

**GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA**  
**March 14, 2023 REGULAR MEETING**  
**12611 Ravenwood Drive**  
**Conference Room A334, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**  
**7:30 A.M.**  
**Revised March 13, 2023**

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
  - A. FEBRUARY 14, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
4. FINANCIAL REPORT AND APPROVAL OF EXPENSES
5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:
6. OTHER BUSINESS: —None
7. MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS TO BE REVIEWED:
  - A. CANYON LAKES COLONY  
SUBDIVISION NO. 14-C  
BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP  
FINAL PLAT
  - B. TALL TIMBERS REPLAT – **Request for extension received 3-13-23**  
SUBLOTS 8, 9, 10 &11  
BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP  
FINAL PLAT
8. TOWNSHIP ZONING AMENDMENTS TO BE REVIEWED:
  - A. AUBURN TOWNSHIP  
TEXT AMENDMENT ZC 2023-01  
INITIATED FEBRUARY 23, 2023  
BY ZONING COMMISSION
9. CORRESPONDENCE - None
10. OLD BUSINESS:
  - A. PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL (SALARY SCHEDULE)
11. NEW BUSINESS:
  - A. COUNTY SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS UPDATE: APPLICATIONS AND FEES
  - B. 2022 YEAR END REPORT
  - C. INFO SHEETS: HOW DO I SPLIT MY PROPERTY?
  - D. 2024 BUDGET
  - E. PLANNING COMMISSION LOGO
12. ADJOURNMENT

Per Article 4, Section 2 of the Bylaws of the Geauga County Planning Commission,  
this agenda is subject to modification.



# Geauga County Planning Commission

12611 Ravenwood Drive, Suite #380, Chardon, OH 44024

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[www.co.geauga.oh.us/Departments/Planning-Commission](http://www.co.geauga.oh.us/Departments/Planning-Commission)

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## MARCH 14, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

### **1. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman John Oros called the March 14, 2023 regular meeting of the Geauga County Planning Commission to order at 7:32 a.m. at 12611 Ravenwood Drive, Suite A334, Chardon, Ohio. A quorum was obtained. Roll call was called by Ms. Irizarry, and the following members were present:

### **2. Roll Call**

Members present: Nick Gorris, Gary Neola, Dan Miller, Dennis Bergansky, Jim McCaskey, Commissioner Dvorak, Commissioner Lennon, Caterina Cocca-Fulton, Walter Claypool and John Oros.

Members absent: Commissioner Ralph Spidalieiri.

Steven Metcalf, P.S. from Neff Associates was present.

Staff present: Linda Crombie (Director,) Allyson Kobus (Planner II), and Pamela Irizarry (Administrative Assistant).

Mr. McCaskey arrived at 7:36 a.m.

Commissioner Lennon arrived at 8:00 a.m.

### **3. Approval of Minutes for the February 14, 2023 Regular Meeting**

Mr. Gorris made a motion to approve the February 14, 2023 regular meeting minutes, and Mr. Neola seconded the motion, Ms. Cocca-Fulton abstained, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passes.

### **4. Financial Report and Approval of Expenses**

Ms. Irizarry provided the financial report as of March 13, 2023 attached hereto and the expenses marked as Exhibit "A" totaling \$228.49.

Mr. Bergansky made a motion to approve the financial report and the summary of expenses, marked exhibit "A" totaling \$228.49. Commissioner Dvorak seconded the motion, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passes.

### **5. Director's Report**

**1. New Building Lots:** Ms. Crombie said there were four (4) new building lot proposals submitted in February, one each in Burton, Middlefield, Newbury and Parkman.

**2. State of the County presentations:** Ms. Crombie said she attended and reported on the Geauga Growth Partnership's and Leadership Geauga's State of the County presentation in the past and recently attended on February 3, 2023. The highlights of the event focused on local businesses.

3. Suspension of Enforcement: lot evaluations for Large Lots: Ms. Crombie said a follow up to the Planning Commission's action at the February 14, 2023 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners at its March 7, 2023 meeting passed the resolution to suspend enforcement of the septic lot evaluation requirement for large lots (5.001 acres and up to and including 20 acres as calculated from the road right of way line) until the Subdivision Regulations can be amended. As of March 7, 2023, Planning Commission will no longer require a lot evaluation for large lots regardless of where an owner might be in the lost split approval process. Ms. Crombie informed surveyors and title companies and will ask Geauga Public Health's assistance with notifying septic designers.

