

**Whitewater Township Board
Minutes of Regular Meeting held January 14, 2020**

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Popp called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. at the Whitewater Township Hall, 5777 Vinton Road, Williamsburg, Michigan, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of Board Members

Board Members present: Treasurer Benak, Clerk Goss, Trustee Hubbell, Trustee Lawson, Popp
Board Members absent: None

Others present: County Commissioner Gordie LaPointe, Fire Chief Brandon Flynn, Deputy Treasurer Lois MacLean, Planning Commission Chair Kim Mangus, Deputy Supervisor Ron Bachi, and 21 others

Set/Adjust Meeting Agenda

There were no adjustments.

At Popp's request, a moment of silence was observed for the passing of Linda Cosgrove, wife of Tom Cosgrove, member of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

Public Comment (9:14)

Ronald Bachi, 6987 Cook Road, read from a prepared statement in opposition to event barns. (See attachment.)

(14:34)

Janet Bachi, 6987 Cook Road, spoke in opposition to event barns.

(19:53)

Popp notified Janet Bachi that her five minutes were up.

(20:44)

Heidi Vollmuth, 8371 Winnie Lane, spoke in opposition to an event barn ordinance.

(24:45)

Kate Glancy, attorney, said she is representing a group of concerned property owners from Whitewater Township. She listed their concerns and their request that the board not make this change tonight unless further study and investigation has been done.

(26:27)

Dee Prabhaker, 6925 Cook Road, read from prepared comments in opposition to an event barn ordinance. (See attachment.) He also read from prepared comments of Paul Wiemerslage, 5050 Lackey Road, in opposition to event barns.

(30:29)

Bob Campbell, 8886 Skegemog Point Road, spoke in opposition to event barns.

(33:51)

Bob Reider, 9435 Fairview Road, spoke in opposition to event barns.

(34:48)

Ryan Stibbs, 9675 Old M-72, spoke in opposition to event barns and proposed that another survey be done.

Public Hearing (38:04)

None

Reports/Presentations/Announcements/Comments (38:08)**County Board of Commissioners Report**

Gordie LaPointe gave the following report:

- They finalized the budget. They maintained their commitment of putting \$7 million toward the pension deficit at a minimum. They made a commitment to have a fund balance of 25%. The \$1.3 million excess at the end of the year was committed 50% to pension, 25% to budget stabilization fund, and 25% to a capital fund. They committed \$7.4 million to the defined benefit pension.
- Regarding the jail, it was built in the 1960's, it is inefficient to operate, and they always are running a deficit in the number of corrections officers. He is hoping the county board will take action this year to remedy the situation. He is very impressed with the new captain who runs the jail, Captain Barsheff; he is always available to the board to explain what is going on. They have done a number of things within the budget to improve things.
- They are looking at combining the clerk and register of deeds' offices. They have asked the county administrator to look into the feasibility and the pros and cons. He does not see the willingness on the board to do it, but they will go through the exercise.
- Airport governance continues to move along, looking at changing the governance from a commission to an authority. There are a lot of pros and cons on both sides. The articles of incorporation are outdated. It was done when Traverse City was a part owner. Since then, the county bought them out. There are huge gaps in the document that governs the airport. Grand Traverse County owns 85%; Leelanau County owns 15%. He explained some of the issues.
- TIF 97 is still motoring along. They are looking at ways in which they can apply some pressure to the city to not allow an extension for another 14 years beyond the expiration. There are a couple ways in which they may have some leverage to cause the city to discuss it.
- Pugsley has fallen apart. However, the gun range will go ahead.
- In their last meeting, there was talk about the board agreeing to refugee residency. They cannot relocate in a community unless the local jurisdiction has given approval. Bethany Christian Services sponsors this, which affects a half dozen people or so. There was a 7 to 0 vote of approval. They come under refugee status. They get vetted and they get reviewed and inspected every year. It is a very worthwhile program and is small scale.

There was brief discussion of the airport governance topic.

County Road Commissioner Report (49:18)

No one is present from the Road Commission.

Mobile Medical Response Report (49:25)

No one is present from Mobile Medical Response. December activity reports were provided.

