

MINUTES OF RAVENNA CITY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
July 15, 2019

The Meeting of the Ravenna City Planning Committee was called to order by Chairman, Rob Kairis at 7:01 P.M. Present were: Andrew Kluge, Matt Harper, Amy Michael and Paul Moskun. Also attending were Mayor Frank Seman; Finance Director, Kimble Cecora; Director of Public Service, Kay Dubinsky; Fire Chief, Geoffrey Cleveland; Police Chief, Jeff Wallis; Utility Billing Supervisor, Mike Reynolds; Larry Silenius of 123 North Walnut Street, Ravenna, Ohio; Clifford Soudil of 434 Woodland Street, Ravenna, Ohio; Deena Tannert of 784 East Main Street, Ravenna, Ohio; Tim Calfee of 910 Murray Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio and Christina West of 732 Eastland Avenue, Ravenna, Ohio.

Mr. Kairis said the only item on the agenda is a discussion of satellite receivers, antennae, etc.

Mr. Finney said that there were a number of satellite violation letters sent and those varied in locations. Some were in the side yard. Some were in the front yard. The side yard could be the side of the house. When he went through the ordinance, he believes there is a discrepancy. He would like to make it so the satellites cannot be in the front of the structure to the street but may be installed on the side yard.

Ms. Michael said this issue was brought to committee previously because a concerned citizen started seeing these pop up all over. They talked about how to monitor it. There is a point where they talked making them get a permit.

Mr. Finney said that it does state satellite dishes must apply for a zoning permit. However, there has never been an installer come for a permit. It's nearly impossible to enforce. The installer is a third party, not the satellite company. That makes it so much more difficult.

Mr. Kairis said this is not uncommon and it is the responsibility of the company to know this; not the responsibility of the City to tell them the rules. Other communities restrict just like Ravenna does. It's not that they don't know. It's that they don't care because they install a satellite and then not be held responsible.

Mr. Soudil said these people are all contractors and get paid something like \$20.00 per dish setup. They're not about to get a permit. It goes back to the same thing. They need to have a way to enforce this at the time the legislation is put into place. He was shocked to see one today that was three inches from the City's curb on the other side of the sidewalk. There are others around too. The department doesn't have enough time to enforce all of the ordinances.

Ms. Michael asked if they could find out who the installer is and fine them.

Mr. Kairis said that ultimately it's not the installer's responsibility. It's the responsibility of the homeowner.

Mr. Soudil said the installer is just going to put it anywhere they can get reception. That's part of the deal. They wouldn't want to put it on the roof at the Jones house because it's a lot more work to do it that way.

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Mr. Kairis noted a letter received from the Community Improvement Corporation basically stating there are other options. It's not a hardship for a resident to not have a satellite dish in the front or side yard and urging City Council not to change the code to permit this. He tends to agree with it and he's not in favor of making any sweeping changes. He doesn't know if Mr. Finney just wants to clean up the code in case there is some misunderstanding. There isn't a conflict but he does understand that if someone doesn't read down far enough, somebody could put it in a side yard and think they aren't violating the code. If Mr. Finney has a suggestion for improving the clarity of the code. But he heard Mr. Finney say he was okay with the satellite being in the side yard.

Mr. Finney said that it would be with the understanding that they are trying to keep the street trees and allow homeowners options for different types of television or even internet. It's his opinion, he doesn't see a satellite dish as unsightly on a side yard that may even have a six foot privacy fence anyway vs. a front yard.

Mr. Kairis asked if the change would be to permit them but still requiring a permit.

Mr. Finney responded in the affirmative even though they have never issued one.

Mr. Kluge asked what the recourse is for people who have them in their front yard.

Mr. Finney said that the code states that since 2001. They have could get a permit and they'd be told they can't put them in the front yard.

Ms. Dubinsky said the bottom line of the problem is that past administrations just haven't been enforcing these codes and now they are doing it and people are having a problem with it. She believes those codes are there and should be enforced. It's not only satellite dishes. It's parking on the lawns, etc. The problem with the satellite dishes is the City isn't finding out about it until after the fact.

Mr. Kairis is a customer calls a company and tells them the dish has to be moved, he would hope that would send a message. If they do what they just said, ignore a problem, then, of course, they will be putting them wherever they want. He agrees that if a side yard is permitted, then they'd have to talk to Building Dept. about where they are going to put it, etc., and if that was an issue, the permit could be denied. But he thinks that might give some people a little more flexibility. He doesn't know how the Administration goes about enforcing people who have violations is up to the Administration. That is not a function of City Council.

Mr. Finney said the first thing he would like to do is to fix the discrepancy. The second item is a statement "no earth station or ground station, including its concrete base slab or other substructure, shall be constructed less than twelve feet from any property line or easement", as they do with sheds or other structures, his thought is to change it to meet the zoning setbacks of the location. In R-3, the setback can be five feet from one property line and ten from the other.

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Mr. Kairis said the current code is a bit more strict, stating 12'. Does Mr. Finney think that should be changed?

Mr. Finney said that what he is recommending to change it to meet the local zoning code for that specific area.

Mr. Harper said there is a resident who has a satellite in the front yard. He knows some neighbors have contacted Mr. Finney in the past. That satellite is probably within a foot to a foot and a half of the property line. The people complaining look out their front window and there is a satellite dish instead of a beautiful tree. They've been trying to get that resident to move that dish for two years.

Mr. Finney said that issue is currently in the court system. They are working on it. They are going to court over a satellite dish.

Mr. Harper said this has been an ongoing problem and a resident is not willing to comply, then it becomes very problematic. They can't go on the property and remove it themselves.

Mr. Finney said that the court system can order it removed. If it not removed, then the City could hire someone to remove it and then assess the resident's taxes. It's interesting a few of the letters that were sent out the satellites aren't even functioning. The one elderly lady just didn't have anyone to remove it for her.

Mr. Finney went on to say that the last area is where it says roof mounted earth stations shall not be permitted to be mounted on any accessory structure. He would like to see them permit the satellites to be mounted on a shed or a garage.

Mr. Soudil said they may have written it that way because the dishes used to be about 10 feet in diameter. Now they are much smaller.

Mr. Kairis said if they wanted to present code changes, it will take three readings and would give them plenty of time to follow up with the residents. If they can do it in a week from now they can put it on the next meeting.

Mr. Finney said he would be out of the office next Monday. He would like to clarify that City Council does not want satellite dishes in the front yards.

It was the concurrence of those present that satellite dishes should not be permitted in a front yard.

Mr. Finney said there have been cases of a corner lot. The code currently states that it is two front yards. However, if he drew lines down a house, they could have a rear yard. At some point from the face backward, it wouldn't be a side or rear yard.

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Mr. Kairis said that he thinks that if they have a corner lot, they shouldn't have a satellite dish. It may seem unfair but it shouldn't be on either of the front yards. They will have to change the wording.

There being no further discussion, it was decided by those present the issue will be kept in committee for the next month.

Discussion ensued regarding zoning issues surrounding the idea of allowing for chickens in the City limits.

There being no further business to discuss, this meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Robert Kairis, Chairman
Planning Committee