

# NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes of Regular Meeting December 17, 2014

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marlene Chockley at 7:09 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:

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

## 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chockley asked if Commissioners were in favor of allowing item 9B, AT&T Cellular Telephone Tower, to be added to the agenda. Several Commissioners objected due to lack of opportunity to review the information. Wally Haley, representative for AT&T, said he was surprised to see that this application was not on the agenda, and explained that this approval must be in place in 2014 to be included in AT&T's 2015 construction budget. He noted that the members of the public who spoke at the public hearing were all in favor of the proposal because it would allow gaps in their coverage to be filled.

Lewan said he was very comfortable adding this to the agenda because the October 17<sup>th</sup> review he prepared covered both the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and site plan, and the items left to be addressed would typically be made conditions of a site plan approval. He noted the detailed engineering review would not happen in any case until after site plan approval.

Stanalajczo said he was unaware that Lewan's report had reviewed both the CUP application and site plan and that additional information did not have to be submitted following the October hearing. Dignan said he and one other Commissioner were not at the October meeting and he has not had an opportunity to review the video, so he is not prepared to vote for or

against it. Fink said the applicant could pay for a special Planning Commission meeting that could be held before the end of the year.

It was agreed to schedule a special meeting for Monday, December 22, 2014 at 10:00 A.M.

► **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that the original agenda, without the addition of the AT&T Cellular Tower request, be adopted as presented. **Motion carried 4Z—0 on a voice vote.**

## 5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

**Biltmore Development Request to Amend the Master Plan.** Christine Klump-Ward, 9041 Timbercrest Lane, said it is time for the Township to look past the vocal minority that is opposed to growth and to change the Master Plan to allow smart growth for the benefit of the entire community.

Caroline Otterman, 10181 Whitmore Bay Drive, said the Commission should not be influenced by a small group of bullies who are not vested in and do not care about the community. She said that path was followed before, leading to stagnation and schools in danger of closing. She said it is obvious that Northfield Neighbors does not represent the community since they were voted out of office in the last election. She urged the Commission to remember that it represents the entire community.

Terry Webb, 285 Waterlily Drive, said he bought his house in 1995 in a subdivision that people said they did not want, but it was well-built and after 20 years people have come to like it. He said not everyone wants a five acre lot; some people like living close to their neighbors. He said it makes sense to have housing close to the freeways.

Kelly Klump, 11658 East Shore Drive, said residents do not get to vote on this so it is up to the Commission to decide what is right for the community. She said Northfield Neighbors were voted out of office, and she encouraged the Commission to take that vote as an indicator of the direction residents want the community to go in—towards growth.

Jim Nelson, 7777 Sutton Road, said the previous speakers are incorrect—Planning Commissioners are not elected, and while the last Board was voted out, so was the Board before them that had replaced members of the Northfield Neighbors. He said two of those Board members were voted out because they abused their positions and they are now Planning Commissioners. Dignan said personal attacks will not be permitted and turned off Nelson's microphone.

## 6. CORRESPONDENCE

**A. Memo on Green Oak Township Master Plan.** Lewan explained that State law requires that governmental entities be allowed to comment on planning proposals of adjacent Townships. He said he reviewed the Green Oak proposal, found no issues with it, and wrote a letter to Green Oak Township stating so.

Iaquinto objected to this not having been distributed to the Planning Commissioners for review prior to a response being written. Lewan said this is the way these reviews have always been handled when there are no issues of significance to the Township, but he understands that a different process might be more appropriate.

Chockley said there was a problem with the document being handled within the Township and by the time she saw it the 63 day time limit for comment was close to expiring. Iaquinto said this is a disservice to the residents of both Northfield and Green Oak Townships, and he does not want this to happen again. Dignan said these communications should also be provided to the Township Board and made available to the public. There was discussion about how to make sure this type of information is widely distributed in the future. Iaquinto asked Chockley to report to the Commission at its next meeting what happened in this case.

Cousino said it is important for Lewan to review these proposals because as a trained planner he may identify issues Commissioners would not see.