Fire Department Report (49:31)

Brandon Flynn gave the following report:

- It was an uneventful month. Some training sessions were skipped because of the holidays.
- He attended a town hall meeting put on by the State Fire Marshal to talk about the new Public Act 291 which will regulate all firefighter training. The state is going to require continuing education credits for firefighters. He thinks the township is ahead of the game since they got Target Solutions last year. It may have negative effects as far as the time commitment for new recruits. It will probably take effect later in the year.
- He applied for a Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant through the DNR and received a 50% match grant in the amount of \$4,000 to replace their wildland firefighting gear. He explained the need for this type of personal protection equipment and how it will be used.

There was brief discussion of the new pumper tanker. The chassis is in and they are finalizing some of the details before they get the body in.

Planning Commission Report (54:36)

Lloyd Lawson gave the following report:

- The PC had a meeting on 1/8. Before the meeting, they had an open house. A lot of people turned out and there was a lot of discussion back and forth. Their regular meeting started a few minutes late. They discussed the turnout being good. This is something they are probably going to plan on doing four or five times a year.
- They discussed reviewing the RC district. There was also discussion of possibly putting together a subcommittee to maybe lay out the pros and cons and then bring it back to the PC with recommendations. Their timeline is possibly June having it all done. Originally, the board was talking about February, but they do not see getting all the information together by then.
- They did not review their bylaws. It was pushed off to the next meeting. They elected officers, Mangus chair, Dean vice chair, and Jacobson secretary.
- The PC asked about codification, which is on the board's agenda tonight.
- They made a resolution on meeting dates.

There was discussion that Mickey Dean was going to step down but changed his mind. Popp asked about bylaws and board approval. Lawson reiterated that bylaws were moved to the next meeting.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Report (57:47)

Cheryl Goss gave the following report:

Whitewater Township Board – Minutes of 01/14/2020

- The committee met last night; 4 members and 1 alternate were present; 1 member was absent.
- Chet Grant was present and spoke with the committee during public comment about the status of Lossie Trail.
- Minutes were approved for their 10/14 and 12/9 meetings. The November meeting was cancelled.
- The committee adopted a resolution setting their 2020/2021 meeting schedule and elected officers.
- Goss provided an update about trail signs, namely, that Image 360 has been provided with some information about the trails at Whitewater Township Park and they have been asked to do design work for trail signs. It will be a design that is unique to Whitewater Township and will be used at other parks.
- Linda Slopsema reported on some recent extensive damage to the Lossie Road Nature Trail from vehicular traffic and provided pictures. The committee agreed that they will get and install two “Motorized Vehicles Prohibited” signs on T posts until more substantial signs and posts blocking vehicular traffic can be installed in the spring. Vehicle tracks in the snow were present coming from the Vannest property to the north of the Cook Road entrance. Slopsema suggested that letters be sent to adjacent property owners reminding them of the non-motorized status of the trail.
- Regarding the Hi Pray Park dugout project, Slopsema and Goss met last week with David Capser of Fleis & VandenBrink to talk about this project. They were invited to submit a variable proposal for some or all of the project. The proposal is supposed to be available later this week.
- Regarding the batting cage usage and rules, it was decided that it will be booked in 1-hour increments. Hours of operation were not decided upon. More information will be sought. The committee did come up with an initial set of rules.
- Elk Rapids Youth Baseball recently received some grant funds which they would like to share with the township, and the committee suggested asking them to purchase a live pitching protective screen. Goss will transmit that request to Elk Rapids Youth Baseball.
- Regarding the tennis backboard, Melissa Melton got more information about the cost of this structure for budget purposes.
- The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.
- The committee wanted Goss to ask the board if they are agreeable with letters going out to adjacent property owners reminding them of the nonmotorized status of the trail.

Discussion followed. There was no objection from the board to the letters.

Goss will draft the letter and send it to all adjacent property owners.

