

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes of Regular Meeting February 18, 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 (Arrived at 7:10 P.M.)
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
Township Engineer Jacob Rushlow
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Stanalajczo asked that a discussion of the requested Master Plan amendment be added under Old Business.

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the agenda be adopted as amended.
Motion carried 5—0—1 on a voice vote, Roman opposed.

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Master Plan Amendment. Carolyn Ottoman, 10181 Whitmore Bay Drive, asked the Commission to take action on the request to amend the Master Plan by Biltmore. She said growth will make the community vibrant.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

A. Master Plan Amendment. Chockley noted all Board members have been receiving letters from community members about this.

7. REPORTS

7A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported that the Board adopted a revised fee schedule which included reduced fees for ZBA applications, and adopted resolutions allowing for alternate dates for the Board of Review. She added that at their January 27th workshop session Board members offered ideas about growth in the Township although no conclusion was reached.

7B. ZBA

Dignan reported that on February 17th the ZBA granted variances to allow an existing garage to be removed and an attached garage to be added to an existing home on East Shore Drive.

[Cousino arrived at this point].

7C. Staff Report

Nothing to report.

7D. Planning Consultant

Lewan said:

- An agreement with the Road Commission is being worked out to allow the Nowatzke project to move forward.
- Detailed engineering plans were received for Regal Recycling.
- He will be giving a five hour class on basic planning and zoning next Thursday at the County Building on Zeeb Road and Commissioners are welcome.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 8A. Case #JPC150001; Request by the Northfield Township Library for a Conditional Use Permit to allow an expansion of library facilities at 125 Barker Road within the WLD-D, Whitmore Lake District Downtown, pursuant to Section 30.04 of the zoning ordinance; Parcel 02-06-401-009.**

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Stanalajczo supported, that the public hearing be opened.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll-call voice vote.

Kate Bond with Boss Engineering said:

- No new signage, lighting, parking, or programming is being proposed for the existing library.
- A 2,166 sq. ft. two-story addition is proposed to the 3,100 sq. ft. existing building.
- An additional sediment basin and rain gardens are proposed to handle the existing and additional runoff.

- Soffit lighting on the existing building is proposed for safety and new trees will be planted to replace those being removed for the addition.

Township planning consultant Douglas Lewan said:

- Both the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and site plan for this proposal are being handled together.
- The proposal conforms to the Master Plan.
- There are no significant issues with natural resources.
- The addition will not be adding to the capacity of the building so there will be no additional traffic impact.
- The proposal meets the seven conditional land use standards, and he is convinced the use of the additional square footage will not have an effect on the surrounding neighborhood, but more information about the use of the proposed addition has been requested.
- He is recommending approval of the CUP.

Library Director Zaley Nelson said the additional space will allow them to add to their collection, add computer space, and add separate the areas for children and adults. In answer to questions from Stanalajczo, Nelson said a 42-seat community room with a kitchenette will be available for use by the community, and although they would like to add parking they cannot afford that right now. Dignan said he is also concerned about there being enough parking, and he would not like to see the area west of the library along the road used for parking. Nelson said they have a good relationship with their neighbor across the street and are allowed to use that parking when the business is closed.

In answer to a question from Fink, Nelson said future additional parking would be to the north of the existing parking area. Iaquinto said when he attended a couple events this summer it was easy to find other parking in the area because the business across the street was not open. Nelson said people also use the old Township Hall site. Dignan agreed that nearby off-site parking and other spaces are available to the public.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that the public hearing be closed.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll-call voice vote.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Motion: Chick moved that Old Business be handled following New Business.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll-call voice vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10A. Case #JPC150001; Request by the Northfield Township Library for a Conditional Use Permit to allow an expansion of library facilities at 125 Barker Road within the WLD-D, Whitmore Lake District Downtown, pursuant to Section 30.04 of the zoning ordinance; Parcel 02-06-401-009.

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, that the Planning Commission recommend to the Northfield Township Board approval of the Conditional Use Permit requested by the Northfield Township Library as presented during the February 18th Planning Commission meeting and referencing the planning consultant's report of January 27, 2015.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

10B. Case #JPC150001; Request by the Northfield Township Library for site plan approval to allow an expansion of library facilities at 125 Barker Road within the WLD-D, Whitmore Lake District Downtown, pursuant to Section 30.04 of the zoning ordinance; Parcel 02-06-401-009.

In answer to a question from Stanalajczo, Lewan said approval of the site plan can be conditioned upon approval of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) by the Township Board.

