

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
January 15, 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. Chair Rex LaMore called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

PRESENT: Chair Rex LaMore, Vice Chair Dali Giese, Commissioners Rick DeShon and Annette Davis, and Trustee Williams.

ABSENT: Secretary Eidt, Commissioners Joscelyn Brown-Timm 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 November 20, 2012

Seconded by Commissioner Davis.

Motion Carries

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Chair LaMore welcomed Trustee Williams to the Planning Commission. Trustee Williams expressed his pleasure at serving with the Planning Commission and admiration for the wealth of knowledge present on the Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

Health Impact Assessment

The use of a Health Impact Assessments (HIA) was addressed in the Nov/Dec 2012 edition of Michigan Planner where Meridian Township's HIA was featured. Consensus of the Commissioners that this would be a good tool as part of the pre-application process for development. Commissioners will review Meridian's HIA and send recommendations to Wanda for developing a version for the Township. Wanda will send the MAP article to commissioners for review.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Master Plan Review

Consultant Chris Doozan informed the Commission of the three items for review; the Transportation Analysis, Community Survey and Future Land Use Map.

Transportation Analysis

Chris began with an overview of how the function of the roads has changed with Complete streets from just vehicular traffic but for other means of transportation. Discussion of rights-of- ways for location of utilities. The road system gives basic form of the Township and contributes to safety for

the residents. The traffic count numbers on the map were obtained from Ingham County and MDOT. Table 24 addresses traffic volume changes. Most roads saw a decline. Explanation of the information on the chart was given.

Road classification is important for planning purposes as well as road funding. Road classifications and locations were discussed. County classifies roads as either primary or local. Funds are distributed by these two classifications. Took projections from Tri County and used an average family size and daily trips per household to generate average trip. There were 3 segments of roads that could meet road capacity.

Discussion regarding the need for enough funds to maintain roads: Under current funding, there is not enough funds to maintain all the township roads. How will this impact the traffic on major arterial roads? This should be noted in the report within the recommendations. Cost and funding of roads on a 5 year maintenance plan will require the need for a millage and/or roads going back to gravel. At this time the Township can only contract with the County for road repairs/maintenance.

Table 25 addressed Intersection Accident analysis. Number of accidents and accident rate provided interesting insight. Suggested adding Complete Streets information in the non-motorized section. Review of the recommendations addressed projections of transportation deficiencies, and the philosophy of the Township as well as possible solutions.

Discussion:

- Additional routes for access to the city over the river.
- Contingency of funds for maintaining roads.
- Add upgrading and maintaining when feasible.
- Accommodate non-motorized traffic.
- Other recommendations:
- Overview: ag uses on roads.- provide language to retain ag uses in northern tier.
- Traffic volume decreasing.
- Consider city in usage.
- An analysis has never been done considering the build out of the Township.
- Cost of gas could be a reason for the decrease.
- Access control along M-43.
- Encouragement of alternative methods of transportation and vision of green zone.
- Awareness to township needs.
- Addressing the needs of agriculture use on our roads in the Overview Section.
- Importance of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance working together.

Community Survey

Chris recommended a chapter on the new community survey providing an analysis of the results. Preservation of natural resources and agricultural lands are important to the township residents as well as alternative agricultural uses. Support of a millage for preservation of these lands has decreased. The county ag millage may have had an impact on the millage issue. Residents don't feel more subdivisions are needed and location of further development near the city was best. Residents showed strong support for limitation and registration of rentals. Commercial should be along the GR corridor near GR and Zimmer, and close to city center. Unsure of the reason for low support of Mixed Use.

Discussion:

- Should generalize questions and not make them site specific.
- Change of language could become more pro-active to encourage development.
- Pitch certain areas for development.
- Commercial needs and specifics of the survey.
- The Green Zone and creative use for future development.
- Strong support for non-motorized transportation options.
- Understanding of speed limits and studies of traffic patterns.
- Terms of millage- not enough support.

- Should consider a more comprehensive survey if looking at the use of a millage for improvements.

Chris will look at the language used to provide a more positive outlook to some of the responses.

Future Land Use Map

Chris reviewed the map and will be adding the Green Zone. Noted that the golf course should be noted as public space. Staff will be providing an updated map to incorporate boundary changes, splits, etc.

Tri County Master Plan Recommendations

Wanda provided background information as to the Urban Services Management Study and the goal of the committee to garner consistent language and policies across jurisdictions to create a sustainable region.

The commissioners asked for more time to review the material for discussion at the next meeting.

Planning staff will review the information for appropriate placement within the Master Plan, policy or zoning ordinance.

Wheatfield Master Plan Review Committee

The commissioners reviewed the letter to be submitted to Wheatfield Township based on the comments from the committee.

Commissioner DeShon moved the Planning Commission submit the letter to Wheatfield Township.

Seconded by Commissioner Giese.

Motion Carries

Planning and Board Reports and Review

Township Board

none

Planning Staff

Tri County will be hosting a charrette pertaining to the Transportation Grand River Corridor Study as part of the Grant received. The charrette will be held between April 30 and May 7th. Asked commissioners to participate.

The Cardinal Fabricating site sold and anticipating an application for Site Plan and Special Use.

Will provide the commissioners with educational opportunities that can be taken advantage of.

Planning Commission Chair

The Board approved the Earthcom Site Plan and Special Use with modifications.

Vice Chair Giese will chair the February meeting.

Review

Will take up the HIA at next meeting

Reviewed additional elements of the Master Plan

Commissioners to review the recommended language of Tri County for the next meeting.

Letter to Wheatfield will be sent.

Commissioner DeShon moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Commissioner Giese.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Wanda Bloomquist, Recording Secretary

Vice Chair Giese