

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting
January 7, 2015**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marlene Chockley 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
Marlene Chockley	Present
Brad Cousino	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Larry Roman	Present
Mark Stanalajczo	Present

Also present:

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

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No comments.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

7. REPORTS

7A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported that the Board has not met since the Commission last met.

7B. ZBA

Dignan reported that ZBA has not met since the last Commission meeting, but the Township Board has advertised the current opening on the ZBA and will be adding a second alternate.

7C. Staff Report

Fink said depending on action by the Township Board next Tuesday it is possible that Kathleen Manley may be attending future Planning Commission meetings.

7D. Planning Consultant

Lewan reported that a site plan application for the Northfield Township Library was received, and he has been working through site plan issues with Tom Nowatzke.

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 dated December 30th which provided background on this project. He noted that Zoning Board of Appeals action in 2006 allowed the project to be reviewed under the 2006 zoning ordinance in addition to granting all variances requested. He said he believes the ZBA took that action because several changes being made to the ordinance at that time would have negatively affected the proposal.

He recommended granting the request for extension of the site plan, and said he believes any determination about the validity of variances could be determined later.

- ▶ **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Iaquinto supported, that the extension to Northfield Preserve be granted through December 16, 2017, with the understanding that the preliminary site plan approval is governed under zoning ordinances prior to 2006.

Stuart Farber, applicant, said he would like nothing better to actually build this project, but financing is holding that up at this point. Iaquinto said he would be opposed to requiring the applicant to incur any additional costs during the three year extension period, such as having to submit a final site plan.

In answer to a question from Chick, Lewan suggested that the Township attorney be consulted about the

issue of the ZBA variances. Chick thanked Farber for being patient with this process.

Fink cautioned against applying 2006 engineering standards, such as for detention ponds, because those standards would be vastly different. Lewan said those standards are separate from the zoning ordinance. In answer to a question from Cousino, Lewan said if the site connects to a County drain the Water Resources Commissioner would be involved. Farber said there were approvals from that office in 2006 and he imagines those permits would no longer be valid.

Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10A. Review Ann Arbor Township Master Plan.

Lewan explained that under State law neighboring communities are allowed time to review changes to master plans of neighboring Townships. He noted that his firm represents Ann Arbor Township and a principal in his firm prepared their master plan.

Lewan said no changes are proposed in the six square miles of Ann Arbor Township adjacent to Northfield Township. He reviewed the densities of the three master plan districts in that area (Agriculture Production, Residential, and Open Space Preservation) and noted:

- While there is an area planned for higher density than that planned in Northfield Township those parcels along the Township border are for the most part already divided and developed with homes in a large lot configuration.
- Pontiac Trail is identified as an “arterial” road similar to the Northfield plan and also identifies it as a “priority non-motorized corridor.” The Northfield plan identifies this corridor as a “bike improvement” non-motorized pathway.
- Municipal services are not found along the Northfield Township border within Ann Arbor Township.

In answer to a question from Iaquinto, Lewan said the northwest area of Ann Arbor Township adjacent to Northfield Township is designated Agricultural Production.

In answer to a question from Chockley, Lewan said he believes there is no sewer available in the area designated for residential at a density of .50-1.0 units/acre, but he can check. Cousino noted a development proposed for the south part of that area would use a private sewer system, so it is unlikely there is sewer further north.

Chockley said she appreciates the opportunity to review this plan, but she does not see any effect on Northfield Township. Lewan said a letter to that effect should come from the Township.

10B. Election of Planning Commission Officers and ZBA Representative.

Iaquinto nominated Stanalajczo to serve as Chair of the Planning Commission for 2015. Dignan supported.

Chick nominated Chockley to serve as Chair of the Planning Commission for 2015. Cousino supported.

Iaquinto asked that Stanalajczo and Chockley each speak about serving in this position. Stanalajczo said he believes meetings have not been run well and there has been a lot of chaos. He said he speaks and organizes his thoughts well, and he has experience running Township Board meetings in the absence of the Supervisor.

Chockley said she has five years of experience as Chair of the Commission, and while she is not perfect she has many ideas for the future work of the Commission, including making sure materials are distributed in a timely manner, reviewing planning going on in neighboring Townships, and doing more goal setting. She said the Commission has accomplished a lot in recent years, a lot of work goes into being Chair behind the scenes, and she works with the community and planners well and listens to all input from the community.

