

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
May 7, 2014**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marlene Chockley at 7:02 P.M. at 8350 Main Street.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ROLL CALL  
AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Roll call:

Janet Chick	Absent with notice
Marlene Chockley	Present
Brad Cousino	Present
Andrea Darden	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present (arrived at 7:38 P.M.)
Larry Roman	Present

Also present:

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

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Darden supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented  
**Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.**

**5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

No comments.

**6. CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**7. REPORTS**

**7A. Board of Trustees**

No report.

**7B. ZBA**

No meeting has been held since the last Planning Commission meeting.

**7C. Staff Report**

Nothing to report.

**7D. Planning Consultant**

In answer to a question from Chockley, Lewan said the engineer for Regal Recycling, Kathy Keinath, has been in contact with the Township engineer, but no further submittals have been made to the Township.

**8. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**8A. Master Plan Amendment.**

**8B. Amendment to Article 11.0—RC-Recreation Conservation District**

**8C. Amendment to Section 68.03—Amendment Procedure**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Roman supported, that the public hearings be opened.  
**Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.**

A member of the public, Dale Brewer, said he was present to hear comments about the Master Plan Amendment for the area south of North Territorial at US-23.

Lewan reviewed the proposed amendment:

- Work on this proposal began with the goal of expanding allowed uses around the US-23/Territorial area to increase interest in development. Two mixed use areas (MU) were developed—the Mixed Use North and Mixed Use South areas.
- The Mixed Use South area around US-23 and Territorial is designed to allow a mixture of uses with an emphasis on office research and retail and a limited amount of industrial and high-density residential as part of mixed use developments.
- Designs which place buildings closer to roads and use increased building height are encouraged.
- Outdoor storage is not compatible with this district.

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- There is currently no Mixed Use zoning district. Proposals can be developed using the PUD mechanism, but creation of a Mixed Use zoning district is recommended.
- Single uses would be allowed under this amendment as long as they are considered compatible with the surrounding area.
- All statutory requirements for distribution of this draft of the Master Plan amendment have been met.

Dale Brewer, 11548 East Shore Drive, said he is a developer and represents a couple of property owners in this area. In response to a question, Lewan said development of stand-alone parcels will not have to use a PUD, but since there is currently no Mixed Use zoning, a review of any proposal would be necessary to determine the appropriate zoning.

Brewer said submittal of a plan is not required for rezoning from Agricultural. He said most of the parcels in this area are small—five to ten acres in size—and use of a PUD would not be appropriate for them. He said—especially in light of the creation of the sanitary sewer district along Whitmore Lake Road—this plan should be reevaluated to accommodate the relatively small parcels in that area.

He said two large parcels totaling over 100 acres are currently assessed as developmental property but are not included in this area. He said those two properties should be included in this district or assessed at an agricultural rate. He added that at the same time there is property currently zoned and assessed as agricultural that will be brought into this area.

Chockley suggested that Brewer make an appointment to discuss this issue with Lewan. Brewer said the Commission should delay further action until these issues are addressed.

Lewan said development of an overlay district is intended to avoid the need to use a PUD for parcels in this district. Chockley said she understands Brewer's concern because she has experienced the type of assessment problem he brought up.

Lewan said he does not think it is appropriate to expand this area as far west as would be necessary to include the parcels brought up by Brewer, but other non-agricultural uses might be appropriate.

Lewan presented maps to the Commission and Brewer showing the existing and proposed limits of the Mixed Use South area. There was discussion about how to allow time for Brewer to review the maps with Lewan to get answers to his questions. It was agreed to close the

public hearing and adjourn the meeting for five minutes.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Dignan supported, that the public hearings be closed and the meeting be adjourned for five minutes.  
**Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.**

[Iaquinto arrived at this point].

## **9. OLD BUSINESS**

### **9A. Master Plan Amendment.**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that action on the Master Plan Amendment be postponed and another public hearing be set for the first meeting June.  
**Motion carried 76—0 on a voice vote.**

### **8B. Amendment to Article 11.0—RC-Recreation Conservation District**

Lewan briefly reviewed the proposed amendment.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the Planning Commission recommend to the Northfield Township Board adoption of the amendment to Article 11.0—RC-Recreation Conservation District.  
**Motion carried 6—0 on a roll call vote.**

### **8c. Amendment to Section 68.03—Amendment Procedure**

Lewan said this action will consolidate public hearing requirements in one area in the zoning ordinance to avoid confusion. Chockley noted that a public hearing on the amendment of the section of the ordinance where these items are being consolidated will be held next month. It was agreed to take action on this amendment, but to wait to send it to the Township Board until after the public hearing on the companion amendment next month.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Roman supported, that the Planning Commission recommend to the Northfield Township Board adoption of the amendment to Section 68.03—Amendment Procedure.  
**Motion carried 6—0 on a roll call vote.**

**9D. Article 51.0—RTM Research/Technology/  
Manufacturing—Second Revision.**

Lewan recalled that the Commission had discussed whether to allow churches and similar uses in the RTM District and he had agreed to do some research. He said he found that churches are typically allowed in residential districts, and many area jurisdictions allow such uses in commercial and office districts which are comparable to the RTM district. He said based on that he does not see a reason why they should not be allowed in RTM.