Lewan referred to the revised site plan submitted last Friday, and said:

- A library of this size under the current zoning ordinance would be required to have only 11 parking spaces, and there are currently 18.
- The parking aisle between the two rows of parking is only 16 feet, whereas the standard is 24 22 feet, so he is recommending that this be addressed.
- Landscaping issues cited have been addressed, and there is essentially no new lighting.
- The proposed building meets the architectural design standards of the zoning district, but it seems that an additional window should be added at one end of the addition. Iaquinto noted a window in that area would not be compatible with plans for a screen to project movies in that end of the building.
- The location of the existing sanitary sewer on the site needs to be shown to make sure it will not be affected by the new facilities proposed.
- Parking calculations have been corrected, loading issues have been addressed, and tree locations have been changed as requested

Lewan said only the issue of the parking lot drive aisles remains to be addressed. Stanalajczo asked where two doors on the south side of the addition lead. Nelson said a deck will be added in the future in that area.

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Township Engineer Jacob Rushlow, OHM, referred to his letter of January 23rd, and said most of his comments were addressed with the revised plans submitted last Friday, and since then the remaining issues have been addressed. He noted:

- An existing dumpster will be relocated.
- The existing sewer lead is being located.
- The viability of the two wells is being investigated.
- The proposed retention pond and rain gardens will handle stormwater runoff from both the existing parking lot and the new building, and the applicant is working on providing additional details.
- Expanding the existing parking lot to the north would allow the width of the drive aisle to be increased.
- Some conflicts between cars backing out of two parking spaces with the public sidewalk and dumpster should be addressed.

Rushlow said he is recommending approval of this plan. In answer to a question from Chockley, Rushlow said the calculations for stormwater runoff do not take into account the additional five feet of parking lot paving which would provide the correct drive aisle width, but it would be a small amount of additional pavement and that could easily be addressed.

Fink commended the Library for this plan. He said the rain gardens will be very aesthetically pleasing additions and the retention pond will address existing runoff from the parking lot. Lewan noted that some of the items Rushlow listed are detailed engineering matters which are handled following Planning Commission approval.

Roman asked if alternative locations for the dumpster have been considered. Iaquinto agreed that relocating it near the accessory building would be more aesthetically pleasing. Fink suggested designating the two parking spaces near the dumpster for employee parking so cars which are not frequently moved use those spaces.

Roman said the 8' x 10' shed shown on the first set of drawings is not on the revised plans. Nelson said the shed is being used by Kiwanis for storage, but it is not in the best condition and needs to come down, so they will be working with Kiwanis on that. Kate Bond of Boss Engineering said she can note on sheet 2 of the drawings that this is to be removed.

Fink said as part of the detailed engineering review inclusion of a dry hydrant should be addressed with the Public Safety Director.

In answer to a question from Roman, Lewan said there is no requirement for screening. Dignan said although a fourth window is not needed on the north side of the building, he questioned whether a false window could be included to improve the view of the building from Barker Road. He said the Dodge House itself has a very nice appearance. Bond said landscaping could be used to address this. She said without the architect being present she would not like to commit the library to an

unknown expense. She added that the floor plan has been flipped so that the mechanical room will be in this area, rather than the projection room. Chockley said either a window or landscaping would be acceptable to her. Dignan said he would prefer a window or a false window. Bond said the Library will commit to exploring that.

In answer to a question from Cousino, Bond said the addition will be slab on grade.

► **Motion:** Chockley moved, Iaquinto supported, that based on the information received from the applicant, the Northfield Township Library, and reflected in the minutes of this meeting, the Planning Commission finds that the site plan for expansion of the Northfield Township Library, 125 Barker Road, Whitmore Lake, Michigan, Parcel 02-06-401-009, the meets the required standards and finding for site plan approval pursuant to Section 36-867 of the zoning ordinance, and recommends approval with conditions:

1. Address the concerns of the Township engineer in his memo of January 23, 2015
2. Address the concerns of the Township planner in memos dated January 27, 2015, and February 18, 2015,
3. Removal of the accessory building.
4. Explore the provision of a window or false window on the north side of the community building or landscaping.
5. That the Conditional Use Permit is approved by the Township Board.

Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9A. Proposed Master Plan Amendment. Stanalajczo noted that on June 4, 2014, the Planning Commission directed the planning consultant to begin work on amending the Master Plan, yet nothing has happened since then. Chockley noted that several studies were requested from the applicant. Stanalajczo said that was a separate motion made later. Iaquinto said this puts the applicant in a difficult situation of requiring them to produce studies prior to approval of their request.

Dignan said he objected to the Township narrowing the scope of its review of the Master Plan to the Biltmore area. He said it is important to protect the integrity of the Master Plan to separate the Biltmore request from a larger review of the Master Plan; otherwise the Township could be left open to amending its Master Plan every time there is a request from a developer.

Lewan said he agrees the Master Plan should be looked at regardless of a request from a developer, but the

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current review of the Master Plan would never have been undertaken without the May 29th letter from Biltmore. He said the Commission has been waiting for the studies requested from Biltmore, and in conversation with Biltmore's representative there did not seem to be any objection from them to providing the studies.

Iaquinto said Mr. Stollman of Biltmore told him he did not simply request a rezoning because of the wide range of densities being considered. Iaquinto said he does not understand how Biltmore could undertake the requested studies since they have no specific plan in mind. Lewan added that a request for a rezoning would have been different from the Master Plan designation and that he would not have recommended that to the applicant or the Commission. Chick said the Michigan Townships Association says a Master Plan amendment is the appropriate way to approach this.

