Webber Township Planning Commission
Public Hearing of 08-22-2026

Jacqueline called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Jacqueline led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call: Virginia Hammer present, Kevin Newell present, Kathy Rose present, Jacquline Jacobs present and Elizabeth Burrows absent.

Kevin made a motion to approve the agenda while Virginia supported. All in favor, motion carries. 4 yes 1 absent.

Jacqueline stated the purpose of this meeting is to discuss and hear public input on the new zoning book. She stated that the book will be a process. She asked the public if everyone had the agenda and the summary of changes.

Kevin made a motion to open the public hearing supported by Kathy. All in favor, motion carries. 4 yes 1 absent. The time was 10:06 AM.

A member of the public shared his appreciation with what was being done as well as having a meeting on a Saturday.. He said we have a good township and it's a great place to bring his family up too. He also appreciates the less restrictive camping ordinance. He had three things to bring up as concerns.

1. The definition of a private club or organization as a permitted use in the Recreational area and questioned what was allowed with that type of permitted use.
2. RSC definition changed and appreciates that but suggested to allow for friends and not just immediate family. He liked that it couldn't be rented out. He questioned what would happen if he had a house built after already having a RSC on it due to the single land use on the property.
3. He would like to be able to have multiple units for his family but would rather not invest in 5 campers and would prefer multiple RSC's instead. He would rather not split his land to accomplish this though.

Jacqueline suggested leaving his name and number to find out some answers for him.

A member of the public questioned the accessory dwellings. She was under the understanding that a mother in law was allowed but that it's not clear in the current ordinance. The book states you can't have two dwellings on the same property. She also brought up the one and two lots that don't have a use to them. It was stated that the law requires a use. She was under the impression that Webber Township would need to buy it back for current value. Her suggestion was for the township to allow a smaller dwelling to just meet setbacks and add a stipulation that the land couldn't be divided or split after that date. Just require that property to have a well and septic. She stated that Pat said Webber doesn't have that many. It would also reduce the number of campers. She stated it would make the township in compliance. She mentioned a property just under 9000 sq feet but was unable to do anything with it. She also stated the book doesn't define what an acre is which is in the RSC ordinance and that has caused issues in the past. She questioned whether lots can make an acre which also affects the camping ordinance. She was curious about what Planning had thought with the old ordinances vs the new ordinances and what is their biggest concern. Jacqueline stated Planning Commissions concerns would be discussed after the public hearing.

A member of the public questioned whether these changes would strengthen or weaken the ordinances. Jacqueline stated she thought that the board members intent is to allow more uses that are permitted and to be easier for the public. It is also allowing the ZA to do more instead of going through the process with the Planning Commission. He questioned if the township looks like we want it to look. He stated it was trashier. Jacqueline stated her belief was to loosen up the zoning book and be stricter with the blight ordinance that was approved.

Another member of the public stated it would be beneficial to have what you can or can't do clear in the zoning book when someone is looking to buy property. He also stated with the blight ordinance in effect that you have the means to do something about it. He asked whether a complaint for blight would become public information. Jacqueline stated he could make it anonymous and complaint forms were on the table but to make sure you add where the property was located at. She also stated zoning complaints can be FOIAed and the clerk can provide more details with that. Discussion occurred about whether certain information on the complaint can be redacted or not.

A member of the public stated the new book doesn't have the whole RSC ordinance in it. She stated according to Google that ours is not rustic and does not match it. She suggested more of a Rustic cabin while living off grid. Her suggestion was using that ordinance for Tiny Houses since you have to go by Michigan laws.
She also brought up that nothing was addressed regarding the manufactured mobile homes if that was going to be separate. The new book states 16 feet for a dwelling. Another concern was shipping containers that turn into a storage container is not clear in the book. Some ZA allow it while others say no.

A member of the public questioned where he can get the most up to date information with the new book. Jacqueline stated to him that it was online on the website and a copy was in the clerk's office.

Kevin made a motion to close the public hearing supported by Virginia. All in favor, motion carries. 4 yes 1 absent. The time was 10:34 AM.

Kevin thanked the public for coming. He has seen on Facebook and in stores people ranting about this but not show up besides 6 people. Kathy stated that people are venting. Kevin stated he felt that Willams and Works did a good job taking into account multiple zoning issues. Kathy shared concerns about the livestock being allowed in Residential. She questioned if you could build a garage first than a home. Jacqueline stated it used to be a house first but agreed it's not clear in the book. She shared concerns about the garage having a kitchen and bedroom with no septic while having a camper on the property She spoke about getting a camping permit while living in a shed and how it is unenforceable due to not being able to prove where people are living. She said Webber has 191 camping permits and it's looking more like a campground. She shared concerns that the ZA isn't trained well enough to make decisions with the zoning book and felt it should go to the board or planning first. She also mentioned that planning has reduced meetings which makes it harder to know what's going on in the ZA office or her decisions. She shared concerns about numerous junk cars and trailers on properties. Discussion occurred about the property on US10 and Merrillville having a business there in a Residential area with multiple complaints. Virginia liked the suggestions about the one and two lots. She felt single wides are a better option than campers since they stand up better. She stated a spelling error on the Watercourse ordinance. She shared concerns about rules being in the zoning book that aren't enforced should just be removed.

Jacqueline stated a lot of what was discussed was on her list with adding a definition of an acre and removing the temporary dwelling permit. She suggested excluding camping in the Commercial district and to clarify how to enforce tents and how long they can be used as well as how many campers a dwelling can have. Jacqueline agreed with Kathy regarding many permitted things going through the zoning office and bypassing planning especially in the Commercial District and felt it was not a good idea. Jacqueline also suggested having a dwelling accessory permitted. Discussion occurred about the limited numbers of meetings planning has now with regards to site plans and working on new ordinances. More Saturday meetings were also discussed as an idea.

Jacquline made a motion to send the recommendations and concerns to the board supported by Kathy. All in favor, motion carries. 4 yes 1 absent.
Discussion occurred about what would happen next. Jacqueline suggested a joint meeting to discuss things with the board. It was discussed how joint meetings need more organization and how minutes were written compared to how it should be done.

Jacqueline made a motion to adjourn the meeting supported by Kevin. All in favor, motion carries. 4 yes 1 absent.

Respectfully submitted
Jacquline Jacobs