4. Planning Commission website: Ms. Crombie said the new website is now up and running. Mr. Claypool voiced concerns about why Planning Commission's website link is under the BOCC website, since we are our own entity. Mr. Miller asked Mr. Claypool if he would like the website set up differently and he responded yes; he feels we need to change the tab to get to our website because it is hard to find. Ms. Crombie said it was previously discussed the tab could be changed to show "boards and commissions" but that has to be approved by the Commissioners. Ms. Crombie responded that Planning Commission could also do a budget request to hire an outside company to design our website. Mr. Claypool said there should also be a landing page to find any information pertaining to Planning Commission.

5. Northeast Ohio Planning and Zoning Workshop: Ms. Crombie said Portage County will be hosting this year's Northeast Ohio Planning and Zoning Workshop on June 30, 2023. She and Ms. Kobus will be attending, but if anyone on the board would like to attend they are welcome.

6. Work Summary, February 2023:

a. Planning/Zoning/Subdivision Administration: Ms. Crombie said there were 27 lot splits/consolidations, 12 easements, and a formal and informal amendment review.

b. Comprehensive Planning Efforts: Ms. Crombie mentioned staff referred the General Plan two times in February.

c. Continuing Education: Ms. Crombie said Ms. Kobus completed the free 6-week course titled "Going Places with Spatial Analysis" through ESRI.

7. Major Subdivisions to be Reviewed:

- A. Canyon Lakes Colony  
Subdivision No. 14-C  
Bainbridge Township  
Final Plat

Ms. Crombie said we have not had a subdivision in a while and this one is in Bainbridge Township. She advised 14-A and 14-B were the last phases, and currently 14-C is being reviewed, which is a street off Canyon Ridge with 8 sublots. The main concerns with this subdivision are the road name and sanitary sewer infrastructure. Ms. Crombie also advised that when plans were initially submitted, the road name of "Red Oak Ridge" was proposed, but the Bainbridge Fire Department said that name was too similar to other road names within the township. The County Sheriff's E-911 also agreed. A new proposed road name of "Hughs Way" was submitted. The County Sanitary Engineer commented that as-built drawings and sewer log/videos are required prior to their approval; these are expected to be submitted.

Ms. Crombie recommends approval of Canyon Lakes Colony Subdivision No. 14-C based upon the contingencies that the road name being changed from Red Oak Ridge to Hughs Way, and acceptance of sanitary sewer infrastructure by the County Sanitary Engineer.

Mr. McCaskey made the motion to approve Canyon Lakes Colony based on the contingencies noted and Commissioner Dvorak seconded the motion, and upon the call for the vote, the motion passes.

7. Major Subdivisions to be Reviewed:

- B. Tall Timbers Replat  
Sublots, 8, 9, 10 & 11  
Bainbridge Township  
Final Plat

Ms. Crombie said she had received a formal request to have this plat tabled to the May meeting. Mr. McCaskey asked if this plat was for four (4) lots going to three (3) lots. Mr. Bergansky said it appears it is actually five (5) parcels going to three (3) parcels and Ms. Crombie said yes and commented that the owners feared the landlocked lot would be developed.

Mr. Bergansky made a motion to table the proposal to the May meeting. Commissioner Dvorak seconded and upon a call for the vote, the motion passes.

8. Township Zoning Amendments to be Reviewed:

- A. Auburn Township  
Amendment ZC 2023-01  
Initiated February 23, 2023  
By Zoning Commission

Ms. Crombie said the Auburn Township Zoning Commission submitted amendment ZC 2023-01 that impacts six articles. Ms. Crombie said language is proposed to be added to the definition of Recreation Facilities regarding shooting ranges. This language will not prohibit indoor shooting ranges and does not prevent individual property owners from shooting on their private property.

Mr. Miller asked if target shooting, where three (3) or four (4) people are involved is prohibited. Ms. Crombie said no, this proposed change is about outdoor shooting ranges and not in residential districts. Mr. Claypool commented if he built a facility on his property, this language could be used against him. Ms. Cocca-Fulton felt the definition is too broad. Mr. Oros agreed the existing language is too broad for leisure activity. Mr. Neola feels the proposed language needs to be taken out.

