

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD DECEMBER 14, 2017

Agenda

PUBLIC HEARING: MASTER PLAN UPDATE

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT MASTER PLAN UPDATE TO INCLUDE:

- a. Introduction and Planning Drivers
- b. Rural Character Preservation Strategy
- c. Maple Hill Drive South Sub-Area Plan
- d. Future Land Use Plan

PUBLIC HEARING: ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS TO INCLUDE:

- a. Section 11.000: Definitions – specifically Section 11.237: Building Official
- b. Section 60.000: Special Exception Uses – specifically Section 60.400: Planned Unit Development
- c. Section 68.000: Off-Street Parking of Motor Vehicles – specifically Section 68.300: Off-Street Parking and Site Circulation Requirements
- d. Section 77.00: Addressing Requirements for Structures

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a. 2018 MEETING DATES
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A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, December 14, 2017, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cheri Bell, Chairperson
Fred Antosz, Vice Chairperson
Ollie Chambers
Dusty Farmer, Secretary
Mary Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Kathleen Garland-Rike
Bruce VanderWeele

Also present were Julie Johnston, Planning Director, James Porter, Township Attorney, Martha Coash, Meeting Transcriptionist, and approximately 20 interested persons.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Bell called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.; the “Pledge of Allegiance” was recited.

Agenda

Chairperson Bell asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the Agenda. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Antosz made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Farmer supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

The Chairperson called for public comment on non-agenda items. Hearing none, she moved to the next agenda item.

Approval of the Minutes from the Work Session and from the Regular Meeting of November 9, 2017

Chairperson Bell asked if there were additions, deletions or corrections to the Minutes of the Work Session or the Regular Meeting of November 9, 2017. Hearing none, she asked for a motion.

Mr. Antosz made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Work Session and the Regular Meeting of November 9, 2017 as presented. Ms. Farmer supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: MASTER PLAN UPDATE

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT MASTER PLAN UPDATE TO INCLUDE:

- a. **Introduction and Planning Drivers**
- b. **Rural Character Preservation Strategy**
- c. **Maple Hill Drive South Sub-Area Plan**
- d. **Future Land Use Plan**

Chairperson Bell moved to the next item on the agenda, a public hearing considering the draft Master Plan and asked Ms. Johnston for her presentation.

Ms. Johnston told the Board per the requirements of Public Act 33 of 2008, Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the Master Plan must be reviewed for changes every five years, and the Planning Commission must hold a public hearing on the Master Plan Update before making a recommendation to the Township Board. This hearing allows the Planning Commission a final chance to make any changes to the draft Master Plan Update before it is forwarded to the Township Board. It is also an opportunity for the

public to voice their support or any concerns regarding the draft document before the Planning Commission makes its recommendation. She noted the process to this point to develop needed updates has taken place over the last twelve months. She indicated the draft Master Plan Update includes four main chapters:

Introduction and Planning Drivers: Outlines the demographic changes occurring in the Township that influence planning decisions and includes how changes have occurred over the last five years and how changes may occur for future planning.

Rural Character Preservation Strategy: Details the goals, policy statements and strategies for preserving rural properties and character within the western 2/3rds of the Township. This section includes the detailed environmental mapping conducted by Western Michigan University and the public outreach steps taken to develop the proposed strategies. Many months of strategy discussion have taken place to help preserve the rural character.

Maple Hill Drive South Sub-Area Plan: This Plan was based on a recommendation in the 2011 Master Plan, which indicated this particular area of the Township was prime for redevelopment and that a more detailed Sub-Area plan was needed. The recommendations in the Sub-Area Plan are based on community outreach and careful consideration of the Planning Commission with regard to the uniqueness of this area and its location in that portion of the Township slated for more intense development, including the need for buffering from neighborhoods.

Ms. Johnston noted the extensive outreach to and participation by residents at work sessions and additions/changes to the plan that were made as a result, including the importance of green space, stronger language on incentives in zoning to support public spaces in the Sub-Area, and a goal the Township to work with the Road Commission to consider closing the Driftwood access once a secondary access has been developed to connect Green Meadows to Maple Hill. Another change was made regarding evaluating building scale rather than height, to provide transitioning to protect neighborhoods to the south.

Future Land Use Plan: This section of the Update replaces the 2011 Future Land Use Chapter. Incremental alterations to the Future Land Use Map have been proposed to address changing conditions and support the planning drivers affecting the Township.