**B. Notice from Ann Arbor Township of Intent to Plan.** Chockley noted this will be on the January 7, 2015, agenda.

## 7. REPORTS

### 7A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported:

- The AT&T cellular tower conditional use permit was approved.
- Chockley and Cousino were reappointed to the Planning Commission.
- ZBA members Doug DeFavero and Gary Wellings (alternate) and were re-appointed, and Greg Koliński Kolecki was appointed as a new member.
- Mssrs. Purrington and Cameron resigned from the Board of Review and replacements are being sought.
- Engineering and associated fees will be reviewed. Northfield Township's fees are almost twice as high as surrounding communities.
- The Township must have a Wastewater Treatment Plant Asset Management Plan per new State requirements, and the Board approved the timeline and initial budget for the plan.

### 7B. ZBA

Dignan reported that the ZBA met this week and reviewed its by-laws to update them and bring them into compliance with State law. He said the minimum

number of meetings per year will be changed from four to one to allow it meet only when necessary. He added that the ZBA will be requesting that the Township Board appoint a second alternate and consider lowering the fees for ZBA applications.

Dignan reported that ZBA Secretary Tim Anderson resigned several months ago by giving notice to the Clerk and Supervisor, but no one else was apparently aware of this.

Dignan also explained that he cannot serve as an officer on both the ZBA and Planning Commission, so if he continues as Chair of the ZBA another Commissioner will have to take on the role of Secretary.

### 7C. Staff Report

Nothing to report.

### 7D. Planning Consultant

Lewan reported he will be the trainer on February 26<sup>th</sup> for a Michigan Association of Planners workshop—*Planning and Zoning Essentials*.

## 8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

## 9. OLD BUSINESS

**9A. Case #JPC050003; Request for Extension of site plan approval for the Northfield Preserve site condominium originally granted August 6, 2008 and expired December 16, 2014. David Sherman, Applicant; Parcel 02-09-200-007.**

Lewan referred to his memo of October 29<sup>th</sup> about the history of this project and said he is recommending approval of this request with some conditions.

Stuart Farber appeared for Northfield Hills LLC and said this a 37 acre parcel northwest of Seven Mile Road and Donna Lane for which 62 home sites were approved. He said more than 50% of the development would be open space including regulated wetlands. He noted some of the parcels will require pump stations to access the sewer system.

Farber said shortly after the project was approved the economic downturn occurred and they have been unable to develop or sell the property. He said they would like to protect their investment by getting the site plan extended.

Stanalajczo noted that since this project was approved the requirement for preliminary site plans has been eliminated, so he questioned what the value of this extension would be. He also asked whether this project would proceed under the ordinances in place at the time of approval or the current ordinances. Lewan said a variance was approved to allow this project to be reviewed under the old ordinances, and as long as this

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site plan is valid that variance remains in effect. He noted that other variances related to the project expired long ago. Stanalajczo said he supports the rights of property owners to develop their property, but he wants to understand what the value to the developer is in having this site plan in place.

Lewan said he can prepare a more thorough report if desired by the Commissioners. Chockley asked him to do that for review at the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Lewan confirmed there is not a problem with this delay even though the site plan expired recently.

Farber said his preference would be to develop this project and appreciates the Commissioners' desire to understand the history of the project more fully.

**9C. Article 26.0-MHP Mobile Home Park.**

Lewan reported that notice was received today of approval by the State Mobile Home Park Commission of the new language proposed by the Township. He noted they made a few minor changes. Chockley said she will schedule a public hearing for January 21<sup>st</sup>.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

**10A. 2015 Regular Meeting Calendar.** Chockley noted the proposed schedule is for the usual dates of the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Roman supported, that the 2015 Regular Meeting Calendar be adopted as presented. **Motion carried 67—0 on a roll call vote.**

**11. MINUTES**

**August 20, 2014, Regular Meeting**

Chockley made four minor corrections.

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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 January 7, 2015.

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Marlene Chockley, Chair

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Mark Stanalajczo, Secretary

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

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that the minutes of the November 5, 2014, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION**

Dignan asked for feedback about how much information Commissioners want about actions taken by the Zoning Board of Appeals. It was agreed that generally only items that indicate action may need to be taken by the Commission or Board need to be communicated regularly.

**13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None present.

**14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners wish everyone happy holidays.

**15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETINGS**

**Monday, January 22, 2014**, at 10:00 A.M. and **January 17, 2015**, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building were announced as the next regular Commission meeting times and location.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

- ▶ **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Chick supported, that the meeting be adjourned. **Motion carried 47—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned 8:35 P.M.