Ms. Crombie said the Township added a definition for stacking lanes. The Township is also changing the setback requirement of lakes and ponds from 100 feet to 50 feet as 50 feet is the sanitary isolation radius required by the Ohio Department of Health. In the B-2 and I-1 Zoning Districts, any pond or lake shall be setback a minimum of fifteen feet (15') to any lot line and road right-of-way unless is it adjacent to a residential district.

Ms. Crombie said in the B-2 District "service" is being added as funeral home and day care centers are being added to the permitted uses. The same for the B-4 district, "General Businesses" are proposed as a permitted use in the district and as defined in Auburn's zoning definitions, include a wide range of retail and service businesses. This will allow for more retail and service businesses at the 44 and 422

interchange. These changes coincide with the changes discussed in the B-2 and B-4 districts purpose statements.

Under 4A.05 Schedule of Uses, dwellings are recommended to be changed to permitted uses instead of conditional uses. Ms. Cocca-Fulton asked why dwellings in a business district are changing. Mr. Neola asked if dwelling refers to something above the business or detached; he feels this is not good planning. Ms. Crombie said it refers to single detached homes as being permitted and she noted that many townships allow single family homes within the commercial districts.

For Drive in, Drive-Through Facility Regulations, Ms. Crombie said this is being added as an accessory use and she advised the 10 feet maximum setback for menu ordering is too strict. When researching restaurants around the area, she found they had setback distances of varying feet, but much more than ten feet. She feels a different approach, such as a minimum distance from the side or rear lot line when adjacent to residential use or district.

Mr. Claypool commented that these proposals are granular; either allow businesses or don't allow businesses. He felt some of the regulations were architectural. This is not in the best interest of the community. Mr. Neola agreed. Mr. Gorris commented an owner can still submit for a variance. Ms. Cocca-Fulton agreed that the 10 feet setback is too restrictive, having a setback not from the actual building makes more sense. Ms. Crombie said the Commission could add more recommendations than just that one. Ms. Crombie advised additional requirements are proposed for the minimum stacking spaces per drive through lane and the width and lengths are straight forward. Mr. Gorris commented how some businesses are too small, would they be able to stack and is this too restrictive for some businesses? Ms. Crombie said the township wants to avoid vehicles stacking onto the street but some lots may very well be too small.

Under Administrative Provisions, Ms. Crombie said item "c" Required Data, already requires each applicant include an application form, legal description, and an accurate site plan. The proposed language adds that if the recorded legal description or plat is not based upon a survey performed by a professional surveyor or if the Zoning Inspector feels the legal description is insufficient, then the inspector may require that a new legal description be prepared by a professional surveyor. Ms. Crombie said this language gives the zoning inspector broad discretion.

Ms. Crombie said the language proposed comes from owners submitting a site plan showing a structure will be located at a required setback but it ends up being built in the incorrect location, this is due to the owners not knowing where their property line is located. Ms. Crombie said the main point to remember is a property owner is always responsible to know where the property line is located. Having a new legal description or plat will not help as that is simply a written description of the property or map; what matters is that when the shovel goes in the ground, the owner knows where the lot line is located. The only way to know for sure that a building is being built in the correct location is for a surveyor to stake the corners of the proposed building or stake the property line. Ms. Crombie said that a site plan, which the Township already requires, is essentially a contract between the owner and township that indicates the structure will be built in a specific location.

Mr. Metcalf, an audience member, commented how you can still run into problems with old deeds but they are still legal and are traceable. Ms. Cocca-Fulton said if the property line is not clear, then it needs to be staked. Mr. Gorris agreed with the staff comment to not include this proposed language.

Ms. Crombie said another proposed change is with the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) time frame to make decisions. Ms. Crombie said 30 days is standard and is in the Model but the Township indicated

there are three (3) times a year with months having a 5<sup>th</sup> week that forces them to schedule a special meeting to act on the minutes. During the informal review Ms. Crombie mentioned 45 days as an alternative because if it is changed to 60 days, then legally the BZA can take 60 days to act on something. Ms. Crombie said if the Township wants to change it, perhaps 40 days is an option. Mr. Neola felt 40 days seems reasonable.

