

# ***RAVENNA TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION***

JAMES MYERS, CHAIRMAN VICKI JOYNER, VICE CHAIRMAN  
RUTH SCHELL, JIM JUST, AND BILL STONE

The Ravenna Township Board of Zoning Commission met on Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at 7:00 p.m., at the Ravenna Township Trustees Meeting Room at 705 Oakwood Street, Suite 105 Ravenna, Ohio.

J.P. Myers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll Call was taken with: J.P. Myers, Vicki Joyner, Ruth Schell, Jim Just, Bill Stone, Jim DiPaola, Zoning Inspector, Carolyn Chambers, Secretary, and Bob Harris of Regional Planning present.

Vicki Joyner made a motion that the minutes from the February 23, 2010 meeting be approved and Jim Just seconded it. Minutes approved, motion passed.

There was no one to speak from the public.

Old business was the discussion of Wind and Solar Power.

J.P. Myers asked if there was anything that we need to see other than setbacks. Bob Harris stated that we have different copies of different townships and it is up to us to set requirements to be in place that would look to protect the neighboring properties as well allow for the use because it's a renewable energy source and we want to try to promote that as much as possible.

J.P. Myers: Was a little skeptical himself until he got the last paper that was sent out to him and it made him come around to thinking a whole lot different on it. His personal feeling is we need to have the sidelines, set ins and setbacks from the road when possible. The first one was saying they would like to see it in back yards if possible, but in order to save the trees that would have to be cleared he would just as soon see the wind turbine out in front. Edison sets there poles right on the property lines and run in from there. These wind turbines have a less chance of them tipping than the telephone pole plus you don't have lines hooked to the top of it if someone hits it.

Bob Harris: They are just fiberglass so if they do get hit they are going to do minimal damage to a roof. When you talk to other Zoning Commissions they like to look at tower height plus 10% being a required setback. I think also when you are looking at allowing towers to be not extremely high then you are not really looking at a large turbine so if it does collapse there will be minimal damage to a structure.

J.P. Myers: So if there is a 80 foot tower they want another 80 foot basically.

Bill Stone: So it would be like a 170 foot circle then.

Bob Harris: If you are going to do that it should only be that distance from someone's neighboring properties not the structure on the property where it's intended to be used. Definitely would recommend having that setback distance. The ones that I was thinking on small lot will only be 50-60 feet high I don't really think they are going to be that heavy to do that damage. You are probably going to see a few of these on the roof peak. Then at some point you are going to see solar panels replacing shingles and siding and things like that.

Ruth Schell said that it says in here that it withstands hurricane winds.

Bob Harris: Some of the really big ones fail. The pole itself. You want to have an isolation distant on something that high.

Bill Stone: What is the setback for the utility lines?

J.P. Myers: 5 foot from the property line.

Bob Harris: I've seen that where it's been 110 % from the right away. Look at Deerfield is the only one where we incorporated at template we actually see where the incentive come into place.

You are allowed to have a single tower on each residential property and within a residential development you take 100 KW plus 10% so if you're a developer you would be allowed to put up a tower or that many towers up that would be equivalent to that kind of kilo watt hour.

Vicki Joyner: Are you referring to development that it would produce electricity for the housing in that development.

Bob Harris: Right, you would set aside an area that you would be allowed to put in a pole or a few large poles. It is an incentive for a developer to do that in addition the homeowners can create any number of turbine that they want to put along the roof peak and also the solar panels so they would be able to create energy from what the developer put in on the larger poles plus what they create on their own individual lots. Which would help them to become self sufficient.

Vicki Joyner: Well all they would have to do is put in Geo Thermal and ready to go.

Bob Harris: In the Deerfield example we actually use the incentives on how we work with incentive that we put in the original template. I would recommend to put in incentive to this.

Ruth Schell: How do you get the energy to the house?

Bob Harris: Through the power lines.

Bill Stone: This would be a supplement, it wouldn't be their prime source of electricity.

Bob Harris: No, if you have an overage of electricity, you sell it back to the electric company. Only in the Agricultural section a farmer would be able to put in the large towers to help offset any operation and to produce power to sell back to the electric company for a profit. This is another tool to help large lot owners to create some sort of wealth and maintain farming.

J.P. Myers: The 25 acres that's where the hit for the gas wells and then go make up the difference with properties around it so wherever you see a gas well you will see one of these wind generators.

Bob Harris: Deerfield came up with the 25 and in your community 50 might be a better number. This is just an option. One way to preserve the role character one way to do that is to element the role fragment farm. This is a volunteer program for a large landowner to do. The law regulates that up to but less than 5 mega watts. Over the 5 mega watts then become the PUCO. You can play with these numbers to whatever you're comfortable with. Setbacks whatever you feel comfortable with. The law allows you as the Township to regulate the use.

