

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
January 17, 2012
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. Chairman Michael Fielek called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

PRESENT: Chairman Mike Fielek, Vice Chair LaMore, Secretary Eidt, Trustee Wright, Commissioners Dali Giese, Rod Imhoff, Ron Cook, Joscelyn Brown-Timm, and Ger Schultink

ABSENT: none

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

MINUTES APPROVAL

Commissioner Schultink moved to approve the minutes of November 15, 2011, with the addition of two no votes being added to the minutes on the vote of the Green Zone.

Seconded by commissioner Eidt

Motion Carries

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

New Business

Rental regulations (discussion)

Chair Fielek explained that this was an item discussed at the January Board meeting and the board requested the Planning Commission review this issue in response to concerns and questions from residents.

Mr. Hindi, 1825 Mapleshade: Addressed the PC regarding the issue of rentals and vacant homes in his neighborhood. Mr. Hindi submitted the names of 5 other residents that were also in favor of the Township addressing their concerns. Concern over declining market values. Was told this was a single family residential neighborhood. Believed it could not be rental.

Steve Zaban, 1873 Mapleshade: In support of Mr. Hindi's issues. Suggest looking at how other communities handle rentals.

Discussion:

- Concern regarding condition of rentals and upkeep.
- Maintenance is not a concern yet as this is a new issue.
- 3 rentals in Maple Shade 2 foreclosures.
- 1930 Beeman Rd. required a petition of the neighborhood to get action taken by the Township.
- Drains are not kept clean due to leaf clean up. ICDC is doing a study on the drain.
- Is there a homeowners association in Maple Shade- no.
- Blight Ordinance should deal with upkeep.
- To what extent does the Township want to control renting of homes.
- Zoning deals with land use. Does not look at ownership.

- Regulating rentals would be a separate ordinance- not a zoning ordinance.
- Rental regulations would deal with maintenance issues, licensing, etc.
- Township would have to take over maintenance if neglected- most work in this fashion.
- Is this economically driven by foreclosures, unable to sell, etc. or is this an issue of more homes becoming rentals.
- Look at Blight ordinance and see if it is explicit enough to enforce to protect property values.
- Are some of these issues being addressed by the police department.
- Nothing has been done at the board level to ask the police to take this issue up.
- The township can direct what department would deal with maintenance conditions.
- Falls in the same as abandoned cars, etc.
- Zoning Ordinance does address the definition of a family.
- The Board is looking for suggestions from the PC.
- Suggest the Blight Ordinance needs to be re-evaluated and enforced.
- Concern with degradation of property values due to lack of enforcement of Blight Ordinance. Suggest the board look at the blight ordinance.
- Symptoms need to be dealt with.
- Reasonable for residents to ask for enforcement.
- Cost involved in looking for violations as well as enforcement.
- Do have a full time police department to help handle the load.
- Not sure if we want to use the police department to enforce.
- Not sure if rental licensing is going to take care of maintenance issues.
- Would like to take a look at a couple of other community ordinances.
- We are an unchartered township and the level of service is different. Should the Township consider becoming a charter to be able to give the level of service that residents are requesting?
- Samples of an unchartered township regulating licensing of rental units.
- The zoning ordinance can not dictate ownership only land use.
- Look at a non-profit that would purchase homes, renovate and take on rental.
- Blight ordinance should be enforced.
- Have asked McKenna to look for unchartered township rental ordinances.

2012-13 Meeting Dates

Meeting Dates are third Tuesdays. Suggestion of changing meeting times to 7:00. 7:00 would be difficult for some commissioners, will keep meeting times at 7:30.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Community Survey

Discussion:

Change 3c and 3f into statements.

4.a If you agree, instead of yes

9. Do you currently use CATA ? will leave as written

19. revise direction to the website...

Box on back...using instead of "anytime".. the township offices are open...

14. Easements...

Suggest asking about rentals and millage to pay for easements.

Suggest asking for definition of rural.

13. ask if they agree that we should go for a trail.

Suggest asking about blight ordinance? Rental registration?

Rod volunteered to help compile results

Deliberation

Auction Regulations

Chris Doozan explained that one change was made adding general purpose auction, subject to SUP in B2 and I-2. Farm equipment and car auctions are appropriate in B-2.

Commissioner Imhoff moved the PC recommended the board approve the regulations to auctions. Second by Commissioner Giese.

Discussion: none

Motion Carries

Zoning Amendments: Art 8 through Art. 22

Chair Fielek explained the reason this was back before the Commission to address. This gives the Planning Commission an opportunity to review landing site amendments in Section 8.02B.

Discussion:

B(2)c. change "seeding" to "crop use".

Revision date should be changed.

D....may be permitted per day. Change "may" to "are".

Commissioner Imhoff moved to recommend the Board approve revisions to Article 8 through Article 22.

Second by Commissioner Brown-Timm

Motion Carries

Master Plan Review

Vision, Goals, Policies

Chris Doozan incorporated the comments of the last meeting regarding energy conservation.

Discussion:

8 on page 1.2. with regard to extending services w/o being paid for.

Discussion turned to maintenance of roads and how this is going to be paid for.

Township has a road committee that has been looking at this for the past year.

Suggestion to remove paragraph pertaining to Natural beauty roads from Master Plan. This is a statewide program. The road has to meet certain criteria. Will add: content sensitive language.

Population Analysis

Chris reviewed the population analysis section. Change in population has been relatively small.

Growth has slowed considerably. Page 2.2 compares to surrounding area. Household size has been dropping but is still larger than surrounding areas. The Township is considered rural or semi-rural. Steady increase in median age. Not much out migration. Residents are well educated.

Medium income for the Township is much higher than surrounding communities (This information is from the American community survey). Reviewed the determining factors of population growth. Will update physical parameters when updating the land use plan. Other factors affected such as land use, regulations, services, wetlands, etc.

Regional growth will have an impact on Township growth. Change in preferences will have an effect. Population projections from Tri-county are prepared as part of the transportation projects.

Please review prior to the next meeting.

Ordinance Review: Article 25 through Article 29

This has been tabled until the next meeting due to time constraints.

Planning and Board Reports and Review

Township Board

- Completed 1st year with police. Board feels it went exceptionally well and dept felt went well. 90,000 overage only 13,000 was used. Police_Assessments went down. Should go down again this next year. Feel getting better coverage than would have otherwise. Response times are very good. Active neighborhood watches in the township.
- Concern how county commissioners are going to deal with out county roads in the future.

Planning Staff

- Verbal invitation for a joint meeting with city of Williamston sometime in March or April.
- Shannon resubmitted drawings for lot splits. In review with McKenna Associates.

Planning Commission Chair- Review

Auction regulations and amendments to Art. 8 through Art. 24 moved to the Board for approval.

Survey changes will go to PC before submittal.

Dates will be posted.

Chris will bring sample licensing ordinances for unchartered townships.

Tabled review of Art. 25 through Art. 29 until February meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

**Commissioner Cook moved to adjourn at 9:45
Supported by Commissioner Brown-Timm**

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm

**Wanda Bloomquist
Recording Secretary**

Secretary Gerald Eidt