

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
February 19, 2013
Minutes**

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. Vice Chair Dali Giese called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

PRESENT: Vice Chair Dali Giese, Secretary Eidt, Commissioners Rick DeShon and Annette Davis, Joscelyn Brown-Timm and Trustee Williams.

ABSENT: Chair Rex LaMore and Ger Schultink

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

MINUTES APPROVAL

Commissioner DeShon moved to approve the minutes of January 15, 2013

Seconded by Secretary Eidt.

Motion Carries

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Woodhull Township Master Plan Review

Woodhull Township has completed the draft of their Master Plan. Sub-committee consisting of Joscelyn Brown-Timm, Annette Davis, and Dali Giese has been formed to review the plan and offer comments. Planning Assistant Bloomquist will send them the information and determine a meeting date for review.

2013-14 Meeting Dates

Meeting dates for the 2013-14 fiscal year were reviewed and will be posted.

Zimmer Rd. Bridge Design

Chair LaMore has expressed his concern over the design of the bridge to the Board and the Ingham County Department of Roads and Transportation. Supervisor Martin asked the Planning Commission to weigh in on the design. Ingham County is willing to work with the design if the Township wants to make a change. The current design is a typical modern design. Due to the rural character of the Township, the possibility of a future trail and more pedestrian use of the bridge were considerations that should be addressed as the likelihood of another opportunity to have input into the character of the bridge would not occur. Trustee Williams provided material that was submitted to the Board from the ICDRT regarding several options and cost to aid in discussion.

Discussion included:

- Need for Township funds for future road maintenance should take priority as funding of maintenance and improvements to the Township roads will be an expensive proposition and the state has not dealt with funding needs to date.

- Trustee Williams had spoken to some residents and they echoed the need to spend the money on the roads.
- Any excess cost to improve the aesthetics of the bridge would be born by the Township. The cost of dying the concrete was a reasonable initial investment, however to maintain the color would require expenditure in the future that seemed excessive.
- Due to the speed of traffic, the design would not have as much impact as it has in the city.
- Other options presented would cost the Township an additional \$20,000-\$50,000.
- This would be the only opportunity to create an appealing landmark within the Township.
- Grants are not available to be used in the future for upgrading the aesthetics.
- The opportunity for a river trail is not in the immediate future.

It was the consensus of the Planning Commissioners to recommend leaving the design element of the bridge as presented from the ICDRT. Trustee Williams will report to the Board on behalf of the Planning Commission.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Master Plan Review

Revisions of the Grand River Corridor Chapter, Community Survey, and Transportation Analysis were included in the packets. Chris reviewed the revisions.

Grand River Corridor

Revisions were made to include more information regarding the Green Zone and environmental conditions such as the wetlands, topography, and agricultural uses. The benefit of the Township to mold development along Grand River to retain the rural character and vision of the Township.

Discussion:

- Commercial in the Green Zone is part of Mixed Use

Community Survey

Incorporated a balanced approach to the survey.

Discussion:

- Appreciation of the revisions and the balance of presenting data, not conclusions.
- Concern over the way the survey was done. This was not a random survey.
- Sample is of residents with a vested interest
- Previous survey was not included in the last master plan update
- Chapter states that the survey was not representative of the Township
- Options: to leave the chapter as is; Embellish the deficiencies of the survey; leave out of the master plan
- The PC listens to the input of the residents who show up at the meetings.
- The PC is an advisory commission.

Consensus of the Planning Commission to leave this chapter out of the Master Plan Update.

Transportation Analysis

Updates were made to the classifications of the roads.

Discussion: none

Future Land Use

Chris Doozan began his review by explaining this is a culmination of the previous chapters and projects based on history. This chapter addresses roads, soils, surrounding communities, natural borders of land uses, etc. Environmental concerns are addressed and protection of ground water is highlighted. The concept of the map is explained, the importance of ag preservation is addressed and the legend of the Future Land Use Map is detailed.

Discussion included:

- Detail of the urban service boundary and city boundaries on the map.

- Location of Multiple family and industry.
- Border of the Green Zone

Chris will present “Implementation”, the final chapter for review next month.

Tri County Master Plan Recommendations

Due to scheduling conflicts, recommendations will be presented at the next meeting.

Health Impact Assessment

The Planning Commission had an opportunity to review Meridian Township’s HIA.

Discussion Included:

- What would be the result of using this form
- What is the Township prepared to do with the information
- Could these questions still be asked of an applicant
- Would save the applicant time in answering questions from the commission at the PH
- This would be an official document and part of the application
- Is there enough development to support the need for the HIA
- Start with a guidance document that would be available to developers. This would give them insight as to what types of concerns the Township would address.

Staff will work on drafting a guidance document.

Planning and Board Reports and Review

Township Board

Trustee Williams informed the commission of the upcoming Public Hearing for the 2013-14 budget. Discussed the non-conformance zoning issues that are being referred to the Township Attorney. They include: farm animals in a R-1 district; an illegal apartment in Commercial District; illegal private kennel. Informed the commission of the dissolution of the Communications Committee. Land values are up across the region.

Planning Staff

Reminded Commissioners of the educational opportunities this month. Informed the Commissioners of the upcoming bus tour being hosted by the Urban Services Management Committee to highlight the benefits of ag preservation, ag business and the impact it has on the region.

Planning Commission Chair

none.

Review

Will review a draft guidance document at the next meeting. Reviewed additional elements of the Master Plan and will review the Implementation Chapter at the next meeting. Community Survey Chapter will be left out. Trustee Williams will inform the Board of the feedback from the PC regarding the Zimmer Rd. bridge. Review committee consisting of Commissioners Davis, Brown-Timm and Vice Chair Giese will meet to review the Woodhull Draft Master Plan.

**Commissioner Davis moved to adjourn.
Seconded by Commissioner Brown-Timm
Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.**

**Wanda Bloomquist
Recording Secretary**

Secretary Eidt