

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
March 2, 2016**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kenneth Dignan at 7:04 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  
Assessing & Building Assistant Mary Bird  
Planning Consultant Sally Hodges, McKenna Associates  
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble  
Members of the Community

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chockley supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented.  
**Motion carried 6—0 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Laura Wojtys, 6235 Hellner Road, Craig Warburton, 450 W. Joy Road, Jennifer DeLisle, 7441 Spender Road, David Perry, 9441 Earhart Road, and Kittle Burkhart, 6187 Nollar Road, asked that no further action be taken on the Biltmore Development request and the current Master Plan be followed. Warburton objected to the Commission discussing business not on the agenda at the last meeting, and DeLisle spoke against increasing the residential density in AR zoning.

**6. CORRESPONDENCE**

**A. Letter from GYOA Trucking listing materials to be stored on-site.** Dignan referred to two letters from members of the public that had been distributed to Commissioners.

**7. REPORTS**

**7A. Board of Trustees**

Chick reported on the February 23<sup>rd</sup> Board meeting, including that the Board approved a maintenance agreement for lighting on the 8 Mile Road bridge and reappointed Amy Steffens to the ZBA.

**7B. ZBA**

No meeting since the last Planning Commission meeting.

**7C. Staff Report**

Nothing to report.

**7D. Planning Consultant**

Nothing to report.

**8. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

**9. OLD BUSINESS**

**9A. Biltmore Request to Amend Master Plan.**

Fink explained that in the opinion of the Township attorney the letter sent by the Commission to Biltmore Development in 2015 was not sufficient to constitute a response to their request to amend the Master Plan, and action—which should be based on findings of fact after analysis by the Township planning consultant—still needs to be taken. Commissioners discussed how to proceed, including whether Biltmore is still interested in receiving a response and whether a written opinion from the Township attorney is necessary.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, to ask the planner to review the request for amendment to the Master Plan dated May 29, 2014, from Biltmore Land LLC, addressed to Mr. Howard Fink, Township Manager, Northfield Township.

Chick proposed that the motion include review by the Township Engineer and Public Safety Director.

**Amendment to motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Cousino opposed.**

- ▶ **Amended motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, to ask the Township's planning consultant, engineer, and Public Safety Director to review the request for amendment to the Master Plan dated May 29, 2014, from Biltmore Land LLC, addressed to Mr. Howard Fink, Township Manager, Northfield Township. **Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Cousino opposed.**

**9B. Consider Churches in all Zoning Districts.**

Iaquinto and Dignan recused themselves due to having been involved in matters leading to the request from Living Water Church which prompted this discussion. Dignan turned over conduct of the meeting to Vice-Chair Chick.

Planning Consultant Hodges referred to her memo of February 24<sup>th</sup> indicating that churches do not have to be permitted in all zoning districts and making recommendations for ordinance amendments to:

- allow churches as conditional uses in WLD, GC, HC, PSC, and RTM,
- allow them by right in ES or make other amendments to district, and
- consider whether they should be allowed in SR2.

Commissioners discussed the recommendations, including the need to comply with the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA).

- ▶ **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Roman supported, that the planner is directed to facilitate the recommendations for zoning changes as presented at this meeting, making churches conditional uses along with similar uses allowed by conditional use permit, and amending the RTM district to remove churches, theaters, auditoriums, and meeting facilities as uses allowed in the district. **Motion carried 4—1—2 on a roll call vote, Chockley opposed, and Dignan and Iaquinto recusing themselves.**

**9C. Review Request from Living Water Church in General Commercial (GC) District.**

Iaquinto and Dignan recused themselves due to having been involved in matters leading to the request from Living Water Church which prompted this discussion. Dignan turned over conduct of the meeting to Vice-Chair Chick.

The Commission, Fink, and Hodges discussed the proper procedure for considering this request. Hodges recommended that it would have been best if the Township had made available an application form for the church to submit a request for a zoning ordinance text amendment. The Commission agreed that Living Water's request had been addressed in the previous agenda item, but that if churches are eventually

allowed in the GC district it does not guarantee a favorable action on a request for rezoning of their specific property.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**11. MINUTES**

**February 17, 2016, Regular Meeting**

Chockley made one correction.

- ▶ **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Iaquinto supported, that the minutes of the February 17, 2016, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

**12. POLICY REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

**A. Goals and Objectives for 2016 (continued).** Dignan referred to the list of 11 objectives provided to him by Commissioners. It was agreed that Commissioners will each provide ranked lists to Dignan for compilation.

**B. Review Process of how an Applicant Petitions the Planning Commission.** There was further discussion about providing a formal method for property owners and others to request zoning ordinance text amendments, including assessing appropriate and reasonable fees.

- ▶ **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Roman supported, to direct the Township planner and Township staff to put together and make recommendations to the Planning Commission for a process for applications coming before the Commission, along with any type of fees they suggest be reviewed. **Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.**

**13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Craig Warburton commented on the issue of how applications to the Planning Commission should be made.

**14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS**

Iaquinto commented on a statement made during the First Call to the Public, thanked Hodges for her work, requested that she prepare recommended motions, and commented on the proposed changes to the RTM district.

**15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING**

**March 16, 2016**, 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, Chockley supported, that the meeting be adjourned.  
**Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**


The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 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 March 16, 2016.

  
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Kenneth Dignan, 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/>