Dignan said the minutes do accurately reflect the Commission's actions, but in the process the Commission made the mistake of narrowing its focus to the area of interest to Biltmore. Chick said she does not think a mistake was made because a larger area than the area Biltmore is interested in was agreed upon to be studied. Roman said the most important thing to address in that area is sewer service, and no further action should be taken until the sewer study—which the Township is doing—is available. Iaquinto said the developer could install his own sewer system, so there is no reason for the Master Plan study to be delayed because of lack of a sewer study.

Stanalajczo said even though the last Master Plan amendment was adopted two years ago, that review was started five years ago. He said he thinks the future land use map is flawed because it does not reflect a realistic 20 year view. He said he does not care what a developer wants; it is up to the Township to plan for its future. Roman said he strongly feels a sewer study is critical to this process. Stanalajczo disagreed.

Dignan said traffic studies are not done for master plans, so the study requested from Biltmore is irrelevant to considering an amendment of the Master Plan. Chockley said Lewan is working on a document to move the Township forward in the master planning process and will be presenting that at the next meeting. Chick said the process of amending the Master Plan is lengthy. Stanalajczo said a request to the Township Board for funds to do this work needs to be made.

10. NEW BUSINESS (cont.)

10C. Discussion of Priorities and Projects for the Year.

Chockley referred to the list of projects she had provided and the 2013 list of priorities. Stanalajczo repeated that he would like to review the future land use map. Iaquinto said review of the Master Plan should be at the forefront of every agenda.

Dignan said rather than concentrating only on residential densities, he would like to consider form-based zoning toward the goal of having a beautiful community. Chockley noted the Open Space Ordinance addresses some of those issues.

Lewan suggested considering ways to streamline site plan approvals. Stanalajczo said having the workshop that was discussed previously to review examples of what different types of developments could look like on the same piece of land is very important. Chockley noted that is scheduled for the next meeting (March 4th). She added that some Commissioners previously attended a form-based code training.

Dignan said he brought up the issue of public land zoning because that is important when government-owned properties are sold.

Regarding the issue of lake lots, Lewan suggested that input be requested from Zoning Administrator Weiland. He added that some issues restricting development on these lots have been already been addressed by the Commission.

Chockley noted that undertaking parking, traffic flow, and economic development studies for the downtown area have been discussed in the past.

Chockley recalled that the Township Board had taken on the responsibility for the Capital Improvements Plan. Fink said he thinks that is appropriately a Board responsibility, and he will bring that up with them.

Regarding the Site Plan Review Manual, Lewan said the Township's manual is better than most, but some updating to reflect the new codified code references is needed.

Chockley invited Commissioners to submit additional items, and said she would send out the list to Commissioners tomorrow. She asked that they rank their priorities and respond by the next day.

In answer to a question from Stanalajczo, Fink said he expects to get a sewer study document from Brian Rubel of Tetra Tech by the end of March.

10D. Planning Commission Annual Report. Chockley referred to the draft report to the Township Board that she had prepared. Commissioners suggested revisions. Chockley agreed to bring a revision to the next meeting.

11. MINUTES

February 4, 2015, Regular Meeting

Four corrections were made.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that the minutes of the February 4, 2015, regular 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

Master Plan Amendments. Mike Cicchella, 7789 Sutton Road, said the Master Plan is only two years old and was well thought out. He said language about clustering and greenbelts is included and what the community should look like is addressed. He said discussion of amending the Plan galvanizes the community negatively, and amendments should not be undertaken to meet the needs of developers.

Meeting Process. Craig Warburton, 450 W. Joy Road, said the sound system in the room is terrible, the subtleties of the infighting that is going on is embarrassing, and there is a lack of parliamentary procedure.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Master Plan/Zoning. Roman said residential densities and what development looks like are inter-related. He said he is not opposed to looking at changes in zoning as long as it is looked at comprehensively.

Dignan said he believes the Commission did mis-step slightly, and should have separated the discussion of the request from Biltmore and zoning.

Iaquinto thanked Fink for forwarding letters received at the Township office about the Master Plan issue.

Commission Priorities. Roman said smaller issues can be addressed through the year as needed.

Letter to *Courant* from Chair. Dignan said whenever the Chair sends out a letter using the title of Planning Commission Chair the Commission should have input into it. Chockley said she provided this to the Commissioners because she acts transparently, and she wrote this for the information of the public about what the Commission is doing.

Pond Hockey Classic. Iaquinto said this was a great success, brought in a lot of additional revenue for local merchants, raised a lot of money for local sports, and brought many people into the area who otherwise would not have come here.

Commission Process. Lewan said he has had extensive experience with Planning Commissions and Northfield Township's is among the best run he has worked with, and it is in the nature of planning that things can get messy.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

March 4, 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, Iaquinto supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 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 March 4, 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/>