

**OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING HELD JULY 24, 2014

Agenda

**DISCUSSION: WEST MAIN STREET & 9TH STREET SUB AREA PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT**

A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, June 24, 2014, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Schley, Chairperson
Fred Antosz
Wiley Boulding Sr.
Richard Skalski
Dusty Farmer
Pam Jackson
Millard Loy

Also present were Karen High, Zoning Administrator; and James Porter, Attorney. There were approximately 4 other persons in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Schley at approximately 7:00 p.m. and the "Pledge of Allegiance" was recited.

AGENDA

The Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Loy made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Mr. Skalski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Chairperson Schley asked if anyone in attendance wished to comment on non-agenda items. There were no comments offered.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JULY 10, 2014

The Chairperson asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the minutes of the Work Session and Regular Meeting of July 10, 2014. A member of the public noted that Jeff Bertolissi was erroneously named Ken Bertolissi on pages 2 and 3 in the work session minutes.

Mr. Boulding, Sr. made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2014 Work Session and Regular Meeting with the correction as noted. Mr. Skalski seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chairperson Schley moved to the next item on the agenda.

DISCUSSION: WEST MAIN STREET & 9TH STREET SUB AREA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

Chairperson Schley asked if there were comments from the public on the next agenda item. Mr. Kadir Mohmand read a letter that he had sent to the FBI regarding his concerns with the process. He indicated he feels discriminated against and that the Township is not treating all property owners in a fair and equal manner. He seeks similar treatment received by others in the community.

Mr. Jeff Bertolissi asked why drive through restaurants are a concern, and expressed his belief that it makes no sense to keep the area rural in feel. He also expressed his disappointment that property owners get only four minutes each to speak at Planning Commission meetings. He ended his comments with a request for Planning Commissioners to listen to property owners and be flexible.

Chairperson Schley then indicated that the discussion last meeting had left off at Section 50.400, which covers design standards. Under unifying elements, Commission members agreed that under item 5, the reference to local and hardy landscape materials should be changed to native landscape materials, to be consistent with our landscape ordinance. Mr. Fred Antoz suggested that the same reference lists as those included in our landscape ordinance be included in this section. Commission members agreed. There were no other comments referencing Section 50.400.

Chairperson Schley opened the discussion to Section 50.401 Setbacks and Side Line Spacing. After a lengthy discussion, Commission members agreed to postpone a

decision on this section until a parcel map is available. It was generally agreed that the setback in the draft was too narrow, and that it should be increased.

Chairperson Schley opened the discussion to Section 50.402 Site Circulation. Members had no concerns.

Chairperson Schley moved on to Section 50.403, Building Requirements. After discussing the proposed gross floor area limit of 30%, Commission members requested that staff prepare an illustration of this guideline, showing setbacks and parking on a typical site. They agreed that the limits of the footprint of a single-story building should be increased from 10,000 square feet to 25,000 square feet, with multi-story buildings increasing from 15,000 square feet to 35,000 square feet. They also requested that staff clarify the language, so that the first floor of a single story building can be 25,000 square feet. The basement area should not be included when calculating the square footage.

Commission members discussed whether there was a need for architectural and design standards for buildings. Chairperson Schley pointed out that these standards can help to avoid a “potpourri” look that can begin to look blighted over time. It was agreed to keep this section intact.

In regards to following contours and keeping existing natural features, Commission members questioned whether this Section was already adequately covered in other areas, and whether it was strong enough while some wondered if it was flexible enough.

Chairperson Schley then moved on to parking. Commission members agreed that parking should be permitted in the building setback area. However, they expressed a desire to keep the rule that only one double loaded row of parking be located in front of a building facing West Main Street or 9th Street. They requested that staff prepare illustrations of typical sites to better understand how this rule will work.

Chairperson Schley opened the discussion to Section 50.405 Landscaping. Mr. Antoz suggested that the lists referenced in the landscape ordinance be included in this section as well. Commission members agreed.

In a discussion on screening, it was suggested that item G be omitted, because hedgerows, orchards, and three rail horse fences are not typical characteristics of the area. They emphasized their wish to preserve the rural atmosphere currently existing, not to create a different rural atmosphere.

In a discussion on the chart of landscaping requirements, they requested that staff simplify the chart and reiterated the desire to preserve the rural character that we have, not to create a new character. Commission members suggested that staff review our existing landscape ordinance and visit sites that were landscaped according to the

ordinance to see how they look and how the landscape materials have fared. There was a concern that our ordinance requires an excessive amount of landscape materials.

Commission members discussed stormwater management but no changes were made to this section.

Chairperson Schley then moved on to Section 50.408, Natural Features and Open Space. Commission members asked how the open space requirement of 5% of the site had been arrived at. They requested that staff prepare illustrations of typical sites to better understand the impact of this requirement.

Chairperson Schley asked for comments on Section 50.409, Signage. Commission members agreed to strike this section and refer to the existing sign ordinance instead.

Chairperson Schely opened the discussion to Section 50.410, Dimensional Deviation. Commission members requested that it be clarified at the beginning of the document that all reviews would come through the Planning Commission, not the Zoning Board of Appeals. It was also agreed that the reference to gross floor area should be increased to 25,000 to match the earlier reference.

Chairperson Schley noted that the review was complete and asked for public comment on the content of tonight's meeting.

Mr. Kadir Mohmand noted that he has 20 acres and feels that limiting floor area to 25,000 square feet is too much regulation and is discriminatory. He added that drive-throughs should be allowed.

Ms. Judy Weddington asked about building setbacks, and whether an existing building would have to be torn down if it doesn't meet the new building setback requirement. Attorney Porter stated that the building would be allowed to continue to be used.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairperson Schley asked if there was old business to come before the Commission. There was none and the Chair moved to the next item on the agenda.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Schley asked if anyone had other business to discuss. There was none.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

The Chairperson asked if Commissioners had comments to share. There were no additional comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Having exhausted the agenda for the meeting, Chairperson Schley adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared:
July 31, 2014

Minutes approved:
August 26, 2014