



SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT

Proudly serving : Douglas | Saugatuck | Saugatuck Township



3342 Blue Star Highway
Saugatuck, MI 49453
Phone: 269 857-3000
E-mail: Office@saugatuckfire.org

FIRE CODE BOARD of APPEALS MEETING

3:00pm – January 27th, 2020

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order / Roll Call:
Meeting called to order by Chairperson Miller at 3:00pm
PRESENT: A. Miller, E. Beckman, J. Verplank
ALSO PRESENT: Chief Greg Janik, Deputy Chief Chris Mantels
ABSENT with Notice: None
2. Reminder: It is requested that the board silences cell phones and put them away for the duration of the meeting.
3. Approval of Agenda (*additions / deletions*):
 - A. **Motion by Verplank, 2nd by Beckman to approve the agenda as presented. No discussion, motion carries unanimously.**
4. Approval of Minutes:
 - A. **December 6th, 2019**
Motion by Beckman, 2nd by Verplank to approve the minutes of the 10/6/2019 meeting as presented. No discussion, motion carries unanimously.
5. Unfinished Business: None
6. New Business:
 - A. **Election of Chair and Vice Chair**
 - i. **Motion by Verplank to make Miller Chair Supported by Beckman. All approve, motion carries unanimously.**
 - ii. **Motion by Verplank to make Beckman Vice-Chair Supported by Miller. All approve, motion carries unanimously.**
 - B. **Public Hearing to Consider Appeal of NORTSHORES OF SAUGATUCK, LLC**
 - i. **Open Hearing (Chair)**
 1. **Chair Miller will open hearing, and begin with presentation by applicant or designee, limited to 20 minutes. Then will allow presentation by Fire Code Official, or their designee, limited to 20 minutes. Then will allow the public or other parties to comment, limited to 5 minutes each.**
 - ii. **Presentation by the Applicant or designee.**
 1. **Northshores of Saugatuck LLC case for Lot 15 was presented by Attorney Carl Gabrielse. (See attached PowerPoint)**
 - iii. **Presentation by the Fire Code Official or designee.**
 1. **Chief Janik and Deputy Chief Mantels presented the Fire District's case. (See attached PowerPoint)**
 - iv. **Presentation by other parties**
 1. **Doug Denblekyer - Chief of the Graafschap Fire Department. In full support of the Fire District's proposal for a pressurized water supply to prevent another Laketown fire from 2007.**
 2. **Dave Burdick – 385 Fremont in Douglas – Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition**
 - a. **Homes burn, new or old.**
 - b. **Most fires are caused by people in the home.**
 - c. **Fires can be deadly in less than 3 minutes.**



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- d. New lightweight construction techniques lead to faster floor failure.
 - e. If requirement were to be relaxed, and someone is injured or killed, that will come back to haunt the fire district, and the three communities.
 - f. If something can be adequately solved by writing a check, there is no problem.
 - g. Only the health and safety of the community should be in the equation, not profitability.
3. Cynthia McKean – City of Saugatuck
 - a. The issue is not a spat between the developer and Fire District.
 - b. Decisions made after hearing is closed will affect the entire community.
4. Becky Bruns
 - a. Lives in Laketown
 - b. Referenced 2007 fire
 - c. Questioned what skills or experience the developer, or their attorney have in fighting fire.
 - d. Is concerned that the developer wants to privatize profits, and communitize the costs.
5. Dave Haverdink – Chief of Hamilton Fire
 - a. No one can change time, and distance
 - b. Was present for the fire in 2007.
 - c. Couldn't bring in water quick enough.
 - d. Had to abandon position because ran of water
 - e. How can we best deal with time and distance to facilitate best protection for the community.
- v. Discussion
 1. Discussion between the board ensued.
 - a. E. Beckman offered his comments.
 - b. J. Verplank offered her comments.
 - c. A. Miller offered his comments.
 2. Beckman and others would like to see PUD document and would like to see the development in person.
 3. Carl Gabrielse – the Fire District voiced concerns with the Townships water supply. Not in the purview of the Fire District or the appeals board to redo a consent agreement. Not in the purview of the Fire District to compare developments. That would be between the developer and the Township with the approval of the planned unit development that has already occurred. We are proposing to build a house, on one lot, and the one item that is holding up construction is the site plan review from the Fire District. The entire development PUD was approved by the Township, with an emergency and firefighting layout in it. The Township contacted the Fire District. The Township, who is the direct authority approved that plan with the dry hydrants around the boat basin. That has all been approved. No way Northshores would be able to run dry hydrants through the federal channel.
 4. Chris Mantels – all developments are required to follow the 400-foot requirement. This prevents friction loss by pumping water 3,000 feet away. As far as Mr. Gabrielse reference that we were involved in the review of the PUD, I would say his statement is incorrect. I was at the meeting, as Chief Janik was out of town. We were only ever asked if the marina would adversely affect our operations, the PUD had already been



