

# ***RAVENNA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS***

*JEFF GAYNOR, CHAIRMAN, REMY ARNESS  
GARY LONG, JOANN McEWEN, AND CLAIRE MOORE*

Jeff Gaynor called the meeting of March 10th, 2021 to order at 7:00 p.m.

R/C: , Remy Arness - here, Joann Mcewen, here, Claire Moore, here, Gary Long, here, Jeff Gaynor, here.

Jeff: The record will show that we have a quorum. We had two items listed on the agenda for tonight. One of them has been resolved somehow. What happened there? They sold the property or something?

Jim: They decided they weren't going to build a two family home.

Jeff: Okay. So conditional use request 2021 BZA 04 is moot. Conditional use request 2021 BZA 03 by Ted Wynns at 2904 State Route 59, Ravenna, Ohio, the request is to convert a building that was to be retail sales situations to an indoor storage facility. Is Mr Wynn with us this evening?

Ted: Well it's both. It's indoor and outdoor.

Jeff: Okay. Personal storage. Would personal storage be it?

Ted: Yes, just like I had in the back pretty much. Same kind of storage.

Jeff: Okay I need to swear you in if we're going to answer questions here. (Swears Ted Wynns in)

Jeff: Where do we stand on this from the last meeting?

Joann: We wanted to see proof that he had the proper permits and that it had been Okay'd.

Jeff: And what we have found out from the county building department is that the inspections weren't done because the building is not finished. Most of the inspections we spoke about were supposed to be on a finished building. That has not occurred. The electric is not ready for inspection. The water is not ready.

Ted: The what?

Jeff: The water.

Ted: The water's been on. By Portage county resources.

Jeff: To the building.

Ted: Yes.

(Inaudible due to announcement over speaker)

Jeff: Jim I don't know who this other gentlemen that is sitting with us this evening.

Jim: This is captain Blubaugh with the fire department.

Jeff: Thank you. Nice to meet you.

Captain Blubaugh: We've met before.

Jeff: Probably have. Anything else from the board members? Bear in mind the information we got from the portage county zoning department.

Ted: The building department sent me an email saying everything is in, according to the building department. They looked at the blueprints, which I haven't submitted yet. They think everything is okay. I have not submitted it because I have to have approval to submit it.

Jeff: We, the board, are concerned with a number of items. Number one, the property is in poor state or disrepair.

Ted: It is?

Jeff: There's junk all over and weeds growing and junk.

Ted: The guys over there are supposed to grade that and did do some of it today alongside the drive.

Jeff: I had said and promised at least one of the board members that we weren't going to discuss the right of way today. That's not on our agenda. We determined that the right of way should be at the east end of the building other than the west end, like the court and this board decided when we first gave permission. I don't think I really need an explanation.

Ted: You mean for the guy in the back? I gave him an easement to go back there. He's been working on it. He put the electrical line in there. He did some of it today and if he doesn't do the rest of it, I will do it.

Jeff: How long have you been working on this actual building?

Ted: I've been working on it close to 3 years, and haggling with the building department over it for about a year and half. I have about a year and half in the building.

Jeff: You were haggling for a long time before that also. It took several years for the courts to decide where the right of way should be. And your zoning permit has been extended at least twice. Frankly we're tired of waiting for something to happen.

Ted: That why I've tried to lease the building out and I can't. This is what I came up with. I don't want it to sit there anymore. I'd like to do something with the building. I want it to be usable.

Jeff: So do we.

Ted: That's the whole purpose of doing what I'm doing here. I want to move forward.

Jeff: Has the person who bought the rest of your self-storage area there, you've approached him about the purchase?

(Inaudible due to multiple people talking at once)

Ted: I have been talking to him and he was talking about putting in heated inside storage units. I haven't decided whether I'm going to do that or not. I'm just trying to make it look like there some progress getting done, I'm tired of it just sitting there. Sitting there empty, it's not helping anyone, it isn't helping the community. I just want to clean it up and move forward. I believe I can do that by fall.

Joann: I think that you had ample opportunity, even with Covid, to clean the property up on the outside and get the landscaping done, with the vehicles... (Inaudible) If we need to get emergency vehicles into the back area, we've given you a lot of time (inaudible)

Ted: I've been trying to move forward. I'll be honest with you, that's some guys motorcycle and car I've been trying to get it out of there. To get it out of there, I have to go through the procedures.

Joann: We can't really grant you conditional usage unless things are finished the way they're supposed to be. You don't have permits saying it's passed and its okay. We wouldn't be doing our jobs if we granted a conditional use for something that is not permitted to have people in it.

Jessica: I've been waiting two years for Ohio Edison to come out and set a pole.

Ted: I paid for a transformer. They're supposed to set the transformer and install a telephone pole out front. I have no control over when they're going to do that but they're going to do that, I paid for the transformer and all the panel boxes.

Joann: I cannot speak for the rest of the board but myself, I cannot vote yes for the conditional use permit for you without having the proper permits okay and the place cleaned up.

Ted: The proper permits are in order according to the building department.

Joann: No they're not.

Ted: They're not? Well what's wrong with them?

Joann: According to what we have, you have not passed all the inspections.

Ted: I can't do it until I submit the blueprints to put the partition wall in. I can't do anything without submitting the blueprints, that's the problem.

Jeff: Sure.

Ted: It's just not going to happen.

Gary: Let me just make a comment here. I have no reason in the world to believe that this place will ever be successful because you're on your third extension. The Ravenna Township Zoning Department is opposed to the granting of a Conditional use for an indoor facility. The original construction was started in 2014 for a row of commercial stores and is still under construction as of this date. The property owner is acting as his own contractor and has failed to move this project along in a timely manner. The construction site has inoperable vehicles on it and would hinder first responders in an emergency. The concrete is four inches thick in most areas and might not support the weight of emergency vehicles. There has been no effort to landscape the area. At the last BZA meeting, the owner stated he was unable to find renters for the commercial spaces due to Covid 19. Covid has been with us since only 2020, so that cannot be the issue. The zoning office would offer that the space can't be rented for the sole reason the structure is not finished. Granting a Conditional use would only prolong the unfinished construction. This property has become a nuisance.

