

Keweenaw County Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
*Draft Finalized Meeting Notes*  
December 4, 2023

Keweenaw County Courthouse 4:00 PM

Roll Call:	John Parsons	Present	Steve Siira	Present
	Barry Koljonen	Present		
	Daniel Yoder	Present	AJ Kern	Present
	Jim Vivian, Commissioner	Absent	Bob Pokorski	Present
	Sara Heikkila, Zoning Administrator		Present	

5 Member quorum is present, meeting was appropriately posted.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited

Approve Agenda

Motion (M) to approve Bob / Second (S) Steve

Approve minutes of the regular meeting on October 30, 2023.

M to approve Dan Y / S Bob

Approve minutes of the special meeting on October 26, 2023.

M to approve John / S Barry

Guests:

John Kern, Doug McColl, Jason Meneguzzo, Nick Meneguzzo, Greg Meneguzzo, Mary Long, Mark Aho, Kathy McEvers

Zoom: Harvey Desnick, Ryan Nelson

Public Comment:

*THIS IS THE TIME SET ASIDE ON THE AGENDA TO RECEIVE COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC. THIS IS NOT INTENDED TO BE A PERIOD FOR DIALOGUE. EACH PERSON WHO WISHES TO SPEAK DURING PUBLIC COMMENT SHALL STATE THEIR NAME AND ADDRESS. COMMENTS SHALL BE LIMITED TO THREE (3) MINUTES OR LESS FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO ADDRESS THE BOARD.*

Doug McColl – STR ordinance needs to have group size definition and WUPHD concurrence, no actions have been taken regarding these 2 issues, would like ZA to regulate group sizes for STRs.

**New Business**

1. Open Meeting Act (OMA) refresher:

As of January 1, 2022, the OMA only makes remote participation allowable for “military duty, a medical condition, or a statewide or local state of emergency or state of disaster declared pursuant to law or charter or local ordinance .....” “medical condition” is defined in the statute as “an illness, injury, disability, or other health-related condition,”

Commissioners must attend meetings in person to participate in the meeting as a Commission member unless one (or more) of the conditions above are met.

If a member has a medical condition that prevents attendance to Commission meetings in person, the applicable portion of the OMA requires that the Commission have “procedures by which the absent member may participate in, and vote on, business before the public body.” See below:

(ii) For each member of the public body attending the meeting remotely, a public announcement at the outset of the meeting by that member, to be included in the meeting minutes, that the member is in fact attending the meeting remotely. If the member is attending the meeting remotely for a purpose other than for military duty, the member's announcement must further identify specifically the member's physical location by stating the county, city, township, or village and state from which he or she is attending the meeting remotely.

(iii) Procedures by which the public is provided notice of the absence of the member and information about how to contact that member sufficiently in advance of a meeting of the public body to provide input on any business that will come before the public body.

Both participation and voting by a member are prohibited if the procedures are not followed. Therefore, unless shown otherwise, unless members are present in person or the referenced procedures are followed, participation on the Planning Commission as a member of the Commission would not be allowed and participation limited to that given to other members of the public.

Emails – do not reply all.

2. WUPPDR is working with the Michigan Coastal Management Program and the Michigan Association of Planning to host the **Western U.P. Coastal Leadership Academy**, a one-day, in-person workshop. The free workshop will introduce local decision makers to creative scenario-based planning and zoning tools and adaptation strategies that can help address coastal challenges in your communities. **This event will be held on Thursday, December 7, 2023 from 9:30-4:30pm EST at Michigan Tech’s Great Lakes Research Center (GLRC)** and is co-sponsored by the GLRC. [Click here to register online for this event](#). Lunch will be included! Sara Heikkila, Bob and Steve will attend.
3. Nelson Zoning Application – proposing to add decks/porches onto Delaware houses built in the right-of-way (ROW) prior to ROW being established (pre-1940).

PC members agree the decks can be approved from a zoning standpoint.

4. Advertising for a new Planning Commissioner – website & Keweenaw Report.

5. Planning Commissioner terms expiring: Barry Koljonen, Steve Siira, and AJ Kern  
Willing to serve another 3-year term?  
Barry – yes.  
Steve – Yes.  
AJ – yes.

### **Unfinished Business**

STR Ordinance discussion → MSU Extension Webinar learnings.

Summary of MSU webinar.

AJ contends the EHT STR Ordinance should be how the County regulates STRs and that the County has set a precedent with the Bed and Breakfast regulations.

A moratorium on STR permitting was proposed by AJ, but the Commission did not approve that action. COI discussion.

Dan indicates we are lacking public input prior to amending the ordinance.

M for AJ to develop question for STR public input and send it out Dan / S Steve

Zoning Administrator Position update.

Master Plan Update

- Sara Heikkila Ahmeek
- John and Dan Yoder Allouez
- Dan Steck Houghton
- Barry Grant
- Bob Sherman

Completed workshop meeting on October 26.

Update on WUPPDR. Obtained bid from WPPDR

Dan Yoder to check if possible portage health for grant.

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Mark Aho – Stated he is not in favor of zoning in general, thought things were getting paired back, would prefer STRs take a back seat to other amendments. STR ordinance is adequate as is.

Jason Meneguzzo – operates 4 STRs in Keweenaw County, checked with townships for zoning prior to building/operating STRs, his family has a big investment into their STRs, have been operating for 20+ years, no issues until this year, has been providing solutions to neighbors, one individual seems to be driving for more regulations, reiterated they are a local family trying to make a living.

Ryan Nelson – Stated he appreciated the meeting today, 10 year land owner in Keweenaw County, indicated 90% of Keweenaw County residents aren't adhering to the current STR policy, he operates other of rentals outside of the County, permit cost reasonable

Harvey Desnick – Stated the Planning Commission should be making informed decisions and leave emotion out of it, 2023 housing study, PC should look at this. Discussed community character, rural wilderness, minimize zoning.

Nick Meneguzzo – When STR survey is put out to the public, include positive questions as well. COI's go both ways.

Final Comments: None

Next Regular Meeting January 29, 4:00 PM  
M to Adjourn Dan / S Bob