

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
June 21st , 2011**

CALL TO ORDER

The Williamstown Township Planning Commission convened at 7:30 pm at the Williamstown Township Hall located at 4990 Zimmer Road, Williamston, Michigan. Chairman Michael Fielek called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

PRESENT: Chairman Mike Fielek, Secretary Gerald Eidt, Commissioners Joscelyn Brown-Timm, Dali Giese, Ron Cook, Ger Schultink and Board Representative Martin Wright.

ABSENT: Vice Chair Rex LaMore and Commissioner Rod Imhoff

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Consultant Chris Doozan of McKenna Associates and Planning Assistant Wanda Bloomquist

MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion by Commissioner Cook to approve the May 17th, 2011 minutes.

Seconded by Secretary Eidt

Motion Carries

Chair Fielek expressed to the citizens present that comments regarding the zoning ordinance amendments related to Medical Marijuana would be taken during deliberation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Closed at 7:35 pm

DELIBERATION

Medical Marihuana

Chair Fielek reviewed the order for deliberation. Review of the proposed revisions by consultant, Chris Doozan, with brief questions/concerns of the public, then deliberation.

Mr. Doozan reviewed catalyst for the proposed revisions. Initiated Law by the citizens of the State, voted on by the citizens by 63% and became law in 2008. Reviewed definition of primary care giver and qualifying patient. Allows up to 2.5 ounces per patient and 12 plants per patient. PC is complying with law by preparing two alternative set of revisions to the ordinance.

1. Would allow primary caregivers as a special use in non-residential districts: B-1, B-2 and I-1. Would add some additional standards, drug free school zone. Prevent grow rooms. Would have to be contained within the structure. Inspections as necessary. Caregiver would have to provide to the township a copy of the license. No consumption would be allowed on the premises. Chris reviewed the locations of B-1, B-2 and I-1 on the zoning map.
2. Permit as a home occupation in residential districts. Limit of 5 patients. General requirements for home occupations: Drug free school zone. Contained within residence. Permits would be required and inspections as necessary. Would require caregiver to register with Township.

Cooperatives, dispensaries and grow facilities would not be allowed anywhere in Township. Caregivers and patients would not have immunity from federal law.

Currently a moratorium on caregiver facilities is in place which expires in August. The Planning Commission would like to see revisions adopted by the Board before the moratorium expires.

Commercial and Industrial zones are primarily along M-43.

Residential district would require registration with the Township. In non-residential a SUP would be required.

Not allowing caregivers at all would be considered exclusionary zoning.

Public Discussion:

- By not addressing the issue at all it opens up to anywhere without regulations once moratorium expires.
- How would registration and compliance be enforced? There are procedures in place for compliance with the zoning ordinance. Meridian Police would be involved also.
- Caregivers provide patient information to the State.
- Don Dickenson-5872 Lounsbury Rd. City of Lansing seems to be out of control. Recommend in the commercial districts/not residential. Would be easier to monitor.
- Regulation of residential or commercial: concern if this would equate to more charges from Meridian Twp. Police.
- Having caregivers in residential invites problems. Concern with ease of enforcement and regulating.
- Bonnie Krause - Grand River. Concern with signage along Grand River.
- Revisions do not provide for dispensaries. Lansing allows dispensaries. Only 1 caregiver would be allowed per parcel.
- Is Greenleaf considered a dispensary?
- Is it possible to limit the number of caregivers within the Township?
- Do we have an entity that is pushing this to be allowed in the Township? Since the state law allows, the Planning Commission recommends an ordinance to regulate it.
- Reminder that 63% of the citizens voted for this and the township should accommodate but regulate. Would like to see it kept in the business area.
- Jane Johnson - 4815 Barton Rd. Patients and caregivers are only known to the state. More structure is needed.
- The Township cannot regulate patients. This structure allows us to know where caregivers are within the township. Since caregivers need to register then they would be in violation of the ordinance if not registered. This gives the township enforcement rights.
- Since the moratorium was set no one would be grandfathered in unless they were legal operation prior to the moratorium.
- Easier to monitor in commercial area.
- Concern about the argument to allow in residential areas.
- Board ultimate decision maker.
- If in residential you don't know where it is. If in a business district- taxable and can be monitored. Zoning does not look at revenue.
- What exactly is the law to enforce caregivers that are not following the limits addressed in the law. Police would enforce what they feel appropriate.
- More citizen input will be allowed at the Board level.
- John Kennedy - 4787 Barton Rd: clear that residents feel much of the ordinance is unenforceable. Concern about public cost.
- Bonnie Clark: clients are currently coming to the Township for medical marijuana
- Chair Fielek asked for a show of hands between the options. To allow for caregivers in residential districts: no support. To allow caregivers in non-residential districts with a SUP: approximately 16 hands were raised.

Deliberation:

Discussion on draft ordinance:

Reference to the written correspondence.

Requires 75% of state legislature to pass an amendment to the law.
Both options would have regulations/permit procedures and restrictions.
Two clear paths.
Should commission consider recommending both options to the Board for consideration.

Commisisoner Schultink moved to recommend to the board the revisions to limit primary caregivers to the B-1, B-2 and I-1 districts with a special use permit.

Seconded by Commissioner Cook.

Motion Carried.

GRGreenZone

Chair Fielek reviewed the public forum and positive feedback of the ordinance.

Secretary Eidt moved to call for a Public Hearing on the GRGreen Zone ordinance amendment at the September meeting.

Second by Commissioner Giese.

Motion carried.

Master Plan Review

Reviewed the list of items to consider in the review of the Master Plan.

Consider adding additional data:

- building permit and growth activity in the township.
- gender data
- underground pipelines and utility lines
- Special area of important soils- what considerations are used for determining prime farmlands.
- Definition for prime and unique farmlands.

Revise the review list with above additions and send recommendation to the Board. Consultant will provide estimate of cost for the review. Chair Fielek will address the Board with the proposed review.

Planning and Board Reports and Review

Township Board

- Adoption of the revised Burn Ordinance
- Board is considering changing meeting date to second Tuesday to give staff more time to get items ready and to avoid holidays. July meeting moved to 12th.
- Freedom net is doing upgrades due to problems
- Looking at Meridian police to do some code enforcement. Well under budget.
- Safe routes to school grant received by the school.
- Grounds people have uniforms.

Planning Staff

- In discussion with Meridian for a joint meeting.

- ZBA hearings: accessory buildings in front yard and square footage of a principal residence under the minimum allowed.

Review

- Deliberation regarding Medical Marijuana with a recommendation to the Board.
- Public Hearing on the Grand River Green Zone in September.
- Recommended review items for the Master Plan.

Public Comment

Larry Harb - Okemos: suggested expansion of technology uses into OS-1.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Giese to adjourn the meeting.
Meeting adjourned at 9:20.

Wanda Bloomquist
Recording Secretary

Gerald A. Eidt, Secretary