Consent Calendar (1:01:45)

Receive and File

1. Supervisor’s Report for December 2019
2. Clerk/Parks & Recreation Administrator’s Report for December 2019/January 2020
3. Zoning Administrator December 2019 Staff Report
4. Mobile Medical Response December 2019 Activity Reports

5. Fire Department December 2019 Report
6. Historical Society December 2019 Report
7. Approved 10/02/2019 Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes (with footer date correction)
8. Approved 11/06/2019 Planning Commission Minutes
9. Approved 11/13/2019 Historical Society Minutes

Correspondence

1. Grand Traverse County Sheriff Department Statistics for December 2019, 4th Quarter 2019, Year-To-Date 2019
2. Public Comment 12/10/2019 Dee Prabhaker re: Event Barns
3. E-mail 12/10/2019 John Nolan re: Constructive Criticism
4. Letter 01/06/2020 Paddle Antrim re: Capital Campaign Goal

Minutes

1. Recommend approval of 12/10/2019 regular meeting minutes

Bills for Approval

1. Approval of Alden State Bank vouchers # 44788 through 44888
2. Approval of First Community Bank Miami Beach vouchers # 1262
3. Approval of First Community Bank WMDLS voucher # (none)

Budget Amendments (none)

Revenue & Expenditure Report 12/31/2019

Referring to the expenditure for publishing the synopsis of the 11/12/2019 meeting, Popp stated he would like to remove this item as it was not carried out in accordance with state law. The clerk is supposed to prepare it and provide it to the supervisor for approval.

Discussion followed.

Motion by Lawson to adjust the Consent Calendar accordingly as stated.

After further discussion, **Popp said there is a motion made, and he will second it, to amend the Consent Calendar Bills for Approval to remove the Traverse-City Record-Eagle payment for synopsis of the 11/12/2019 meeting.**

Goss noted that the motion was Lawson's **motion to adjust the Consent Calendar accordingly as stated.**

Popp stated he will second that.

In response to Hubbell's question, Goss noted it has been paid.

Roll call vote: Benak, no; Goss, no; Hubbell, no; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes. Motion failed.

Motion by Goss to approve the Consent Calendar as presented; second by Benak. Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, no; Popp, no; Benak, yes. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business (1:10:29)

Miami Beach Sewer System Transfer (Verbal Update)

John Nolan and Tom Slopsema are present.

Goss provided an update concerning the documents, i.e., Transfer Agreement, Bill of Sale, Easement Agreement, and two Warranty Deeds, and stated she sent an e-mail to Attorney Patterson with the updated documents, asked him to provide the deeds, if there is anything else the board needs to do before the documents are signed, and whether it should be done by motion or resolution. Goss is expecting an answer by the end of the week and expects document signing will take place at the February meeting.

**Proposed Revision of AP&P Section 2.6 Independent Contractor Agreement (Nov 2019)
(1:13:16)**

Motion by Benak to adopt the proposed changes to Whitewater Township Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 2.0, Township Board Administration, to include Section 2.6(a) and 2.6(b), as written; second by Lawson.

Goss proposed the following changes, all of which were agreed to by the board:

- Page 88, first line of paragraph 2.6(b), strike the word “non” in the phrase “non contract labor . . .”
- Page 88, third line of paragraph 2.6(b), strike "shall be used when such labor needs arise." Instead, insert "is a starting point. All independent contractor agreements shall be reviewed by the township attorney prior to finalization."
- Page 88, paragraph 1 under Instructions for Use, the words “only as needed” should be underlined to comport with the attorney’s version of the template.
- Page 89, middle of the page, where it says, “Note: Material in brackets and italics is optional or must be completed depending on the contract or use involved,” the words “optional or must be completed” should be underlined to comport with the attorney’s version of the template.
- Page 89, below paragraph 1, Services To Be Performed, a blank line should be inserted after “The township engages IC to perform the following tasks or services” to comport with the attorney’s version of the template.
- Page 89, the last 4 bracketed lines on the page should be italicized to comport with the attorney’s version of the template.
- Page 90, Terms of Payment, in the last line concerning verification, add “clerk or treasurer” after the word “supervisor.”
- Page 90, insert a blank line after paragraph 3 to comport with the attorney’s version of the template.
- Page 90, insert a blank line after paragraph 4 to comport with the attorney’s version of the template.
- Page 90, in paragraph 7, the bracketed material in the second bullet point should be italicized to comport with the attorney’s version of the template.

- Page 91, under Liability Insurance, the per occurrence limit will be reduced to \$500,000.
- Page 91, paragraph 10 is a bracketed paragraph and should be italicized to comport with the attorney's version of the template.
- Page 91, paragraph 12, the bracketed words "[or immediately upon completion of the services/project]" will be italicized to comport with the attorney's version of the template.

Benak amended the wording of her motion from "as written" to "as amended." Second by Lawson.

