public meetings are up to the zoning commission to decide. Rob said that was just a mistake in July when it happened without their knowledge. Karen asked when the board can get updated books. Mark said it'd be nice to get the new amendments back from Regional Planning first.

Karen asked Van Black if he wanted to comment. Van expressed concern about the lack of communication from the trustees. Van urged the committee members not to quit. It's hard to get good people. He encouraged them to ask the trustees to give them more input. Mark said there should be a trustee here tonight. Van said they're not neglecting you, they just don't know what they should be doing to help the commission. Karen thanked Van for his comments and told him to come back anytime.

George made the motion to adjourn. Bob seconded and the motion was passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

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Chair Karen Henry  
Rootstown Township Zoning Commission