He said he also cleaned up some obsolete language in this draft, and to address comments made by Chick regarding landscaping in Section 51.05J he removed most of the language and referenced Section 60.25—Landscaping.

In answer to a question from Chockley, Fink said he believes JoMar is a platted subdivision.

Roman and Cousino asked about the comparison of Northfield Township's RTM district to zoning districts in other jurisdictions. Lewan said other municipalities have districts that allow both office and industrial as does RTM, and he sees places of worship as compatible with RTM uses. He said zoning was first established to separate non-compatible uses, and he does not see that the very limited industrial uses allowed in RTM would interfere with the operations of a church or vice-versa.

Cousino said he is part of a very active church and there are a lot of activities every day of the week. Dignan said there are three churches in the Ann Arbor industrial park where Costco is located and that area includes retail and industrial uses. Fink said it is a good point that churches operate every day. He said he would argue that the ideal place for a church would be in a business district that does not have a large retail presence.

Lewan said in his experience large churches that are planned in residential areas are very controversial. Fink said that is because they do not work well in those locations. Lewan said a light industrial area like this that has sufficient parking and is located near a major road is more appropriate. Chockley said churches are currently only allowed as conditional uses in agricultural and residential areas and those do not seem like appropriate places. She said she does not have a problem with them being in office and general commercial districts, but she is concerned about allowing them in RTM because of the limited amount of that zoning available. Dignan said the existing RTM zoned areas area predominantly undeveloped.

Fink said he is most concerned about religious institutions being in retail downtown districts because

in those areas retail thrives off retail and church-like uses would tend to disrupt that pattern.

Chockley noted conditional use permits (CUPs) run with the land as long as the use continues. Dignan said the CUP use expires when the specified use is discontinued, but uses allowed in the district are always allowed.

It was agreed to schedule a public hearing for June 4<sup>th</sup>.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

**10A. Review first revision of Article 31.0; Local  
Commercial District.**

Lewan said standards were included in the permitted and conditional use sections of each district of the zoning ordinance, and he is proposing that they be consolidated for all commercial districts in Article 60 for clarity. He said lot size, setbacks, etc., were not altered.

Chockley noted that in Section 31.03 of the Local Commercial district "nursery school" was removed from conditional uses. Lewan said it could be retained, but he thought it was covered under "primary schools." He said he would add it back in.

In light of the earlier discussion about whether to allow churches in the RTM district, Chockley questioned whether they should be added to any of these commercial districts. It was agreed that it would make sense to add it in the General Commercial District.

Cousino asked how the existing LC-zoned properties came to be so designated. Dignan said historically folk festivals were held on one of the sites. Chockley said if LC is considered to be appropriate for smaller retail uses it does not seem that churches should be included in it.

Darden asked if floor area ratio (FAR) should be retained in this district. Lewan said it is more likely to have multi-story buildings in these districts. Dignan noted that buildings over 35 feet or three stories in RTM need approval from the Township Board. He suggested that similar language could be substituted for the FAR requirement in the commercial districts. Lewan said he will do an analysis of this and report back to the Commission.

There was discussion about whether churches should be allowed in Highway Commercial. Lewan said this might be a district that would not be compatible with those uses. Chockley agreed.

It was agreed to set the General Commercial district for public hearing on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

### 11. MINUTES

#### April 16, 2014, Regular Meeting

One sentence was changed to correct its meaning.

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Roman supported, that the minutes of the April 16, 2014, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 76—0 on a voice vote.**

### 12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION

None.

### 13. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

None.

### 14. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None present.

### 15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

**May 21, 2014**, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location. Chockley noted the agenda will include public hearings.

### 16. ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the meeting be adjourned.  
**Motion carried 76—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 P.M.

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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 May 21, 2014.

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Marlene Chockley, Chair

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Kenneth Dignan, Secretary

Official minutes of all meetings are available on the Township's website at [http://twp-northfield.org/boards/planning\\_commission/Minutes](http://twp-northfield.org/boards/planning_commission/Minutes)