Chairperson Bell asked if there were questions from the Board for Ms. Johnston.

Mr. Antosz suggested the inclusion of a definition or example of the “street connectivity index on page 64.

Chairperson Bell suggested including explanation or clarification regarding planning drivers in the appendix, specifically “community tapestry segments.”

Ms. Farmer shared four changes to the Maple Hill Sub-area plan suggested by participants at the November 9 public workshop: 1) the importance of language to address green space preservation, 2) Stronger language on incentives and zoning to support public spaces, 3) Work with the Road Commission to close Driftwood access once a secondary access is initiated and created, and 4) a change in wording that talks about building scale rather than building height to provide protection for neighborhoods to the south.

The Chair noted the Board had received a letter from Frank Wiers and Margie DeGroot December 1st stating their concern regarding green space, buffer zones, and traffic volume.

Mr. "Z", 293 Westview, felt the language about working with the Road Commission regarding closing the Driftwood access was too vague and "should consider" should be changed to be stronger, for example, "the Township will request."

Ms. Michelle Contraris, 5015 Driftwood, shared her concern about the vague language regarding closing Driftwood access and felt it would be good to close it soon.

Ms. Melanie James, Skyridge, told the Board a number of promises made to residents at the time the condos and apartments were built were not honored, including Skyridge being used strictly as an emergency access to the condos, and a noise buffer from U.S. 131. She noted speeding vehicles from the condos and apartments result in residents coming close to being hit, and a substantial increase in broken windows from thrown rocks, which she felt was a result of minors not having enough to do. She suggested providing an activities center for them.

Mr. George White, representative of the condominium association indicated condo residents would very much object to closing off Skyridge while the result would be only one other entrance.

Ms. Anna Versale, Mandalay Drive, was concerned about the amount of traffic and advocated closing the entrance at Driftwood. She felt strongly about keeping green space available for residents and said there are many development opportunities elsewhere in the Township.

Mr. Brian Stoltz said when the Canterbury Apartments were approved for development, the County Road Commission said there had to be two points of access, primarily for emergency vehicles and, at that time Driftwood and Green Meadow were the only alternatives. He thanked Commissioners for including wording regarding the closure of Driftwood in the document. He noted the original plans did not call for subsidized housing and that the change of demographics has resulted in many children in the neighborhood. He said many school buses travel through the neighborhood each day. He also reported he had filmed traffic from his driveway during rush hour and recorded 63 vehicles passing his home during that time, which did not agree with the 13

estimated by the Road Commission. He did not count vehicles that did not pass in front of his home. He also reported loud mufflers and much speeding from the recording.

Ms. Karen Curtis thanked the Commission for including the wording regarding closure of Driftwood access and asked that residents be informed when anything regarding that issue develops.

Hearing no further comments, Chairperson Bell closed the Public Hearing. She noted surrounding municipalities had been provided the draft of the updated Master Plan for comments. Neither the City of Kalamazoo nor the County of Kalamazoo had any concerns. She said concerns about the number of school buses expressed by Mr. Stoltz were also voiced at the November 9 public work session and that KPS confirmed that 29 buses travel through the neighborhood during the day.

The Chair moved to Board Deliberations and asked if there were comments from Trustees.

Ms. Farmer reminded the group the suggestion to include the Driftwood closure in the Plan was generated by Planning Commission members. She supports it, but noted neither the Road Commission nor the Township Fire Department would ever support it while only one entrance was left since it would be very unsafe for the neighborhood. She also explained the Township cannot dictate that the golf course stay as is, but that they can provide incentives to owners to have, sell or donate land for public space. A lot of work went into providing language in the Plan to do that – the Township is doing all it can do legally to encourage it. At the least there will be a green space buffer. She thanked Ms. Johnston for encouraging and providing so much opportunity for public engagement and thanked those who came to provide input at the various meetings. She felt the Staff and Board did a good job and produced a great document.

She concluded by saying she would support changing the wording on page 56, “Vehicular Circulation Connectors” from “*the Township should consider closing the connection between Green Meadow Drive and Driftwood Avenue*” to “*the Township will work with the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County to close the connection to Green Meadow Drive and Driftwood Avenue,*” but only after there is a secondary access.

Chairperson Bell suggested text changes:

- Page 52 of the Maple Hill Sub-Area Plan - add “recreation” as the last word in the second paragraph in the right column.
- Page 12, table three should add to 100%.