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approved before we were asked to comment. We could not explain what and where the dry hydrants were placed and what is in the PUD, or what was approved by the Township. If it is true that all of this was already approved in the PUD, then why don't they already have a building permit, and why are they waiting on us? Obviously, the Township is relying on Fire District input for a viable fire protection water supply rather than letting planning commissioners that don't fight fire approve a water supply. Lastly, I would offer that not being able to dry hydrants in a navigable waterway was actually brought up by Chief Janik to Mr. Bosgraaf, and he said that was not an issue because they own the land and already won that lawsuit.

5. Chief Janik – we never approved a water supply. We want to work this out together.

vi. Close Hearing (Voice Vote)

1. Motion by Verplank 2nd by Beckman to close public hearing. No discussion. Motion carries by unanimous voice vote.

vii. Action by Board

1. Motion by Verplank, 2nd by Beckman to table until 2/4/2020 with a public meeting a 4:30pm at the Fire District, with a site visit at 3:30pm. No discussion. Motion carries by unanimous voice vote.

7. Public Comments: (Limit 3 minutes):

- A. **Becky Bruns** – if Northshore prevails on Lot 15, that this decision will become precedent for all future parcels and developments.
- B. **Chief Greg Janik** – we are the subject matter experts, not the Township, not the attorney, and not the developer. Chief will support all of his personnel in the fire service. They can do this correctly and is hopeful they will have 2nd thoughts and do the right thing. Decisions the BOA makes will affect decisions for the next 100 years. Might as well take the water supply code and throw it right out, just eliminate it, Because the reality is it will be embellished, used, plagiarized, you will be setting a precedent. But I still believe they will at least look at doing the right thing and installing a pressurized water supply. It can be engineered; it can be done to do the right thing.
- C. **Cynthia McKean** – what if there is not a marina? There were 20 items that need to be addressed. It was a preliminary approval; they do not have full approval yet. What about global warming?
- D. **Richard Kirk** – Thank you twice for allowing him to speak. Illinois resident. Over 40 years in Michigan. Based on all evidence presented by Fire District, and the developers counsel, the District did NOT misinterpret the code as it is ultimately their call on what is adequate. The White Star Line, the builders of the Titanic had exceeded the safety requirements, but no one thought about the what ifs.

8. Board of Appeal Member Comments:

- A. **Verplank** – so the decision is if the fire department overstepped their decision in this matter rather than the minimum. Wants to see the best for the community, not just the minimum.
- B. **Beckman** – Been asked if 1142 applies, or if IFC applies. Also been asked if the existing dry hydrants can support needed water supply. Wants to see the PUD so we are not back here again. Supports writing a letter to Mr. Padnos suggesting the best fire protection possible.
- C. **Miller** – scope is whether or not the Fire District correctly interpreted the code. Not to determine whether or not a pressurized water system is required.

9. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 4:44pm.