Roll call vote: Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Goss, yes. Motion carried.

Proposed Amendment of GO #40 Fire Prevention Code (Dec 2019) (1:40:00)

Ordinance 40 needs to be updated to remove references to Rural Fire, to cite a newer version of the International Fire Code, etc.

Brief discussion followed.

Motion by Popp to authorize Fire Chief Brandon Flynn to generate a new fire prevention ordinance with fee schedule, including legal review of proposed ordinance for township board approval; second by Benak. On voice vote, all those present voted in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Event Barn Survey - Next Step (Dec 2019) (1:46:00)

Popp asked the audience to be patient and allow the board to have their discussion, after which he may ask the board to entertain anyone wishing to speak.

The following points were discussed:

- When Question 1 is tabulated on the basis of how many are opposed or not opposed to event barns, 78 respondents chose "opposed to this type of development in any district." 312 respondents selected one or more of the other choices.
- Benak offered to do the same tabulation in Excel and provide it to the board, as well as other information that can be extrapolated.
- Despite criticism about the survey, there is a lot of good data. Future surveys should not be tainted because somebody does not like the results and they are going to bash it. The survey itself did not do anything wrong. The numbers are the numbers.
- Goss debunked the earlier public comment assertion that Popp was not involved in the survey and provided detail as to his involvement from beginning to end.
- Popp argued that 68.7% answering other than "opposed to this type of development in any district" does not mean approval, stating Question 1 was not designed in that context.
- Responses to Questions 7 and 8 were discussed.

(2:02:16)

Goss noted the excessive chatter going on in the back of the room, making it difficult for others to hear, and asked Popp to quiet it down.

Popp asked that everyone be respectful and make their notes.

- Discussion of survey comments continued.
- There was brief discussion of special use permits and use variances.
- Benak acknowledged there is a specific group of people who do not want event barns, and she understands why. Benak said she wants to do what is right; she wants to give the planning commission all the information they can possibly use to make good recommendations back to the board. The board said they were going to do a survey, gather information, look it over, and then decide what we were going to do with it. She thinks it needs to go to the planning commission for them to go over the material, and stated she did provide the survey to the planning commission. She would like to see it go to them, do what they are supposed to do with stuff like this, and then make recommendations. She would not like to see this board be the one that makes the choices on it until after it has been fully vetted.
- Goss asked Benak to tabulate the survey for the opposed/not opposed and add that to the survey results, as well as the other items Goss tallied, and then post revised event barn survey results.
- The statistics on the Additional Comments section were discussed. Benak noted that the negative comments are coming from the “not in my township.”
- Benak offered that she will sit down with anybody and have them look at it (the surveys).
- Popp suggested, before any additional public input is garnered, we should define what this thing is and where we think it should be located.
- Benak agreed it is a perfect time to turn it over to the planning commission to see what they recommend.

Motion by Benak that we turn this event barn question over to the planning commission and ask them to take it up, using the results from the survey, to give us a recommendation moving forward; second by Hubbell.

Goss reiterated her request that Benak add the opposed/not opposed tabulation to the survey results.

Lawson does not feel the planning commission will take up this topic until summer.

Benak agreed to do the tabulation.

Lawson will take it back to the planning commission.

There was brief discussion regarding zoning of parcels which does not match the use.

The board declined to hear further comments from the audience.

The motion was re-read: **Motion by Benak that we turn this event barn question over to the planning commission and ask them to take it up, using the results from the survey, to give us a recommendation moving forward; second by Hubbell.**

There was agreement that the board is not limiting the planning commission's research to the survey results.

Roll call vote: Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes. Motion carried.

New Business (2:19:32)

Ordinance Recodification Proposals - American Legal, General Code, Municipal Code

Benak created a comparison chart of the items she looked at in the three codification proposals and provided copies for the board and public.

Lawson commented that, from the original proposals to now, there are a lot more internet available products they handle. Some of the services provide complete website service; some do just links, and suggested the board needs to figure out where we are going with that. Are we going to duplicate services with our website that we already have versus what we need from them to link to our website.

The meeting was paused while a large number of meeting attendees filed out of the building.

Lawson continued to point out the different website services that are available. Some of them have a fee to download; some provide a free PDF.

Discussion followed.

Lawson said he is not ready to pick one of these yet and would like a little bit more time.

