

The Cranberry Township Supervisors held a Property Maintenance Workshop Meeting on June 30, 2017 at 11:00AM.

- Roll Call-Members Present: Fred Buckholtz, Harold Best, Jerry Brosius, Chad Findlay, Koah Pentz, Bruce Getsinger. (Guests in attendance were recorded on the sign-in sheet.)

1. Member Comments

- Fred Buckholtz opened the meeting by reminding everyone that the meeting was being tape recorded. He also announced that he was not in favor of a full International Property Maintenance Code and listed several reasons why he felt it was important to have some codes in Cranberry Township.
- Harold Best stated that he didn't think the Township needed a code of that magnitude and he would like to hear the people's comments prior to doing anything with it.
- Jerry Brosius was hoping the intent of the ordinance would be twofold: 1. To make it easier to enforce junkyards and 2. To make action on another item suggested in the Comp. Plan. Jerry did agree that the Property Maintenance Ordinance as written is more than what the Township needs.

2. Public Comments

Jim Combs suggested that this be thrown out and started over.

Aaron Bollinger agreed that some rules are necessary but no need to get creative, "Fix what the Township has that is broken."

Bruce Getsinger suggested re-adopting the old ordinance due to law changes if the Supervisors want to use it. However he suggested using the new format with the Property Maintenance Code.

Marilyn Brandon pointed out that the code makes no difference whether you live in Seneca or in the rural areas.

Barrie Brancato spoke about the Comp. survey and blight.

Martin Stine said he didn't get a survey.

- Martin Stine, Marilyn Brandon, Rod Bedow, Fred Buckholtz, Koah Pentz, Robert Zacherl, and Steve Eakin had a brief discussion regarding the survey results of the Comp. Plan.

Ed Barrett said he has nowhere to hide his stuff.

Jarrett Findlay pointed out to the Supervisors that the section regarding code enforcement inside your house was still left in the code.

Marlene Reisinger wanted to know how these rules offset their junkyard license.

Matt McSparren voiced his concern about addressing machinery and disposal of garbage.

- A short discussion between Jim Combs, Jarrett Findlay, Ed Barrett, Koah Pentz, Fred Buckholtz, and Jerry Brosius took place regarding additional code enforcement employees and deputies took place.

Lou Ellen Betterman asked where these rules originated from.

Robert Zacherl informed all that the United Nations was pushing this.

Bonnie Sommers explained her neighborhood junk problems and explained why it was important to have a maintenance code.

Barrie Brancato provided examples of other areas with both urban and rural areas that have maintenance codes.

2. Public Comments (Cont'd)

Randy Spencer made various comments about his history with the Township. He also stated that a property maintenance code can't be cut down. He stated the approach was wrong. He then discussed a letter from the Township from years ago.

Bruce Getsinger asked for a copy of the letter and he would review it.

Koah Pentz stated that he has never received an application for a junkyard and offered one to Randy after the meeting.

Randy Spencer and Chad Findlay then briefly disputed a previous court order regarding a junkyard license

Martin Stine stated he was warned of this coming over 25 years ago.

Chad Findlay listed his concerns with the existing draft and pointed out some violations on his own farm and why he thinks it is unreasonable. He suggested looking into the enforcement on a per zone basis.

Harold Best stated again that he was not in favor of passing the International Code.

Rod Bedow would like to see only the pieces we need taken out and added to zoning. "Most codes don't fit us."

Steve Eakin voiced his opposition to the Property Maintenance Code. He then listed some examples of court decisions regarding property maintenance violations.

Bruce Getsinger explained to the public that his job is to give legal advice and not to make policy decision.

Robert Zacherl thinks this code is all over one property. He suggested an arbitrator to come up with a solution.

Randy Spencer claimed an arbitrator had already been tried.

Chad Findlay informed the public that an actual arbitrator has never been involved. Chad then asked Randy if there could be a solution to the problem without giving him taxpayer money? Randy did not say "Yes or No".

Fred Buckholtz said he didn't agree with giving Randy tax money. He then said the Board will continue this workshop on 7/26/2017 at 6:00PM. This date and time was announced to the public. The workshop was temporality closed at 12:00PM.

The Property Maintenance Workshop was reopened on 7/26/2017 at 6:00PM by Fred Buckholtz. The same members were present except Koah Pentz was absent. Additional members of the public were recorded and filed in the meeting attendance book. Fred Buckholtz opened the meeting by announcing that an agenda was prepared and the Supervisors intended to go through the code section by section. He then re-stated to the public why he feels it is important to have a code in place. Fred Buckholtz started by announcing the first section and asking for public comment.

Ed Barrett asked for a copy of what Fred was reading.

Steve Eakin questioned Jerry Brosius on his support of the code.

Jerry Brosius explained his position.

Steve Eakin then stated his opposition to a property maintenance code and explained his position regarding the burden of proof, violation penalties, and appeal hearings.

Bruce Getsinger responded to several points.

Jerry Brosius questioned whether any building needed included in the code. A discussion took place regarding structures between Jerry, Fred, Harold, Chad and Bruce.

Marilyn Brandon voiced her concern about not being able to regulate abandoned houses.

Amanda and Scott Cowles suggested that child supervision would keep kids from entering those types of structures.

Jerry Brosius stated that was a blight issue.

Steve Eakin asked if the Township has blighted houses in the Township.

Barrie Brancato voiced her opinion on blight.

Jerry Brosius suggested that some homes along Riverside Drive are blighted.

Marlene Reisinger suggested that Barrie and Bonnie write down where the blighted homes are.

Stephanie Felmlee asked if this code would help remove dangerous structures after fires.

Ed Barrett suggested using CDBG money to help people who can't afford to fix their homes.

Chad Findlay explained the rules of CDBG "Housing Rehab".

Steve Eakin asked for a comment regarding the strict liability burden of proof.

Fred Buckholtz said they would talk to the Solicitor. He then tried to get back to the agenda.

Scott Cowles reminded the Supervisors that once a code is passed you don't know what the next Supervisors to follow will do with it.

Jim Combs suggested that there doesn't seem to be any hazards around now. Maybe just a junk car.

Jerry Brosius said that a lot of these things are already included in our ordinances now. We are not giving Koah any more power than he already has.

Harold Best believes that progress has been making on this issue.

Fred Buckholtz reminded everyone that the proposed code is for the exterior.

Amanda Cowles was concerned that someday she might not like spruce trees. She believes she can do what she wants on her own property.

Barb Ross provided the public with her example of how her property value has been de-valued by ½ due to her neighbor starting a junkyard.

Ed Barrett asked how many cars she has on her property?

Jerry Brosius asked about the definitions that were not needed.

Jim Combs and Steve Eakin both believe that commercial developers don't give a rat's ass about this ordinance or how clean the properties are.

Jerry Brosius disagreed and gave some examples.

Scott Cowles said we don't want to bring in more people without jobs.

Ed Barrett asked if any of those plans include work on the flooding issues.

Judy Etzel asked what the next step is for the property maintenance code.

Tom Snow informed the Supervisors about a water issue at his property.

After discussion by the Supervisors, it was determined that the Supervisors would continue the Property Maintenance discussion at the regularly scheduled Supervisors meeting on August 26th. Fred Buckholtz adjourned the workshop at 7:16PM.

ATTEST:

Chad Findlay
Township Manager