J.P. Myers: This height plus 10% is that what everyone is in agreement with? Setback from the road leads to the front of the house we have in there now a 50 foot setback. That would be better than in the back where you have all trees and woods which I think is better than cutting all the trees and having a higher tower.

Bob Harris: We have a variance that says basically there is no variance to incentives that we talked about but with siding it says the towers should be located in the rear yard, but it may locate in the front or side. I don't see where it would be an issue.

J.P. Myers: There is one on 480 and I stopped to listen to it and it is quiet. I would rather see one on my property than a telephone pole. Where if it is hit all the wires don't come down with it. That pole has got to be a 250-500 kw and the pole at the bottom has got to be 5 foot across and you can't hear it. It's commercial. It would come in on its own set of wires so if Edison goes down you have your own basics to run it. If you aren't using the energy that it is producing it goes out to the electric company and they have to buy it from you.

Vicki Joyner: There are towers that are decorative.

Bob Harris: It would just be good to have Zoning in place. It depends on what you are allowing, if it is a really huge one, you need to have that on a piece of property that can accommodate it so they can keep it within their property boundaries. Something that is 100 feet or so and it's not really something that is going to weigh a lot then it wouldn't be so bad.

J.P. Myers: What about the communication towers that goes up. Those are not set it's just a standard erected frame they are closer to the property line that is what this would be, a lot more weight too.

Vicki Joyner: Are there any issues with insurance in residential?

Bob Harris: Not that I'm aware of.

Bill Stone: If it falls on your neighbor's house then your insurance is responsible.

J.P. Myers: The liability of it hitting your neighbor's house.

Jim DiPaola: When I put in my generator nothing changed with my insurance.

Bob Harris: I don't know that much about insurance, you would have to check with your insurance company.

Bill Stone: Is a Site Plan required for this?

Bob Harris: Your Zoning Inspector would be the one that approves it or not. It would depend on what falls in your code.

Bill Stone: What about soil? It will need a foundation, you can't use wetlands, bogs.

Bob Harris: That would be the building department that would have to check. There are soil maps and that could be checked. We would need some sort of letter that states it is ok to put on that sight. My understanding the people that are installing it should check the soil.

J.P. Myers: They can tell you how much concrete and if the soil is ok.

Bob Harris: The tower itself is the most important aspect of this because it is so tall you have the weight at the top then there is a lot of tension on the pole. That's where you have your concern cause the pole could snap.

J.P. Myers: That's all governed by the building department.

Jim DiPaola: the building department is very cooperative. We get letters stated that they have approved things and we never use to get those. They watch it pretty good.

J.P. Myers: We need to adopt some kind of regulation we want to see, weather we work off of Deerfield or another one.

Bob Harris: Deerfield is the one that has the incentives and can show you how the incentives work. Some communities just adopted the tower requirements and then are coming back to adopt solar requirement I myself would do them both at the same time. If you really have a lot of question about use I would have an installer come in and explain a little bit about it.

Ruth Schell: that would be a good idea, we need someone to talk to about it.

Jim DiPaola: I would try to get someone from Bowling Green, I am going up there this weekend and they have some of the Wind turbines.

Bob Harris: I will give you some names and numbers of some installer around here you can contact. They are familiar with the big towers as well as the smaller towers.

J.P. Myers: Have you seen in a development where there is three or four houses where they put a tower in the middle?

Bob Harris: I have seen individuals that want to take advantage of the government grant program and want to install fairly large ones on their property but I haven't seen any on small lots yet.

Bill Stone: What is the life expectancy on these?

Bob Harris: If you put one up it is going to be expensive for installer to put up. The maintenance on these is going to be expensive to. If you put a lot of money in to something you are going to take care of it.

Ruth Schell: Don't they come with a warranty?

Bob Harris: They probably do. Probably whoever puts it in should give you some kind of life expectancy on how long the gears will work.

Vicki Joyner: Do you know any objections?

Bob Harris: Yes, the flicker, the noise, the shadow from the blades. There in the path of birds.

Vicki Joyner: You can push back any argument for all of these. They are a lot cleaner.

Jim DiPaola: You may be limited even before you get to the property lines, you may not be able to get the height. Are the winds strong enough to get through this? No matter what we do that person still has the right to appeal the Zoning Inspector's decision or request a variance.

J.P. Myers: Because it's energy and tax credits if our BZA doesn't want to approve it they can go to the State and get something.

Bob Harris: People have been denied to putting these up. Right now we currently don't have any Zoning to allow it.

J.P. Myers: Everyone up to tabling it until we can get someone to come in and discussion it next month.

The next meeting was set for April 13th.

Ruth Schell motioned the meeting be adjourned and J.P. Myers second it. Meeting adjourned at 8:10.

Respectfully submitted by  
Carolyn Chambers  
Zoning secretary

cc: Trustees (Coia, Artz, Gibson)  
Clerk (Rich)  
Zoning Inspector (DiPaola)  
Zoning Commission (5)  
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