Popp said we are not ready to let go of our ordinance into somebody else's hands entirely who may own the copyrights to it.

Discussion followed as to the availability of hard copies, Word copies.

Goss stated the biggest thing we will be getting out of recodification is finding out if we have things which are not consistent with state law anymore, if we have things that clash with each other internally in the zoning ordinance, or between the general ordinances and the township ordinances, and it was discussed previously that it is much more economical to have a codification company do it than to pay the township attorney \$200+ an hour to do it. The attorney is going to be involved in the final product. Goss acknowledged that she is not ready to make a motion for one particular company but urged that the board should be ready to do so by the next meeting.

Further discussion centered on:

- What is in our shopping list for what we want for services, i.e., Word documents, searchability for surrounding ordinances, how long does it take them to get the revised amendments on the webpage.
- Goss will provide a couple links for each of the codification companies to municipalities who have their ordinances.

- The proposals will not be sent to the planning commission for review.
- Font size and number of pages was discussed.
- Should interviews be done with the sales people for each company.

It was agreed that Goss will set up phone calls with each of the codification representatives for the February 11 meeting, at approximately 7:30 p.m., approximately 7:45 p.m., and approximately 8:00 p.m.

This matter will be brought back at the February 11 meeting.

Appointment of Board of Review Alternate (2:36:55)

Brenda Welch is present.

Popp is recommending Brenda Welch as a Board of Review alternate.

Motion by Goss to appoint Brenda Welch as a Board of Review alternate, term to expire 12/31/2020; second by Lawson.

Welch holds a real estate license but is currently not practicing. They have a heating and cooling company and she currently works there.

Roll call vote: Popp, yes; Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes. Motion carried.

Popp will get Welch signed up for training in Cadillac.

Whitewater Township Park 2020 Dates and Rates (2:40:15)

Motion by Benak to designate the 2020 opening, closing and free camping weekend dates as recommend by the clerk; second by Popp. On voice vote, all those present voted in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Motion by Benak to approve the 2020 camping and miscellaneous rates as recommended by the clerk; second by Popp. On voice vote, all those present voted in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Approval of Contract/Fee for Redesign of Park Website (2:41:42)

Motion by Popp to approve the \$3,760 expenditure for redesign of the park website and to authorize the Clerk to sign the Brick House Interactive contract for same; second by Lawson. Roll call vote: Benak, yes; Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes. Motion carried.

DNR Fire Grant (2:42:53)

Motion by Popp to authorize Chief Flynn and Ron Popp to sign the 2020 Volunteer Fire Assistance Project Agreement on behalf of Whitewater Township; second by Hubbell.

There was brief discussion concerning the signatures already on the document.

Benak suggested adding the word “supervisor” to the motion.

The motion was restated by Popp: **Motion to authorize Chief Flynn and Supervisor Ron Popp to sign the 2020 Volunteer Fire Assistance Project Agreement on behalf of Whitewater Township.**

Second by Benak.

Roll call vote: Goss, yes; Hubbell, yes; Lawson, yes; Popp, yes; Benak, yes. Motion carried.

Tabled Items (2:47:21)

None

Board Comments/Discussion (2:47:21)

Benak brought up the need to set budget meeting dates.

After much discussion, it was agreed that the first budget work session will take place at a special meeting on February 4th at 6:00 p.m. The fire department budget will be discussed.

Announcements (2:48:03)

Next regular meeting date is February 11, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment (2:52:40)

Ron Bachi, 6987 Cook Road, spoke again concerning the event barn survey results.

(2:58:18)

Heidi Vollmuth, 8371 Winnie Lane, commented on a planning commission meeting, the 2009 survey, and event barns.

(3:00:03)

Kim Mangus, 1214 Cerro Drive and 5101 Brown Bear Lane, noted that she worked on the 2009 survey and has tabulated surveys, and offered comments concerning the legality of event barns in the township.

Adjournment (3:03:48)

Motion by Lawson to adjourn; second by Popp. On voice vote, all those present voted in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Goss
Whitewater Township Clerk

1-14-20

Ronald Bachi 6987 Cook Rd. Please attach to the minutes, verbatim. I would like to wish a Happy New Year to the board and the citizens of Whitewater Township. Tonight, we discuss the Event Barn Survey results. Concerns I have with the origin of the survey. The fact that our elected Supervisor was not part of the creation of the survey, is troubling. Mr. Popp was away on medical leave, and the survey couldn't wait one more month, but then it took five months for the results.

