
MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 20, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Members of the Commission present were: Ms. Bucco, Mr. Etter, Mr. Flynn and Mr. Kessler.

Also present: Bryan Snyder - Hamilton County Rural Zoning and Jana Grant – Zoning Secretary.

MS. BUCCO made a motion to approve the Agenda. MR. FLYNN seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Bucco - ‘aye’; Mr. Etter – “aye”; Mr. Flynn - ‘aye’; and Mr. Kessler - ‘aye’.

MS. BUCCO made a motion to approve the November 15, 2017 minutes. MR. FLYNN seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Bucco - ‘aye’; Mr. Etter - ‘aye’; Mr. Flynn- ‘aye’; and Mr. Kessler - ‘aye’.

MODIFICATION TO THE ZONING RESOLUTION:

CYNTHIA BUCCO called the public hearing for **SYMMES 2017-03, TEXT AMENDMENT-ARTTICLES VI, VI-A, VI-B, VII, VII-A, VIII, & IX.**

BRYAN SNYDER stated that the purpose of this change is to revise the language of Sections 62.1, 66.1, 70.1, 74.1, 78.1, 82.1 and 92.1 to fix an error in the agricultural regulations and to add new Sections 62.14-11, 66.14-11, 70.14-11, 74.14-11, 78.14-11, 82.17-11 to add standards for the keeping of chickens in the single-family residence districts.

Mr. Snyder stated that the Township is proposing to amend the Zoning Resolution to fix minor errors and relax the agriculture regulations for the keeping of a small number of chickens in residential zoning districts. The changes would include fixing a typo in the current regulations that indicate that agricultural regulations apply to property “greater” than five (5) acres where it should read “less” than five (5) acres. In addition, the amendments would add regulations reducing the setbacks for agricultural structures from sixty (60) feet to twenty (20) feet only for chicken coops with up to one hundred (100) square feet in area and a maximum of ten (10) chickens per property.

Mr. Snyder stated that the regulations also would include a requirement for keeping the chicken coop in a clean and sanitary condition, keeping the chickens confined to the chicken coop or run, and prohibitions on the keeping of roosters, commercial sale of eggs and slaughter of chickens on the property. Currently, these types of chicken coops are considered the same as a horse barn or pin pen with the same required setback from all residential properties. This prevents most residential sized lots from having the ability to locate chicken coops anywhere on the property. This amendment would separate small chicken coops from these other types of livestock enclosures.

Mr. Snyder stated that Symmes Township has had Township Trustee zoning jurisdiction since 1996 but contracts with Hamilton County zoning staff to administer all aspects of the Zoning Resolution, including issuance of permits and preparation of staff reports for variance requests. There have been several inquiries regarding the keeping of chickens on residential properties in the township and two (2) variance requests have been submitted to allow a reduced setback for two (2) separate properties in the township. These cases have yet to be heard and staff is not aware of any other similar requests for variances being granted in Symmes Township. However, this type of request is becoming more common.

Mr. Snyder advised that in recent years, there has been an interest around the country in the keeping of chickens in urban and suburban settings. The benefits of fresh healthy eggs have

become an interest for an increasing number of people. This is true of this region of southwest Ohio as well. Several years ago, the Hamilton County Zoning Resolution was revised to reduce the setback for chicken coops from one hundred (100) feet to twenty (20) feet from all property lines. This was done specifically to address a number of requests from residents in the county to relax the restrictions on chicken coops to allow small sized urban chicken coops on subdivision sized lots. In November the Symmes Township Zoning Commission passed a motion to initiate this text amendment to the Symmes Township Zoning Resolution that would essentially adopt the same standards and twenty (20) foot setback included in the Hamilton County Zoning Resolution.

Mr. Snyder stated that the main concern with keeping chickens are usually related to odor, noise, and the fact that when allowed to roam, they can create a barnyard type environment that is not consistent with the residential character of a typical subdivision. However, it has been demonstrated in other townships that these concerns can be addressed with the proper restrictions.

Mr. Snyder advised that the Hamilton County Zoning Resolution includes standards limiting the number of chickens to ten (10), limiting the size of the enclosure to a maximum of one hundred (100) square feet, prohibiting the keeping of roosters, confining the chickens to the enclosed area, and requiring the coops to be kept in a clean and sanitary condition. With these requirements in place, a number of permits have been issued for chicken coops in the township under county zoning and zoning inspectors have generally not received any complaints about noise or odor. The same standards would be included in these proposed text amendments. Therefore, it is likely that a chicken coop can be kept on residential properties in the township without having any negative impacts on the adjoining properties. Therefore, staff finds the amendment would be appropriate.

Mr. Snyder stated that generally, staff finds that the proposed text amendments would result in an improved set of development guidelines and regulations. Keeping a small number of chickens on a residential property has been shown to have little to no impact on adjacent properties, with the proper regulations and requirements, and there is little possibility that these small chicken coops would have a negative impact on the township. Therefore, staff finds the request to be appropriate and recommends approval of the proposed text amendments.

MR. FLYNN moved to approve the request for case Symmes #2017-03; Text Amendments, a request for approval of zoning amendments to Articles VI, VI-A, VI-B, VII, VII-A, VIII, & IX of the Symmes Township Zoning Resolution as initiated by the Symmes Township Zoning Commission. Mrs. Bucco seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Bucco - 'aye'; Mr. Etter - 'aye'; Mr. Flynn - 'aye'; and Mr. Kessler - 'aye'.

ADJOURNMENT

MR. FLYNN made motion to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. Mrs. Bucco seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Ms. Bucco - 'aye'; Mr. Etter - 'aye'; Mr. Flynn - 'aye'; and Mr. Kessler - 'aye';.

Approved:

Chairperson

Zoning Secretary