

# NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes of Regular Meeting March 19, 2014

## 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
Andrea Darden	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Larry Roman	Absent

Also present:

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

## 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chockley asked that item 9I, Regal Recycling, be moved ahead of item 9A, and that action on Section 60.34, Day Care Facilities be added under Old Business.

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, that the agenda be adopted as amended.  
**Motion carried 6—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 on March 11 the Board approved the rezoning from RC to AG on Pontiac Trail and also approved a service contract with Washtenaw County for the Construction Board of Appeals. She also noted that the Township has been awarded another \$250,000 grant from the State to complete the non-motorized pathway along Barker Road between Main Street and the elementary school.

### 7B. ZBA

Dignan reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals approved variances to allow a home 459 East Shore Drive to be expanded. He noted that as part of the project the house will be removed from the road right-of-way. He said because an area of the lot that is under the water line is not included in the lot area—as is usually the case with these lots—lot coverage variance and floor area ratio variances were required.

### 7C. Staff Report

Nothing to report.

### 7D. Planning Consultant

Lewan noted that topics at the joint meeting of the Commission with the Township Board on March 25<sup>th</sup> will include the North Territorial/Whitmore Lake Master Plan change, updating the capital improvements plan, and the sewer special assessment district. He also reported that the zoning administrator is asking that setbacks on lots around lakes be changed to address the issue of repeated requests for variances.

## 8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the public hearings on revisions to Article 2.0—Definitions, Article 21.0—SR-1 Single Family Residential, Article 22.0—SR-2 Single Family Residential, Article 25.0—MR Multi-Family Residential, Section 60.34—Day Care Facilities, Section 60.35—Adult Foster Care Facilities and Foster Family Homes, Article 63.0—Conditional Land Uses (Section 63.05, Public Hearing), Section 67.10—Violations and Penalties, and on the Amendment to the Planning Commission State of By-laws be opened.  
**Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

Chockley called for comments from the public. There were none.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that the public hearings be closed.  
**Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

## 9. OLD BUSINESS

### 9I. Update on JPC#130001, Regal Recycling, Parcel 02-29-200-027, 6270 Whitmore Lake Road

Lewan recalled that the Planning Commission approved a preliminary site plan with conditions for this property in July, 2013. He said since then there has been minimal correspondence regarding the project and revised plans have not been submitted as required.

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Mr. Brockway of Regal Recycling said his engineer died unexpectedly late in the fall. He said he has been speaking with Kathy Keinath of Perimeter to take over the project. He said over the winter they have been working on the fence, and as far as he knows sewer will be run down to this area so he does not want to do any work that would be made obsolete by that. Regarding the well he said work has been done to protect it.

Chockley asked Lewan to address this. Lewan said there is usually urgency to address conditions specified by the Planning Commission, but in this case the business is already operating so that urgency does not exist. He said he was not aware the engineer had died, and the Township engineer said he has not heard anything from Regal.

In response to a comment from Lewan, Brockway said their septic system is being pumped. In answer to a question from Iaquinto, Lewan said there is technically no time limit for compliance in this case, but the project does have to be finished.

Commissioners discussed when it would be appropriate for the revised plans and engineering to be submitted. Lewan said Perimeter Engineering should contact him or the Township engineer, Jacob Rushlow.

Chockley asked Brockway if he has applied for a permit for a Type 3 non-residential water supply or if any inspections have been done. She said she understands there have been challenges, but progress has to be made. She said she would like to see detailed engineering to be submitted to the Township within a month. Iaquinto suggested 60 days. Lewan said a building inspection has not been done pending submittal of the revised plans, so that is another reason to have plans submitted soon.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, that a detailed engineering report be submitted to the Township within 30 days. **Motion carried 4—2 on a roll call vote, Iaquinto and Dignan opposed.**

**9A. Article 2.0--Definitions**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that adoption of *Article 2.0—Definitions* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9B. Article 21.0—SR-1 Single Family Residential**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that adoption of *Article 21.0—SR-1 Single Family Residential* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9C. Article 22.0—SR-2 Single Family Residential**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that adoption of *Article 22.0—SR-2 Single Family Residential* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9D. Article 25.0—MR Multi-Family Residential**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that adoption of *Article 25.0—MR Multi-Family Residential* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9F. Section 60.35—Adult Foster Care Facilities and Foster Family Homes.**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that adoption of *Section 60.35—Adult Foster Care Facilities and Foster Family Homes* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9F. Section 60.34—Day Care Facilities**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that adoption of *Section 60.34—Day Care Facilities* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9G. Article 63.01—Conditional Land Uses, Section 63.05, Public Hearing**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that adoption of *Article 63.01—Conditional Land Uses, Section 63.05, Public Hearing* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9H. Section 67.10—Violations and Penalties**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that adoption of *Section 67.10—Violations and Penalties* be recommended to the Township Board of Trustees. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9I. Amendment to the Planning Commission State of By-Laws**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that the *Amendment to the Planning Commission Statement of By-Laws* be approved. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**9J. Review of Article 11.0—RC Recreation Conservation District**

Lewan recalled that the Commission discussed at the last meeting adding single-family dwellings as allowed uses, and also discussed clarifying the statement concerning the minimum lot area. Lewan said to address the latter he changed the wording regarding lot area from, "No building or structure shall be established on any lot less than 10 acres in area, to "The minimum lot area shall be ten acres in area." He said even with these changes it is unlikely that single-family homes will be established on many RC parcels, it is not a good idea to make the uses in any district too restrictive.

