

# NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes of Regular Meeting February 4, 2015

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marlene Chockley at 7:06 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
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Absent <u>with notice</u>
Larry Roman	Present
Mark Stanalajczo	Absent with notice

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 postponed Item 10A, Discussion of Goals, until more members are presented to participate.

- **Motion:** Roman moved, Dignan supported, that the agenda be adopted as amended.  
**Motion carried 4—0 on a voice vote.**

## 5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

**Proposed Master Plan Amendment.** Mike Cicchella, 7789 Sutton Road, said the open space ordinance was passed when he served as Supervisor, and rather than reducing minimum lot sizes he would prefer to cluster housing regulations used to increase density while preserving open space. He also urged preservation of wildlife corridors between developments as called for in the Master Plan which is supported by the community. He said when open space is gone it is gone forever, and open space and agriculture are what make Northfield Township so attractive.

Robin Wojtys, 6235 Hellner Road, said it is the obligation of the Planning Commission to support the vision of the majority of residents, not their own personal view. She said the front page of the Township's website describes the Township as being rural, yet only yet only minutes away from the City.

Chrystyna Kozak, 6449 Hellner Road, said the suggestion of a two acre minimum in addition to changing the Master Plan to allow a large residential development is a further chipping away of the rural character of the Township.

Ed Wojtys, 6235 Hellner Road, said it was disappointing to see the personal agendas that dominated the workshop session of the Township Board last week. He said people who cannot listen to diverse opinions should recuse themselves from such discussions. He said neither side of this argument can show objectively that the majority of the people in the Township support one view or another, and he suggested that some way of determining this undertaken. He said he could live with whatever the outcome is.

Craig Warburton, 450 W. Joy Road, said he is confused about what is going on with the proposed development in the Township. He said it has gone from a proposal by a developer to change the Master Plan to allow more development last year to a wide-ranging conversation at the Township Board meeting last year about what all of the Board members would like to see. He said the Master Plan—which is a very sound document—seems to be in the process of being thrown out.

## 6. CORRESPONDENCE

Dignan said he got three emails from people about the idea of changing the minimum lot size from five acres to two acres, and he questioned where that idea came from. Chockley said that was discussed at last week's Township Board meeting. Lewan said this came up during a broader discussion of potential areas of growth in the Township.

Chockley asked Lewan to comment on questions posed in a letter submitted to the Commission by David Gordon in January. Lewan summarized questions and commented, as follows:

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- *What is the status of the sewer study and is the Master Plan Amendment going forward?* The sewer study is on-going and consideration of a Master Plan amendment is proceeding.
- *Will public workshops be held similar to those conducted when developing the current Master Plan?* When a direction is determined there may be public input opportunities through a survey or public workshops.
- *Will professional surveys be done?* That would require allocating funding which would require action by the Township Board.
- *What is the status of the studies that were requested of Biltmore Development and what effects would there be on people currently in those areas?* The Township is doing a sewer study, and there are no results yet from the developer on traffic and cost of services studies.
- *What safeguards could be put in place to protect the Township should the developer walk away?* Such risks can be mitigated by good development agreements and use of conditional zoning.
- *Is there a legitimate need for housing in Northfield Township?* Developers say there is a lack of developable vacant parcels in southeast Michigan, and if this proposal were not marketable the developer would not be pursuing it.

Lewan noted that no zoning request has been made by Biltmore.

## **7. REPORTS**

### **7A. Board of Trustees**

No report.

### **7B. ZBA**

The ZBA has not met since the last Planning Commission meeting.

### **7C. Staff Report**

Nothing to report.

### **7D. Planning Consultant**

Lewan reported that in response to a request from Mr. Stanalajczo he had prepared a chart of options for various densities in Township residential districts. He said a member of his staff will be preparing examples of each of these scenarios using a 100 acre sample parcel, and he hopes to have those at the next meeting. He said a study of development along the US-23 corridor from M-14 to Brighton is also being done.

## **8. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

## **9. OLD BUSINESS**

### **9A. Amendments to the Manufactured Housing Community District.**

Lewan recalled that the biggest issue that came up at the last meeting concerned average mobile home lot size in Section 26.05(c). He said the language in the draft—which calls for an average lot size of 5,500 sq. ft.—is from the State, and changing that to require a 5,500 sq. ft. *minimum* would require re-submitting the language again to the State for review.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Roman supported, that the adoption of the Amendments to the Manufactured Housing Community District be recommended for approval to the Township Board.

**Motion carried 4—0 on a roll call vote.**

## **10. NEW BUSINESS**

### **10A. Discussion of Priorities and Projects for the Year.**

Postponed.

## **11. MINUTES**

### **January 21, 2015, Regular Meeting**

Chockley made four corrections.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Cousino supported, that the minutes of the January 21, 2015, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 6—0 4—0 on a voice vote.**

## **12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION**

None.

## **13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Ed Wojtys asked why the sewer study is taking so long. Lewan said he is not involved in that. Fink said this is being performed by Tetra Tech. Chockley said it is not a simple matter because there are many issues to be considered, including capacity and legal issues with neighboring Townships. She said when it is done ~~it will be posted on the Township website~~ the Planning Commission will receive it.

## **14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS**

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Dignan noted that the Pond Hockey Classic, which funds youth sports, will be held in the Township this weekend.

**15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING**

**February 18, 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:** Roman moved, Dignan supported, that the meeting be adjourned.  
**Motion carried 4—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned 7:51 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 February 18, 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/>