

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting
July 17, 2019**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roman 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 |
| Brad Cousino | Absent with notice | |
| Eamonn Dwyer | | Present |
| Sam Iaquinto | | Present |
| Cecilia Infante | | Present |
| Larry Roman | | Present |
| John Zarzecki | | Present |

Also present:
Building/Planning/Zoning Coordinator Mary Bird
Planning Consultant Paul Lippens, McKenna Associates
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Iaquinto supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Brian Trim and Wenpu Trim, 254 Lake View Drive, and Lauralyn Bottom, 8026 Lakeshore, asked the Township to enact an ordinance regarding short term rentals of private homes.

6. CLARIFICATIONS FROM THE COMMISSION

The Board discussed why a short term rental ordinance is needed. Lippens said without an ordinance such rentals are not allowed. He said this has come up in Northfield Township due to complaints about short term rentals, and an ordinance would address safety, frequency of rentals, zoning, permits, etc. He recommended referring the matter to the Township Board to get direction regarding creation of an ordinance.

Roman said the Zoning Administrator and Township Manager should propose policy and make

recommendations to the Township Board. Dwyer noted that since this issue came up due to complaints it is clear that it is likely that there are also people who would like an ordinance preventing or controlling such short term rentals. Infante agreed that sending this to staff is appropriate.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

It was noted that correspondence regarding the Master Plan was included in the packet.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. REPORTS

9A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported that on July 10th the Board declined a purchase offer for 75 Barker, extended the “sunset” clause on the proposed marijuana ordinance, and approved the 2019-20 budget and a building use policy. She also noted the Township was awarded a grant for installing recreation equipment along the Barker Road non-motorized path.

9B. ZBA

No report.

9C. Staff Report

Nothing to report.

9D. Planning Consultant

The North Village Committee has met with the North Village builder regarding the development proposal for the site and is working on submitting a development package to the Board.

9E. Parks and Recreation Commission

Iaquinto reported the downtown park is available for use with picnic tables and a walkable one mile loop trail, there are still plots available in the Community Garden, the Bark Park on Jennings Road is available for all to use, and a seat is open on the Commission.

9F. Downtown Planning Group

Infante reported that at the DDA’s two meetings in the last month they discussed:

- the great success of the Boat Show and plans for next year,
- two upcoming public information meetings tentatively scheduled for July 29th and November 25th

- the need to retain the parking at 75 Barker Road, and
- their desire for the Board to work more closely with the DDA on the Master Plan and downtown development.

She also noted they held a special meeting in July regarding tax increment finance (TIF) planning.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10A. 2019 Northfield Township Master Plan

Lippens recalled this was update to the Master Plan was tabled for more discussion and referred to the marked-up draft showing the most recently-proposed changes. He noted a public hearing has been held.

Chick said there is no commonly-understood definition of “land preservation” in the community and she questioned the need for use of the phrase “growth and development” as possibly being redundant. She said both phrases seem to have differing meaning for different groups of people in the community. Lippens agreed a definition of land preservation could be included, but said he believes the proposals for land preservation in the Plan are logical and the proposed Plan supports the zoning ordinance. He said while there are always opinions from residents, it is up to the Commission and Township Board to interpret the Plan.

Roman said he agrees that “land preservation” is a subjective term with different meanings to different people. He said he is concerned about differing interpretations leading to litigation. Jaquinto agreed. Roman said he is especially concerned about the use of the term on pages 1 and 2.

Infante said she thought the word “conservation” could have been used more. She said she agrees with the possible confusion about the term “land preservation,” but said it needs to be in the Plan because it is a priority for so many residents.

There was discussion about whether a definite of “land preservation” can be included in the Plan. Lippens said definitions are included in zoning ordinances because that ordinance regulates land uses, but it is not as common for definitions to be included in master plans. He suggested that the appropriate place to address this would be in the Land Preservation Sub-Area section of the Plan.

Roman said he is concerned that inserting “land preservation” in some places creates policy. Infante said the correspondence about this makes it clear that “preservation” is related to the rural character of the Township, and there needs to be a statement at the beginning of the Plan about the desire for that development in balance with “smart growth.”

Chick said she is comfortable leaving the reference to preservation in the introduction, but perhaps not “land preservation” since there is interest in the Township in preserving more than only land (e.g. history).

Chick said she would prefer that the word “discourage” regarding extension of sewers on page 28 not be used. Lippens said this accurately describes the Township’s policy. There was discussion about growth policy in the Township.

Additional changes in wording discussed included:

- Striking the reference to the Ann Arbor greenbelt on page 40.
- Regarding, “Require all new residential development to be clustered...” Roman said he does not see how this can be required, and suggested “Encourage” instead.
- Regarding “Protect key open vistas along rural roads,” Roman said he does not see how this can be done, especially when the last piece of land in the area is developed. Lippens said he can try to reword this. (also item 8 on page 42).
- On pages 42/43 Roman made suggested several changes to soften language and bring it more in line with the rest of the ordinance (e.g. “encourage to preserve” rather than “preserve”).

Lippens noted that the resident who wrote a letter about site that has been preserved is present. Lippens said he updated the Future Land Use map to show that site, but it also needs to be shown on the Farmland Classification map and he will make that change.

Roman thanked Lippens for his work in improving the document. It was agreed Lippens will provide a further updated version of the plan in the next Commission packet.

10B. Appointment of Parks and Recreation Representative

- **Motion:** Roman moved, Zarzecki supported, that Sam Jaquinto be appointed as the Planning Commission representative to the Parks and Recreation Commission.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

11. NEW BUSINESS

None.

12. MINUTES

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Iaquinto supported, that the minutes of the June 19, 2018, regular meeting be approved as presented, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No comments.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Chick and Infante announced that the DDA is holding an informational meeting on Monday, July 29th.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

August 7, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Chick supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 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 August 7, 2019.



Larry Roman, Chair



John Zarzecki, Secretary

Official minutes of all meetings are available on the Township's website at <http://www.twp-northfield.org/government/>