Lastly, Ms. Crombie advised that Washington Street is being added to the list of streets where no sexually oriented businesses are permitted.

In review, the Commission recommended changes as follows: remove the proposed language in the definition of Recreation Facilities prohibiting outdoor shooting ranges; 10 feet setback for menu ordering is too restrictive and Township should consider alternatives; not include the proposed language that would require a new legal description or plat; and 40 days instead of 60 days.

Motion made by Mr. Neola to approve with modifications as noted, Auburn Township Text Amendment ZC 2023-01, and seconded by Ms. Cocca-Fulton, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passes.

#### 10. Old Business:

##### A. Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual (Salary Schedule):

Ms. Crombie said last year there was discussion about using Job and Family Services (JFS) salary chart as a model for Planning Commission to follow. Ms. Crombie prepared a salary range for staff as opposed to using pay grades but said in order for this to take place, the Policy and Procedure Manual will need to be amended. Ms. Crombie said currently Planning Commission follows the BOCC pay tables and she used their information to create the draft salary schedule. She also presented and discussed various changes in language to Section 4: Compensation of the Manual, such as instead of using "step increase" change this to "wage increase". Also, a re-grading would now be "wage adjustment". Mr. Miller asked if an increase would occur every year and Ms. Crombie replied it is at the Commission's discretion. Mr. Claypool said a general wage increase is not meant to be expected each year as that would set improper expectations. Mr. Bergansky advised in updating the language to remove the term "annual" and approve with modifications.

Motion made by Ms. Cocca-Fulton to approve with modifications, the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual including Appendix A, and seconded by Commissioner Lennon, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passes unanimously. The Commission agreed the amended document would be brought back to the board.

Ms. Crombie reviewed potential wage adjustments but Mr. Claypool commented he would like to have more information and that wage increases need to be done in an Executive Session, where the board can freely and honestly discuss their views, not in an open meeting session, where the employees and public are sitting in. Ms. Crombie said she was referring to wage adjustments not wage increases, which are determined based upon performance evaluations but this can be tabled. Ms. Cocca-Fulton said this is a two-step process, approve the changes to the Manual and discuss wage details at Executive Session.

#### 11. New Business:

##### A. County Subdivision Regulations Update: Applications and Fees:

Ms. Crombie said after this meeting she will start to red-line the Subdivision Regulations. She would like to condense the application process to a simpler one. Ms. Crombie discussed the changes to the

application forms for un-platted lot splits and consolidations, platted land, and variances. She advised that since the forms are part of the regulations, any changes to them must be done in a formal meeting and amendment. She said the goal is to remove all the forms and checklists, with a few exceptions, she presented the board with a draft example of an application form; right now, multiple forms are required, this could be simplified to one or two forms. Ms. Kobus commented it would also be less of a burden on the applicant. Mr. Neola asked would the database need to be cleaned up and Ms. Crombie said the simplified application form would allow for less data entry into multiple spreadsheets.

Another change Ms. Crombie proposed is to the fees. In general, Ms. Crombie said a fee should cover the cost of the review. Currently Planning Commission charges for Minor subdivisions and Large lot subdivisions and there is no charge for transfer to adjacent, lots over 20 acres, or lot consolidations, even though there is similar work involved. Ms. Crombie let the board know that over the last several months for each project the staff has been keeping track of all staff time, copying cost, postage, and office supplies. She presented preliminary information of what the cost are currently and what options of what it could be changed to. There was discussion among the board members of what they like and didn't like about the proposed fee changes but agreed simplifying the process is a good idea.

#### 11. New Business:

B. 2022 Year End Report: Ms. Crombie presented the Year End Report and said for the sake of time, the year end report is ready to be posted to the county website, she asked if anyone had any questions or comments. Mr. Gorris said he felt it was well written. Mr. Neola thought the graphics were well done.

C. Info Sheets: How do I Split my Property? Ms. Crombie presented the Info Sheet staff created showing the steps involved to do a lot split. She made a few tweaks and changed some wording due to the requirement of lot evaluations being suspended for large lots. Since there is a proposal to change the fees involved, Ms. Crombie said the sheet was modified to contact the office for the current fees. Mr. Metcalf, an audience member, suggested attaching a link for a fee schedule.