The Chair thanked Ms. Johnston for the great draft update of the Master Plan and she thanked members of the public for their continued efforts and how it educates the Planning Commission.

Ms. Smith noted the comments from the County of Kalamazoo encouraged careful consideration to the change from a golf course in future planning. She encouraged people to continue to attend meetings and said the Planning Commission would do what they can to make things work for everyone.

There was consensus to recommend the Master Plan Update as presented to the Township Board for approval; the Chair asked for a motion.

Ms. Farmer made a motion to recommend the Master Plan Update with the amendments to the draft as discussed to the Township Board for approval. Mr. Antosz supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS
CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS TO INCLUDE:

- a. **Section 11.000: Definitions – specifically Section 11.237: Building Official**
- b. **Section 60.000: Special Exception Uses – specifically Section 60.400: Planned Unit Development**
- c. **Section 68.000: Off-Street Parking of Motor Vehicles – specifically Section 68.300: Off-Street Parking and Site Circulation Requirements**
- d. **Section 77.00: Addressing Requirements for Structures**

Chairperson Bell moved to the next item on the agenda, a public hearing considering the draft Zoning Ordinance Amendments.

Ms. Johnston told the Board the initial requested changes to the Off-Street Parking Ordinance began with recommendations related to accessible spaces and the desire to ensure the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations are met. Staff recommended changes that would require the use of concrete or similar material, as opposed to asphalt, for all accessible spaces. Concrete is a more rigid product, which will allow the required slopes and cross-slopes of the accessible spaces to be more easily managed.

While reviewing the Off-Street Parking Ordinance for accessible spaces, Staff made four additional changes:

1. Amendments are recommended to Section 68.300 that reduce and re-organize the current Ordinance language into a more user-friendly configuration. Section 68.300 now just regulates parking lots and circulation aisles. Anything not related to parking lots and circulation aisles, like drive-through windows, has been moved to its own section of the code. In addition, those regulations that just reiterate that the parking lot must meet other code requirements have been removed.
2. Staff would like to change Section 68.300 to include requirements for site circulation. The current ordinance does not specifically mention circulation aisles

on site, which does not give staff the regulatory leverage to require certain pavement widths outside of parking lot areas.

3. Bicycle parking is not explicitly required on any development. The current Ordinance states bicycle parking is encouraged and may be required. Without guidance as to when bicycle parking is required, this regulation seems difficult to administer. Staff thought by including language related to special exception uses, the Planning Commission could consider bicycle parking when uses are reviewed that require additional scrutiny because of their intensity or size. For example, requiring bicycle parking within larger PUD projects may be warranted.
4. Subsection I of Section 68.300 indicates a regulation related to shared access reduction under Section 67.600, which is the Access Management Guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance. The current regulations under Section 67.600 are:

67.600 - Shared access reduction schedule.

1. *When a driveway is established to serve two or more parcels, lots, or building sites, and where such parcels, lots, or building sites are not served by any other access point, the total parcel, lot, or building site size and road frontage required by the Township Zoning Ordinance shall be reduced by ten percent.*
2. *When a frontage road or service drive is established on a parcel, lot, or building site, the total parcel, lot, or building site size, road frontage, and number of parking spaces required shall be reduced by ten percent.*
3. *When a cross parking arrangement or agreement has been reached (and written evidence thereof in existence) regarding two or more parcels, lots, or building sites, the number of parking spaces required for each of the parcels, lots, or building sites in question shall be reduced by ten percent.*

Staff would like to eliminate subsection 1, which allows a reduction in parcel size or frontage. To our knowledge, this regulation has not been employed anywhere within the Township. In addition, tracking this requirement overtime could be tremendously difficult as sites redevelop and parcel lines change. Future Planning staff may believe lots to be nonconforming because of the reduction in lot size or frontage requirements. Finally, the use of a parking reduction seems an adequate incentive to encourage shared access. In addition, Staff would like to move subsections 2 and 3 to the Off-Street Parking Ordinance. A new subsection 68.303 titled Shared Access Reduction would be created.

Addressing Requirements: The development of this draft Ordinance was completed through a coalition of the Fire Department, Planning Department, Public Works Department and Legal Department. Ben Clark, Zoning Administrator, reviewed ordinances from other communities and spoke with a representative from a sign

company to learn if there were existing conventions related to distance, address size and legibility. Based on his research, internal discussions among the departments noted above, and final staff review, a draft ordinance was developed for the Planning Commissions review.