Iaquinto said he respects Chockley immensely, but he feels there were attacks on Board members from the public that should have been stopped, public comment time limits have not been enforced, last minute items have been added several times to agendas, and meetings have been allowed to run on and on. He said the accomplishments Chockley listed have been group efforts of the entire Board.

Chick said moderating meetings is not the most important work of the Commission Chair, and the significant amount of other work put in needs to be considered. Iaquinto said he has seen Stanalajczo as being very dedicated in his public service. Stanalajczo said regardless of the outcome of this vote the by-laws adopted last year need to be amended to be more specific about the duties and responsibilities of members because the work Chockley has been doing is not a part of the Chair's official duties.

Chockley was elected Chair on a 4—3 vote, with Cousino, Chick, Roman, and Chockley voting for Chockley, and Iaquinto, Stanalajczo, and Dignan voting for Stanalajczo.

Chockley noted Chick has done an outstanding job as Vice-Chair during the past year and nominated her to serve as Planning Commission Vice-Chair for 2015.

Cousino supported. Chockley called for other nominations. There were none.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved that nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast for Chick as Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

Chick nominated Stanalajczo to serve as Planning Commission Secretary. Dignan supported. Stanalajczo said he is willing to serve. Chockley called for other nominations. There were none.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved that nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast for Stanalajczo as Secretary of the Planning Commission. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

Chockley nominated Dignan as the Planning Commission representative to the Zoning Board of Appeals for 2015. Roman supported.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved that nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast for Dignan as Planning Commission representative to the Zoning Board of Appeals. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

11. MINUTES

December 17, 2014, Regular Meeting

Chockley noted three corrections.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the minutes of the December 17, 2014, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

December 22, 2014, Special Meeting

Iaquinto and Chockley made three corrections.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the minutes of the December 22, 2014, special meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION

None.

13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Proposed Master Plan Amendment (Biltmore). David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, briefly reviewed a list of questions that people have given him by phone and email about the proposed Biltmore development and asked that they be addressed publicly at some point soon.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Pond Hockey Classic. Iaquinto noted the Pond Hockey Classic will be held February 6-8.

Protocol for Review of Master Plans of Neighboring Communities. Chick said she was asked to look into how proposed master plans will be handled when they are sent to the Township. She said Fink indicated these will be directed to him and they will be presented to the Planning Commission for review.

North Territorial Overlay District. Dignan questioned how realistic some of the expectations for this area are and asked that the Commission devote time to discussing this further.

Proposed Master Plan Amendment (Biltmore). Stanalajczo said he respects the opinions of David Gordon and the people he represents, but he has been living in the Township for 10 years and there has been no development during that time. He said he believes growth is important for increasing property values, but he has not seen any specifics from Biltmore because there is no plan yet. He said he will give Gordon's viewpoints fair consideration, but there will have to be compromise.

Planning Commission Management. Roman said he looks forward to a productive year with all Commissioners and he thanked Stanalajczo for being interested in serving as Chair and congratulated Chockley on her election.

Chick suggested that Planning Commissioners be asked prior to agendas being finalized whether they would like to add agenda items.

Stanalajczo asked whether correspondence about planning issues other than master plan amendments will be passed on to Commissioners. Fink said he will do that, but cautioned that some things are directed to the Chair or the planning consultants. He added that he wants to make sure that a staff person—either he Kathleen Manley—attends all Commission meetings because of the important work it does.

Chockley noted that there is a lot of communication between applicants and Lewan that Commissioners typically do not see prior to a full application being presented. Stanalajczo said how all of this information is handled could be address in the by-laws. Fink said there is a process, but it has simply not been documented. He added that it is the nature of how municipal government is run for developers with ideas to come into the office to run those ideas by staff, and he agrees with Chockley that those things and communications regarding developments should be presented to the Commission as a package.

Lewan said he tries to make sure that as much information as possible goes through the Township,

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but knows a lot of engineers and developers from his work in numerous communities, so it is natural for them to come to him, but he tells everyone that applications have to be made to the Township, not to him. Fink said he and Lewan often provide information about regulations to developers, but it is up to the developer to decide whether an application will be made. Stanalajczo noted that prior to a Township Manager being hired Lewan was the point of contact for developers, and it is understandable that there will be a period of transition for everyone to understand that information must come through the Township.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

January 14, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Stanalajczo supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 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 January 21, 2015.

Marlene Chockley, Chair

Mark Stanalajczo, Secretary

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