The front page of the survey shows a barn, it states that event barns are agricultural barns. First question: In what area of the Township would an event barn be most suitable? Are you kidding me? That's a leading question. Yet, the majority of residents didn't buy into it, they answered right, they said commercial. They ask the question, have you attended an event barn? The question should be, how would you like to live next to an event barn? As I read the Survey, it's the comment sections that had the most impact on me. It's fairly obvious that people were passionate about how they felt toward event barns.

Its not just slanted, instead its overwhelmingly negative against event barns. If you can't see that, you either can't read or you need new glasses.

But I don't want to talk about the survey right now, I want to talk to you what this is really about. Its about the commercialization of our agricultural and residential districts. Its about big business in our back yards. In 2016 an individual bought a large chunk of land between M 72 and Cook rd. for just under 2million dollars.

Shortly after purchase they began to go through the steps that would allow them to build an Event Center on that land. Here's the question of the day! Why would they purchase a piece of land for that price with the intent to put an event center on it, when In White Water township, the zoning ordinance does not permit event barns anywhere. Were promises made, did someone say this could happen.

Here's what I know. This situation was never about the farmer, this was always about Special Interest-Big Business. This is just fine and dandy for the purchaser of this property. Not so much for the Whitewater residence that surrounds it. They need just one thing to make this happen, A white water town ship Event Barn ordinance. Is the Board, at all cost' willing to provide them with an Event Barn ordinance. If this was to happen, it would be the beginning of the end of Whitewater Township as we know it.

I have gotten to know this board, pretty well over the last 18 months. Trust me on this one, don't get caught drinking their cool aid. The Board knows there is a lot of pushback from the community on this issue, so they may take a different angle of persuasion.

They know that the Whitewater Township residence don't want the event barn ordinance, their next play will be scare tactics.

They will try to convince you that we need an event barn ordinance, to protect us from exactly what they are trying to bring to our township. They will try to convince you that we need to be proactive with the event barn ordinance, so we can make the rules. Don't fall for this, not even a little bit.

Then they will try to make you feel guilty about the farmer.

The Whitewater farmer is an important staple of our community, I appreciate and respect what the farmer does for our community. A commercial event barn is not part of agricultural farming operations under' The Right to Farm Act.

And let's not forget about agritourism. The event center, that provides alcohol, music, and entertainment to large volumes of people, repetitively should not be confused with the corn maze or hayrides, or farm animal education. They are clearly different.

In conclusion, the event barn pushback is real. Presently I have hundreds of signatures against the event barn ordinance. And that number grows daily. Here is a statistic you can take to the bank. 99%

of the residence that were approached signed the petition against the ordinance that would allow Event Barns or centers as a special use within the agricultural or residential districts.

People have showed up against the Event barn ordinance at meetings, in letters, through publications and now with the survey. The court of public opinion has spoken, are you listening? We the People of Whitewater Township demand to be represented by you, the board. Abandon the Event Barn ordinance.

Thank You.

1-14-2020

Greetings and Happy New Year. I am here tonight as a concerned resident to express strong opposition to any ordinance that would allow an Event Barn commercial business to operate on agricultural land. By any measure, the results of the Event Barn survey were overwhelmingly negative, and showed serious concerns that our residents had about what the increased traffic, drunk driving and noise would do to our safety and quality of life.

The original push behind this initiative was to provide opportunities for farmers with suitable, existing structures, to generate supplemental income. With that being said, I am unsure why these farmers have not stepped forward and publicly asked for this. It makes me wonder if this is really about farmers and preserving historic barns after all.

Meanwhile, there are property owners across the road from me who have been saving the original barnwood from a structure they took down... for what purpose? To wait for an ordinance that would provide a financial incentive to build a brand new event facility, slap the old wood on top and declare that the barn has been "lovingly restored" and is now open for business? At what cost? The safety and quality of life of neighboring residents?

My family, and many others in our community, chose to live here because we value the peace, quiet, safety and rural character. Tonight, when you discuss next steps on the event barn survey results, I urge the members of the township board to listen to the voices of our residents and abandon this ordinance.

Dee Prabhaker

6925 Cook Road