

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes of Regular Meeting January 21, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marlene Chockley at 7:00 P.M. at 8350 Main Street.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Roll call:

Janet Chick	Present
Marlene Chockley	Present
Brad Cousino	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Larry Roman	Present
Mark Stanalajczo	Present

Also present:

Planning Consultant Douglas Lewan,
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented.

Stanalajczo asked that a discussion of electronic submission and distribution of documentation be added as a discussion item.

- **Amended motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the agenda be adopted as amended. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Master Plan. Sandy Klump, 9474 Lake Pointe Drive, said the Township has been stagnating since a small group of residents who are not invested in, do not shop in, and largely do not send their children to school in the community have opposed development. She said new opportunities are being presented for growth and she asked the Planning Commission to have the courage to reopen the Master Plan for review.

David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, said a number of people currently serving on the Planning Commission approved the current Master Plan which includes preservation of open space and farmland. He said some people believe the Whitmore Lake and North Territorial frontages can be developed while still preserving farmland, but that is where the Township's largest farms are located.

He said believes that rather than being a small group of people who are not invested in the community, he believes Northfield Neighbors represents the majority of the community, and he has lived in the community for 35 years. He said development experienced a downturn throughout the entire country in the last several years.

Terry Webb, 285 Waterlily, Eagle Gardens, said he moved here in 1996. He said the Planning Commission made Adler Development do a good job, and it is up to the Commission to do that with the next development in the community. He said a large development is going into Salem Township because it is close to the freeway and that is where development should go. He said Salem made that developer pay for the infrastructure, and that is the way it should be.

Sandra Curry, said she opened her shop at 9541 Main Street—Massage by Sandy—about two years ago and it is thriving. She said about 25% of her business comes from Whitmore Lake, growth is needed, she would like to see Whitmore Lake become a nice community town, and parking and downtown lighting is needed. She said other larger businesses are needed to support the community.

Craig Warburton, 450 West Joy Road, said it is not fair that he has property border that he could end up sharing with 20 new neighbors. He said the Commission is supposed to be an apolitical organization that works to protect his property values.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Master Plan. Chockley read a letter she received today from Susan Shink and Thomas Hatch, 600 West Joy Road, asking that the five acre minimum lot size be protected in the areas zoned for it, and they would support 10 acre minimums in the area they live in. They said they support development where the zoning is proper for it, and said David Gordon accurately represents their views.

7. REPORTS

7A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported that at the meeting of January 13th:

- The Board accepted the resignation of Kathleen Manley, and Christine Yaeger, who works with Hartland Assessing department will be assisting with assessing while Manley's position is filled.
- The Civic Event Application for the Pond Hockey Classic was approved.
- Scott Chisolm and Amy Steffens were appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Three zoning ordinance amendments recommended by the Commission were approved.

- As asked by the Commission she asked Board members to consider their vision for development in the community, and their comments will be discussed at the Board workshop on January 27th.

7B. Zoning Board of Appeals. Dignan reported that the ZBA met yesterday and continued review of its by-laws, and they are working on a recommendation for revised fees for ZBA applications.

7C. Staff Report
Nothing to report.

7D. Planning Consultant
Lewan reported he had several meetings about various development projects, including a meeting with the Road Commission regarding the contributions they will require from Nowatzke for his development, and a meeting regarding the submittal of detailed engineering plans for the Regal Recycling site.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8A. Elimination of the RO—Residential Office—Zoning District. The text of the RO—Residential Office—zoning district is being eliminated. All properties currently zoned RO will be rezoned to the ES—Enterprise Services—zoning designation.

Lewan referred to the map showing this proposed elimination of the RO district by combining it with the ES district. He said he is recommending that the public hearing on this be postponed until the rezoning of some of the properties, specifically on the east side of Main Street. He said there are some well-established homes in that area that probably should not have been zoned RO and should now be zoned SR1.

Iaquinto said if there is not going to be a public hearing on the matter this discussion should not be taking place in this part of the agenda. Chockley said it is appropriate to hear this explanation at this point.

Lewan noted that if this is postponed to a date certain the public hearing will not have to be noticed again. Stanalajczo asked why this mapping issue was not brought up the last time the Commission reviewed it, and he questioned whether re-noticing is required because the notice did not refer to the mapping. Lewan said re-noticing may be required, but to be safe a postponement to a date certain would be in order.