It was agreed to schedule this for public hearing.

## **10. NEW BUSINESS**

### **10A. Review of Article 26.0—MHP Mobile Home Park.**

Lewan said the term “Mobile Home Park” has been replaced in the industry and State legislation with the term “Manufactured Housing Community,” and most of the changes he has proposed follow a model ordinance for these communities.

He explained that the Township’s standard for these developments cannot be stricter than the State’s standards unless the developer agrees to them and they are approved by the State, but in 1982 the State adopted standards that are generally stricter than the Township’s.

Chockley questioned whether the Township will likely ever receive another proposal for such a development. Lewan said it seems that the economics of developing these communities no longer work as well as they used to so there seems to be little interest, but that could change. Chick said it is her impression that there are many vacancies in existing manufactured home communities. Dignan said there are over 200 vacant lots in the development in Northfield Township.

Cousino asked if there is a definition of a “manufactured home.” He said there are a lot of ways to build a house, and there are many expensive homes that were built off-site but could not be distinguished from the homes next to them in a standard residential development. Lewan said the main difference is that a manufactured home does not have a permanent foundation.

Dignan asked about the requirement regarding school bus stops. He said if another manufactured home community is ever proposed it would be important to plan for a safe pick-up and drop-off area for school children. Lewan said he will check on this, and he will also be asking for comment on the proposed revisions from the manufactured home industry group in Michigan.

Chick said the term “manufactured housing community” should be used throughout the ordinance.

Dignan said these types of developments are very dense and often have a large number of children, and he questioned whether a minimum area and minimum standards for recreation can be required. He said drainage areas are often counted toward “open space,” but that is rarely usable for recreation. Lewan said there is a requirement for open space, but he will look into this further.

Chockley noted a floor area ratio (FAR) limit of 40% is included and she questioned whether that is necessary. Dignan said although it is not common here, two-story

manufactured homes are often built in other parts of the country.

Dignan questioned whether it makes sense to allow parallel parking, even if the street is required to be 41 feet wide, because there is so little room between driveways. Cousino said it is possible that individual driveways might not be provided depending on the design of the community.

Regarding the requirement that a 50 foot radius be required for cul-de-sacs, Chockley questioned whether a smaller radius would be sufficient because it is her understanding that fire trucks can turn with a radius as small as 40 feet. Lewan said 50 feet is standard.

Lewan said he will make additional revisions and bring it back to the Commission, and after the Commission reviews it again he will send it to the State Mobile Home Commission for review. Darden asked for a copy of the State regulations. Lewan said he will send these to Chockley for distribution to Commissioners.

### **10B. Section 68.03—Amendment Procedure**

Lewan noted that a large part of this section is devoted to requirements for the sign which must be posted for rezoning requests. He said this signage requirement has been removed from other sections of the zoning ordinance (for conditional uses, etc.), and it had been his intention to remove it from this section. He said most communities do not require the posting of a sign, and if the Township thinks that is a good idea the requirement for it should be stated in the public hearings section of the ordinance, not in several places. He also said he does not think a posted sign better informs people than the notices that are mailed out.

Chockley said she has always like this requirement, and there may be instances where it could be appropriate, such as for a use that creates a lot of noise that might extend beyond the limits of mailed notifications, such as a shooting range.

Cousino said while he understands this may be additional work for an applicant, he also believes a sign informs more people. He suggested making the requirement for these signs something that could more easily be accomplished by an applicant.

Dignan said the issue of notifying the public has become more difficult with the change in print publications over the last several years, and he suggested using electronic methods more. He noted the Township has an improved website, and it is possible to use systems that people can sign up for to get notices about development proposals.

Cousino said that is a great idea, but a sign would still be a good idea for anyone who is interested and gets such a notice to determine which property is the subject of a particular proposal. Dignan noted that standard building permits are issued which must be

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posted on building sites, and he questioned whether the Township could be responsible for posting the signs, and if so, he suggested that the signs could be uniform in appearance. Cousino said the signs could refer people to the Township website for more information. Dignan said the application fee could be increased to cover the cost of this.

Chockley said the internet alone should not be relied upon because many people, especially the elderly and people in rural areas, do not have regular internet access.

It was agreed the requirement for a sign should be removed from this section, but that a modified requirement should be included in the public hearing section of the ordinance. Lewan said he will work on that.

## 11. MINUTES

### February 19, 2014, Regular Meeting

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that the minutes of the February 19, 2014, regular meeting be approved as presented, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

## 12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION

None.

## 13. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

**Zoning Ordinance Updates.** Dignan recommended that each section of zoning ordinance as available for download from the website or from the township offices have section breaks to allow existing copies to be more easily updated. He also asked when the fully updated ordinance will be available. Lewan said it is now available, and he also noted that Municode will be taking over the updating of Township ordinances

rather than the Township maintaining a Word document.

In answer to a question from Chockley, Lewan said it will be possible to download the entire ordinance from MuniCode, just as can be done now from the Township website. He added the MuniCode version will be completely searchable and include helpful hyperlinks.

Chockley said she will be pursuing the idea of Commissioners using notebook or tablet computers to view Planning Commission packets rather than being provided with hard copies.

**Board or Commission Approval of Rezoning, etc.** in answer to a question from Iaquinto, Chick said this could be topic for discussion at the joint meeting of the Township Board and Planning Commission next week.

## 14. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None present.

## 15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

**March 25, 2014**, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as a joint meeting of the Township Board and the Planning Commission.

**April 2, 2014**, 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 6—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 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 April 16, 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)