The importance of requiring addresses on non-residential buildings for public safety was brought to the Planning Departments attention by Chief Mark Barnes and Fire Marshal Jim Wiley. Currently, the Township does not have an ordinance or policy that manages the placement of addresses on buildings in a systematic way. This has led to a variety of addressing types, sizes, fonts, etc. on commercial and industrial buildings, causing confusion and possibly reduced emergency response times. This draft ordinance will support uniformity among projects that require site plan review in the Township.

Definitions: Staff conducted a complete review of both the Zoning and General Ordinances to eliminate any specific language related to a particular Building Authority. Within the Zoning Ordinance, the definition section requires a language change to something less specific that will still describe the Building Authority but will not address a particular organization.

Planned Unit Development: In recent years, the Planning Commission has approved two special exception uses for commercial planned unit developments (PUD) within the Township; the Corner@Drake and Westgate PUDs. During the approval process for these developments, it became clear that our zoning ordinance language did not provide the type of public notice generally warranted for a project of this type, scale and intensity.

The Planning Commission requested changes to the PUD approval process that would require a public hearing at the time of concept plan approval. The current ordinance requires the approval of the special exception use, which includes the public hearing, at the time of site plan review. This public hearing seems late in the process, as the Planning Commission has already approved a concept plan for which the site plan must conform. Giving public notice at the time of site plan does not allow neighboring property owners and residents the opportunity to weigh in on the concept plan, which governs the development after its approval by the Township.

Recommended amendments would change this process and require the special exception use public hearing and approval at the time of concept plan.

Ms. Johnston said if the Planning Commission was comfortable with the Ordinance changes presented, Staff would request a recommendation of approval be forwarded to the Township Board.

Chairperson Bell asked if there were questions from Commissioners.

Ms. Johnston responded to questions, confirming it is the Planning Commission's responsibility to provide minimum standards on exterior building features and that some specifics will be addressed when the Commission finishes reorganization of the Zoning Ordinance next year.

There were no further questions from the Board; Chairperson Bell asked if there were any public comments.

Mr. Joe Gesmundo, questioned the need for the required size of 12" street numbers and the inclusion of street names, which he felt was redundant in #7D, "Addressing of Buildings", saying first responders should know what street they are on. He did not want to clutter up the architecture with such large letters, and felt if it is critical to have 12" letters in some cases, it would seem they would also be necessary for residential properties.

Hearing no further comments, Chairperson Bell closed the Public Hearing and moved to Board Deliberations.

Ms. Farmer said there had been a lot of discussion regarding signing and noted if the changes are adopted the Township will make all changes to their buildings to be in compliance. She explained 80-90% of calls to the Fire Department are for medical issues and that many times they are answered by "on call" responders; when the address goes out the responders may need clarification. In addition, interns act as paid "on call" dispatch volunteers

Attorney Porter added that the name of the street will be required only if there is double frontage, and that part of the reason for the change in requirements is that often fire calls are not answered by the Township's Fire Department. Other jurisdiction Departments may be answering calls because of agreements between departments county-wide, who might not be as familiar with the area.

Chairperson Bell noted the proposed requirements were scaled back from what the Fire Marshal requested.

Hearing no further discussion, the Chair asked for a motion.

Ms. Smith made a motion to recommend the Ordinance Amendments as presented to the Township Board for their approval. Mr. Chambers supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Johnston told the Board she was in the process of scheduling a joint work session with the Township Board in January to discuss the Master Plan update and to provide an opportunity to answer any questions the Township Board may have.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a. 2018 Meeting Dates

Chairperson Bell moved to the next item on the agenda and asked Ms. Johnston for her presentation.

Ms. Johnston provided a tentative schedule of Meeting Dates for 2018 in the usual pattern of the second and fourth Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. with no second meeting scheduled in November or December. Also provided was a schedule for Joint Meetings, approved by the Township Board, for February 20, May 22 and September 18, 2018.

Ms. Farmer made a motion to approve the 2018 schedule for regular and joint meetings as presented. Ms. Smith supported the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Hearing no comments, Chairperson Bell asked for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Farmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Smith supported the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:17 p.m.

Minutes prepared:
December 16, 2017

Minutes approved:
January 11, 2018