Gary: If the board would see to grant you this variance, I will tell you right now (inaudible) Either do it or don't. I'm done.

Ted: I hear you. I agree.

Jeff: The Board would like a sidebar. We're going to recess right now, for five minutes.

(Board takes sidebar)

Jeff: The board is back in session. We've discussed the fact that we're growing kind of weary of seeing this same project come before the board, I don't know how many times now. There doesn't seem to be much progress made in the last couple years. Despite your intentions, we're going to, and for several reasons, again there doesn't seem to be much progress and it doesn't look like there's anything that will change that. We're going to make a motion to deny the request for Conditional Use permit.

Ted: What can I do? It's just going to sit there then.

Jeff: You could come back.

Ted: I can't do anything with it.

Jeff: When can he reapply?

Jim: His current zoning certificate expires January of 2022.

Ted: It's just going to sit there.

Member of the audience: (inaudible)

Jeff: Excuse me, who are you?

Member of the audience: Jim Swalcy. (Inaudible)

Jeff: Excuse me. We don't really know who you are yet and you've not been sworn in. (swears in Jim Swalcy)

Jim Swalcy: Have any of you started a project by yourself? (Proceeds to defend Ted, saying he's a Veteran and is doing all of this on his own.) Has anybody gone to see the building yourselves?

Jeff: I've been there, Jim has been there.

Jim Swalcy: Have you seen it? (Inaudible)

Jeff: Yes, there are three firewalls. I don't understand the relevance of this.

Jim Swalcy: He's a veteran of the Vietnam War, just like myself. I saw him out there working out there by himself. Trying to keep people from ripping stuff up. As far as the landscaping, he

did have someone there and mow the front. (Inaudible) They wanted me to bury it or put it back underneath the dirt but I didn't want to do that. (Inaudible) One of them was a good friend of mine, he was a good friend. He died with a tractor turned on him.

Jeff: You're venturing very far field from the subject.

Jim Swalcy: (inaudible) when you're doing it by yourself.

(Inaudible due to multiple people talking at once)

Jeff: Him biting off more than he can chew is not our problem. This is not a project that should have ever been attempted with one or two people.

Jim Swalcy: (inaudible) would you take into consideration his age.

Jeff: He knew how old he was when he started the project.

(Inaudible due to multiple people talking at once)

Jim Swalcy: I went out to cut a tree down the other day (inaudible) I felt it the very next day. My body is seventy five years old but my mind still thinks I'm eighteen. I still think I can still do it. I might have a heart attack from doing it. (Inaudible)

Jeff: That's the problem. Doing it by yourself is not working. We don't see a reason why it would work in the next five years, just like the past five years.

Jim Swalcy: (inaudible)

Ted: I will agree with you, if I don't get it done. I should have it done by the end of summer.

Jim Swalcy: Take into consideration that he served this country.

(Inaudible due to multiple people talking at once)

Joann: This has been extended and extended and we have not seen much progress. That is our job.

(Inaudible due to multiple people talking at once)

Ted: What about the upfront?

Gary: It's not just up front. I'm talking about the screening. The fencing around the property. It looks like a dump.

Ted: I said I agreed. I said I'd fix it.

Gary: Ted you have agreed and been fixing things for six years.

Ted : Agree to what?

Jim Swalcy: What do you want done out front?

Jimk: There's a motion on the floor, that's what they have to answer. The chairman made a motion to deny, that's what they have to answer.

Ted: I don't understand. I would agree to what you said, if I don't have it done.

Gary: You've agreed to a lot of things and just aren't making any forward progress.

Ted : (inaudible)

Jeff: That's irrelevant. Would the secretary call a vote to deny the motion to deny the conditional use request?

Gary: I'll second the motion.

Ted: You're not going to give me a chance to finish this?

Jeff: You've had lots of chances.

Chellynn: I will call a vote.

Ted: This is unbelievable. Why do you just want it to sit there empty?

Gary: That's enough. There's a motion on the floor and they're discussing it.

Chellynn: (Calls vote) Remy Arness - yes, Joann Mcewen, yes, Claire Moore, yes, Gary Long, yes, Jeff Gaynor, yes.

Jeff: Your conditional use request has been denied.

Ted: What am I supposed to do with the building?

Jeff: That's not my area of expertise.

Ted : The building is just going to sit there. (Inaudible complaining) Give me to at least the end of summer, I can finish it.

Jeff: We need to have a vote to journalize tonight's decision. Same method with the voting. It's helpful to call out our names in a different order.

Chellynn: Okay I can do that.

Ted: It sat there all winter and all summer.

Jeff: Gary, make a movement to journalize today's meeting.

Gar: I'd like to move to journalize the meeting.

Jeff: I second that.

Chellynn: (Calls vote) Remy Arness - yes, Joann Mcewen, yes, Claire Moore, yes, Gary Long, yes, Jeff Gaynor, yes.

Jeff: Anything else? Do I hear a motion to adjourn?

Gary: Yes.

Jeff: What is the date of the meeting we need to approve the minutes for?

Chellynn: February 10<sup>th</sup> 2021

Jeff: Do I hear a motion to accept the meeting minutes?

Joann: I move to accept the meeting minutes?

Chellynn: (Calls vote) Remy Arness - yes, Joann Mcewen, yes, Claire Moore, yes, Gary Long, yes, Jeff Gaynor, yes.

Meeting adjourned