E. Planning Commission Logo: Ms. Crombie said traditionally we have used the Geauga County seal on all our documents. She presented some proposed logos and thanked Ms. Kobus for creating the first concept drawing. Ms. Cocca-Fulton asked why a graphic of a farm and a town were used and Mr. Gorris said he felt it broadly represents both the rural and residential nature of the County. Commissioner Dvorak asked if there could be a maple leaf in the area of Thompson Township. Most of the board members like the proposed change to the logo.

Motion made by Mr. Gorris to keep moving forward with the new logo, and seconded by Mr. McCaskey, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passes.

D. 2024 Budget: Ms. Crombie said in the past she prepared the budget and kept it similar to previous years and did not bring it before the Board. This year she would like to discuss some changes for the board to review before final budget request is submitted in May. She discussed how staff will be starting to use Office 365 as Microsoft is eliminating Office 2019 and 2021 and moving to a subscription-based product. This will be a mandatory request and the cost will be \$240 per year per user. S



She also discussed the proposed cost of hiring an intern or another Planner to work on future projects; the Leadership Geauga program, and new batteries for laptops staff are currently using. Ms. Crombie explained that two (2) laptops were purchased with Covid money in 2020, and both of them need new batteries, but the warranties issued at that time were not the best. Commissioner Lennon said to just

budget for new laptops since it is almost time to replace them anyway. There were also comments from board about increasing pay rate for an intern.

Lastly, Ms. Crombie said as a follow up to the January 2023 meeting, it was asked if there was a way to track the number of hits to Planning Commission's website. This can be done for a fee of \$165.00 per hour and would take about 1-2 hours to complete. Mr. Gorris felt we did not need to track this. Ms. Crombie asked if anyone else had comments on the website to let the staff know.

12. Adjournment:

Motion made by Mr. Gorris to adjourn meeting, and seconded by Mr. McCaskey, and upon a call for the vote, the motion passes. Meeting adjourned 9:28 a.m.

  
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John Oros, Chairman    Nick Gorris    Vicki Crombie  
  
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Gary Neola, Secretary/Treasurer



**COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT**  
**Summary**

**Budget – March 13, 2023**



<u>Account</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Salaries	\$144,281.00	\$22,499.12	\$121,781.88
Supplies	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
Hosp.	\$25,604.00	\$4,384.84	\$21,219.16
Medicare	\$2,120.00	\$319.82	\$1,800.18
OPERS	\$20,220.00	\$3,149.88	\$17,070.12
Worker's Comp.	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
Other Expenses	\$2,300.00	\$0.00	2,300.00
Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contracted Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Covid -19 Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Copier Usage Services	\$1,000.00	\$25.20	\$974.80
Travel	\$3,500.00	\$98.29	\$3,401.71
Advertising	\$325.00	\$0.00	\$325.00
Training	\$700.00	\$0.00	\$700.00
Member, Dues, Lic. Sub	\$1,300.00	\$0.00	\$1,300.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$203,950.00</b>	<b>\$30,477.15</b>	<b>\$173,472.85</b>

SUMMARY RESOLUTION FOR EXPENSES  
GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Berganski MOVED THE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION,  
WHICH MOTION WAS SECONDED BY Mr. Drozak.


WHEREAS, THE EXPENSES LISTED HEREIN HAVE BEEN INCURRED BY THE GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION IN ORDER FOR THE COMMISSION TO PERFORM ITS DUTIES; AND

WHEREAS, THESE EXPENSES HAVE BEEN REVIEWED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION AT ITS MARCH 14, 2023 MEETING;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION HEREBY AUTHORIZES PAYMENT OF THE FOLLOWING BILLS OR CLAIMS:

P.O.	ACCOUNT	DATE	VENDOR	AMOUNT
1055	TRAVEL	2/14	LINDA CROMBIE (MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT/QUARTERLY DINNER)	72.68
<sup>1055</sup> PI 2790	TRAVEL	2/28	ALLYSON KOBUS (MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT)	25.61
<sup>1050</sup> PI 3930	COPIER USAGE	3/7	DEX IMAGING (1/22/23 TO 2/21/23)	25.20
1230	EQUIPMENT	3/7	MNJ TECHNOLOGIES (DYMO LABELWRITER)	105.00
TOTAL				\$ 228.49

  
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John Oros, Chairman

  
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Gary Neola, Secretary/Treasurer