

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission
Russell Town Hall
September 17, 2007

Present: Richard E. Snyder, Chairman
Elizabeth Rader (arrived at 7:50 p.m.)
Eileen Rogers
Bruce Murphy
Donna Weiss Carson
Diana Steffen, Secretary

Also in attendance: Ric Machnics, Zoning Inspector.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

MINUTES OF AUGUST 20, 2007 – *Mr. Murphy made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted, Mrs. Rogers seconded and upon roll call the vote was Mrs. Rogers – yes, Ms. Weiss Carson – yes, Mr. Murphy – yes, and the motion passed by 3-0. Mr. Snyder abstained due to his absence from that meeting.*

RIPARIAN SETBACKS – Mr. Snyder explained that staff at the Geauga County Planning Commission have reviewed the draft amendment and provided informal comments that are shown in a redline version distributed by Mrs. Steffen to the Commission. The Commission reviewed the suggested changes. A significant change was made to B. Applicability in 1.a. The draft had stated that the regulations shall only apply when both a zoning certificate is required and a riparian setback is to be impacted, and the G.C.P.C. had altered the wording to include soil disturbing activities both within the riparian setback and within fifty feet of a riparian setback. Concern was raised that this would be a burden for a homeowner building a small structure such as a shed on a property with a 25-foot riparian setback; Mr. Machnics stated he would prefer that all buildings requiring a zoning certificate be subject to this requirement and that he approved the new wording. The Commission approved all the changes with some grammatical corrections.

Mr. Snyder said that since some members of the Zoning Commission are not comfortable with the definition of a watercourse, he had spoken to Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells of the Chagrin River Watershed Partners, who recommended that the Commission conduct site visits with Amy Holtshouse Brennan, the regulatory agent for defining a watercourse. Several members expressed interest in doing this before the next meeting. Ms. Rader suggested members choose sites of which they are personally aware.

Mrs. Rogers stated she still has concerns about the amendment. She said that nearly every property will be affected and she wondered about the impact on homeowners who have an intermittent stream and are restricted from building on a large area of their property. Mr. Murphy said that the guide map must be used as a guide only, and that the physical location is controlling. Mr. Snyder said there will be very little change from the

