

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission
Russell Fire-Rescue Station
August 22, 2012

Present: Richard E. Snyder, Chairman
Bruce Murphy
Ben Kotowski
Tom Warren
Diana Steffen, Secretary

Donna Weiss Carson was absent with apologies.

Also in attendance: Ric Machnics, Zoning Inspector and Jim Dickinson, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

MINUTES OF JULY 25, 2012 – *Mr. Murphy moved to accept the minutes as submitted, Mr. Warren seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

LAND USE SURVEY – The Chairman introduced Kathy Hexter, Director, Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University, who had responded to his request for qualifications (RFQ) to conduct a residents' survey. The University of Akron and Youngstown State University did not respond to the RFQ. Mr. Snyder said he sent copies of the 1994 survey, the 1994 contract with Ohio State University and Appendix C of the report to Ms. Hexter, who then submitted a letter of agreement contract. There will be a difference in the scope of work from 1994 since the questions are to be used again for the most part. Mr. Snyder asked Ms. Hexter to explain the capabilities of her center and her approach for the survey.

Ms. Hexter said that the Levin College of Urban Affairs is different from some colleges in that it has a large research component. She is not on the faculty but runs the research center doing community planning and development. Kirby Date, who is with the Countryside Program, works closely with townships and counties in this area on balanced growth. They conduct program evaluations, surveys and focus groups. Ms. Hexter also works with Molly Schnoke, who is a survey research expert, and the three of them will be the team to work on Russell's project. Ms. Hexter has worked at the college since 1989; she has a background in city and regional planning. Kirby Date is a landscape architect. Molly Schnoke has a degree in political science from the University of Akron.

Ms. Hexter explained that, if they conduct the resident survey for Russell, the returned surveys will be coded and then they will create two identical SPSS files. Two graduate students will each enter all of the surveys separately, then a statistical analysis will be run to find any errors in the data entry, plus they will visually go through the results as well. Mr. Snyder asked if she thought any of the 1994 questions were biased. Ms. Hexter said that on reading the residents' comments she thought the questions were not biased but some of the wording may need clarification. She agreed that if some questions are changed slightly the answers must still be able to be compared to the 1994 survey.

As soon as the contract is agreed Ms. Hexter said they are prepared to start work. She would like to tour the Township and see the properties that are protected by conservation easements. She would like to meet with the Commission to determine the new issues that should be added to the survey before drafting a revised survey. She would like to mail out the survey well before the holiday mail season. The Commission discussed the best time to send out the survey due to the November elections and the holiday season, but after considering January or April the members agreed that it should proceed quickly now, allowing time to ask the Trustees and David Dietrich for comments. The Commission asked about the envelope, and Ms. Hexter explained her plan for it. Mrs. Steffen showed her the Township letterhead with a logo that Ms. Hexter will consider adding to the envelope for easier recognition by residents. Ms. Hexter also mentioned that they may need to comply with the Institutional Review Board as far as a

consent form to be by signed residents giving permission to use their answers. She will check on this since the survey needs to be anonymous in order not to deter residents from completing it. For the last survey, a letter was sent from O.S.U. to the residents with the survey, but Mr. Snyder said he would like the letter to explain why it is important to update the Guide Plan, and Ms. Hexter agreed that it should be written from the Township.

Regarding personnel costs listed in the budget, Mr. Warren asked if Ms. Hexter could give a breakdown of the figures. Ms. Hexter said that Ms. Date will have an advisory role, assisting with the questions and with reviewing the results prior to the writing of the report, so her time will be the smallest. Ms. Schnoke will do data management and supervision of the students, amounting to 160 hours or one month. Ms. Hexter will be in charge of the project and will draft the survey, amounting to 120 hours or three-quarters of a month. Two students will take approximately 15 minutes to enter the data from each survey, amounting to two months working at 20 hours per week. The bulk of the work will be analyzing the data and writing and presenting the report. Mr. Snyder discussed publicity and said that the current Guide Plan is on the website, but he would like the report from the previous survey also to go on the website.

Jim Dickinson said that the budget seems reasonable. Mr. Snyder said that in comparing the cost to the previous survey, that one would have been \$20,000 in today's dollars and C.S.U.'s budget is \$22,000, which includes more meetings and presentations. The Commission agreed that wording should be added to the contract after the Workplan, "Commission agrees to a Contractor retainer in the amount of \$7,000 upon initiation of the contract and receipt of an invoice in that amount. The balance will be due at the completion of the project within thirty (30) days of receipt of final invoice."

Mr. Kotowski made the motion to engage Cleveland State University to conduct a survey of Russell Township residents on land use issues as per the letter agreement submitted on August 17, 2012, as amended by this discussion, for the amount of \$22,084.00, subject to approval by the Geauga County Prosecutor's Office, Mr. Murphy seconded and upon roll call the vote was Mr. Murphy – yes, Mr. Kotowski – yes, Mr. Warren – yes, Mr. Snyder – yes, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Commission discussed whether to hold a special meeting on Thursday, September 20th at 7:00 p.m. to have a workshop with Ms. Hexter. She will check her calendar and advise if she will be available. Prior to that time she will work on the new questions and email them to the Zoning Commission for review. New questions may involve in-law suites, gas and oil wells, general welfare, sewers and a revised question regarding noise.

Action Items: Mrs. Steffen will revise the draft contract and send it to the Prosecutor's Office for review. She will email the Township's letterhead logo to Ms. Hexter. If Ms. Hexter is available for a meeting on September 20th Mrs. Steffen will arrange to use the Fire Station room and sunshine the special meeting.

FORUM: 'Water Matters: Fracking and Russell's Aquifers' – After review by all members of the Commission of the flyer and advertisement created by Mr. Kotowski, a few small changes were made. Mr. Murphy asked to remove 'horizontal' from the description of hydraulic fracking. Mr. Warren reported that he had asked the Police Chief about security at the program, and was told that it will be under the jurisdiction of the Geauga Park District, which would call the Russell Police only if there is a problem. Mr. Snyder would like to have a map of the aquifers from the Geauga County Planning Commission for the program. Mr. Warren asked for name plates for the panel of speakers.

Action Item: Mr. Kotowski will finalize the flyer and send it to Mrs. Steffen. Mrs. Steffen will handle printing, inserts to two newspapers, advertisements to two newspapers, and distribution of the flyer to various locations in the community or nearby. She will ask the Planning Commission for maps, and will have name plates made up.

OTHER BUSINESS – Mr. Kotowski mentioned the build-out project he and Mrs. Steffen are working on, and discussed a number of ways lots could be consolidated to create building lots.