Cousino asked what the process is for notifying property owners of the potential change in zoning. Lewan said the owners of the four properties that would be rezoned to SR1 must be notified individually.

Lewan agreed that postponing this to February 18, 2015 would be appropriate.

8B. Amendments to the Manufactured Housing Community District. The text of the current Mobile Home Park District (to be renamed the Manufactured Housing Community District) is proposed to include updated language, revisions to

the permitted, accessory and conditional uses, and site development regulations and standards based upon the State of Michigan's Model Manufactured Housing Ordinance.

Lewan recalled that the Commission previously reviewed this, the proposed changes have been based on the State of Michigan's Model Ordinance, and the State's Commission has reviewed and approved the Township's proposed changes with minor changes.

- Motion:** Cousino moved, Roman supported, that public hearing be opened.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

Chockley called for comments. There were none.

- Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, that public hearing be closed.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

- Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that amendments to the Manufactured Housing Community District be recommended for approval to the Northfield Township Board.

Chockley called for discussion. In answer to a question from Stanalajczo, Lewan confirmed that the draft included in Commission packets is the current one. Chockley pointed out two typographical errors, and said the wording in Section 26.05.G.3 should be changed. Fink said it should read, "The parking spaces shall be constructed of concrete, bituminous asphalt, and supported by a suitable subgrade compliant with the Standards of AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials)." It was agreed to make those changes.

Chockley also said in Section 26.05.H.4 and 26.05.I.2 the reference for the rules cited should be included.

Chockley said the ordinance refers to preliminary site plans required by the State, but noted that Northfield Township no longer requires those. Lewan said the Township has a limited role in reviewing plans, so that requirement of the State would still have to be met.

Dignan asked how these revisions would affect an existing manufactured home community that is greatly underdeveloped. He said the manufactured home community in the Township has 100 unused lots and he questioned whether new homes there would have to follow the new setbacks. Lewan said if the community was built without litigation or a consent agreement then the new provisions would apply.

Fink questioned whether the requirement for lots to be 5,500 sq. ft. should be stated as a minimum, rather than as an absolute. Lewan said he will research the origin of that language and prepare a revision for further review.

Iaquinto withdrew his motion.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9A. Elimination of the RO—Residential Office—Zoning District.

See discussion under Item 8A.

9B. Amendments to the Manufactured Housing Community District.

See discussion under Item 8B.

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. MINUTES

January 7, 2015, Regular Meeting

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Stanalajczo supported, that the minutes of the January 7, 2015, regular meeting be approved as presented, and to dispense with the reading.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION

A. Review of Current Zoning and Future Land Use Maps of Neighboring Jurisdictions at the Northfield Township Boundary.

Lewan recalled that Commissioners brought up the question of whether Northfield Township's agricultural zoning (one unit per five acres) is compatible with the designations of adjacent Townships. He referred to the map he had prepared showing that land to the north, east, and west is designated generally as one unit per two acres, and in Ann Arbor Township on the south the density is generally one unit per 10 acres. He noted that the terms "low," and "medium" density residential in other townships are essentially the same as those designations in NT, but NT's "high-density" designation is higher than that of other Townships.

In answer to a question from Iaquinto, Lewan noted that there is an area of Ann Arbor Township designated as one unit per acre. Chockley said she has been thinking a lot about this and noting that areas designated for two acre parcels are not building up. She questioned whether the land in these areas is simply not suitable for dense residential development. She said extensive testing on her 54 acre home site found only two suitable septic sites. Chick said that is not true for every agricultural area.

Chockley said even with 2 acre zoning the agricultural uses do not seem to be going away. Dignan noted that the map provided by Lewan shows the future land use designations of the neighboring townships, not the current use. He said it is mind-boggling how different the current uses and future land use designations are in some areas of Northfield Township.

Iaquinto said it would be interesting to see where actual development is in some of these areas. Cousino said there are some developments along Territorial and Webster Church in Webster Township, but densities in those areas are still governed by soils and land features. He said the value of land that percs is significantly affected by the density allowed.

Stanalajczo said Ann Arbor Township's growth has all occurred along US-23 and that makes perfect sense. He said that map could be a mirror image of Northfield Township. Chockley said development along paved roads and arterials allow people to access services more easily. She said she is interested in what the Board of Trustees will have to say about this subject.

Stanalajczo asked if a colored map of the US-23 corridor showing densities in Green Oak, Northfield, and Ann Arbor Townships could be provided. He said that would show where all of those communities are planning their growth and development. Cousino said Ann Arbor Township's zoning of one unit per acre is the least dense along the Northfield Township border, but much of their township has been annexed by the City of Ann Arbor. Chockley said preserving farms and open space is a philosophy of their Board that is supported by their population. She said they also have the Domino Farms development. Cousino said Ann Arbor Township also has large commercial developments which support their budget.

Regarding the master planning process in general, Lewan said a Master Plan is fluid document, and while there is a State requirement that it be reviewed at least every five years, it can be reviewed and changed more frequently than that if the community desires, and it is perfectly appropriate to do so if there is a change that has occurred that would warrant it. Chockley said that is a very involved process, however.

Chockley said goal setting will be on the Commission's next agenda, and the Capital Improvement Plan will be on a March agenda. She said she will start a list with any ideas Commissioners email to her.

Chick said she has been to the Biltmore site many times and tried to imagine what a 400 home development would look like, but she has no experience with reviewing a proposal of that size. She asked if plans for old developments could be provided to Commissioners to give them an idea of what that would look like. Iaquinto said he would be in favor of that in general, but not specifically in the Biltmore area. Chockley said that would be a good workshop subject. Lewan said reviewing a proposal of that size using all of the methods currently available to developers in the Township could be a good exercise, and providing one free workshop is part of his agreement with the Township. Stanalajczo said Eagle Gardens was the last large development in the Township, and he suggested looking at those plans and seeing how that land could be developed under current options and ordinances.

Stanalajczo said a friend has a house in a well-done subdivision at Six Mile and Beck in Northville, and while that exact type of development may not fit here, it can be useful to look at developments elsewhere.

12B. Electronic Document Submission.

Stanalajczo suggested requiring future applications from developers to be submitted both on paper and electronically to save reproduction costs. Chockley referred to her email asking what Commissioners' capabilities are for receiving, reviewing, and/or printing packets if they are sent electronically. She noted that applicants often submit documents electronically. Lewan said applicants are already required to submit both hard copies and pdfs. Cousino noted that all of that information is generated electronically to begin with, and he noted that plans which can be hard to read when reduced for printing could be zoomed in on to see detail in electronic format.

Fink said the Township can send Commissioners links to documents on the website, but he is reluctant to get into considering purchasing tablets because of the expense and the need for additional technology expenditures, including provision of internet connection.

Master Plan. David Gordon, 5558 Hellner, said it is it is upsetting as a rural resident for many decades to hear the Commission discuss only growth, with preserving open space and farms never being discussed. He said there is a predisposition to finding a place to put subdivisions because that is seen as good for the Township. He said, however, 150 communities have done studies and found that residential development does not help communities economically, and residents of the area where Biltmore would like to build would send their children to schools in Ann Arbor. He asked why Commissioners think the community's views on preserving open have changed in the 10 years since the residents were last surveyed. He said if more is spent on services for a subdivision than is brought in through taxes that is not a benefit.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Stanalajczo asked everyone to remember all men and women in uniform.

Master Plan/Development. Chick said most of the Northfield Township community is open space and farmland and she is looking for a balance. She said a poll in 2010 through a survey sent out with utility bills resulted in 368 responses, and both residential development and preservation of open space were highly valued and they are not mutually exclusive.

Iaquinto said there is a tremendous amount of open space in the Township. He said two-thirds of the Township is encompassed in the area from Nollar Road east to the Township border, and it would be appropriate to keep that rural while allowing higher density development in the other third. He asked Fink to provide an analysis of whether the proposed Biltmore development would bring in more in taxes than would be spent providing services.

Chockley said she thinks a lot about the appropriate consumption of land and options for preserving open space while allowing development. She said she farms her land and understands the concerns of those who use their land for agricultural and want to preserve open space, but she also understands the need for commercial development.

Public Input. Iaquinto said the Commission should consider whether letters should be read at meetings. Chockley said she did not see a problem at this meeting with reading the one letter submitted given the light agenda.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

February 4, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

► **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Cousino supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Chockley adjourned the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

Prepared by Lisa Lemble. Corrections to the originally issued minutes are indicated as follows:
Wording removed is ~~stricken through~~; wording added is underlined.

Adopted on _____, 2015.

Marlene Chockley, Chair

Mark Stanalajczo, Secretary

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