

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
February 21, 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 January 17, 2011, with the addition of Trustee Wright being present.**

**Seconded by commissioner Eidt**

**Motion Carries**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**2012-13 Meeting Dates Resolution**

**Commissioner Schultink moved to adopt the resolution of meeting dates with the change of the May meeting to May 22, 2012 and possible workshop to May 29, 2012.**

**Second by Secretary Eidt.**

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

**Nays: none**

**Motion carried**

Chair Fielek recommended a change of order in the Agenda of moving the discussion of rental regulations ahead of the Ordinance review. Consensus of the Commissioners to the change.

## Rental Regulations

Chris reviewed the ordinance summary that was provided to the commissioners.

- Delhi Township-has adopted the Property Maintenance Code. Sec 3-90 deals with registration and inspection of rental property.
- In all cases some sort of inspection is required every 1-3 years.
- City of Wixom-adopted a stand-alone ordinance. Requires a license for all rentals. Inspection every 3 years. Has a very thorough process for suspension and revocation.
- Southfield- Regulations are tied to the city housing code. Requires an inspection every two years. Deficient in license suspension.
- City of Orchard Lake Village- Feels this is the best one to base a Township Ordinance on. Requires a registration. Inspection is required for certification and needed every 2 years. Must register a local agent if owner is out of the area. Thorough violation and appeals process.
- Birmingham- Ordinance addresses maximum occupancy and parking and is tied to the Property Maintenance Code. Has a Housing Board of Appeals.
- Ypsilanti-Similar to Orchard Lake with the requirement of registration and a certificate of compliance. 2 year renewal. Contains an extensive definition of a "dangerous building".
- City of East Lansing- Extremely thorough ordinance. Contains extensive standards for driveways, maintenance standards, etc. Well thought out process system for inspection and licensing.

Mr. Doozan would recommend the simplest ordinance with registration and certification.

Discussion included:

- Grace period for properties in transition allowing for short term rental while a property is for sale/etc. This could be built into the ordinance.
- Enforcement issues.
- The need for an enforcement officer.
- Perception of uses. Is the Blight Ordinance strong enough? This would be better placed in a rental ordinance.
- Associations sometimes cover lawn maintenance. Would be difficult to apply over the whole township due to rural nature.
- Familiar status: East Lansing deals with this however the others did not.
- None of the examples were from unchartered townships.
- Commissioner Giese reviewed area ordinances of Perry, Leslie and Mason areas. None of these municipalities deal with rentals.
- Would really like to see properties occupied than vacant. Foreclosures seem to be more of an issue than the rentals.
- Rental rehabilitation affects the economic health of the community.
- Non-homestead is enough of a tax.
- Rentals give some economic viability to the diversity of the community.
- Not about rental but condition.
- Blight ordinance may not be enough to address the condition.
- Challenge may be to strengthen the blight ordinance and use this as a tool.
- Could be used for homeowners as well as rentals.
- Do we have a system for complaints to be handled from tenants?
- All municipalities reviewed are much more urban.
- Rental could dovetail the Blight Ordinance.
- Property maintenance can be dealt with in the rental ordinance or revise the Blight Ordinance.
- Township is not enforcing the Blight Ordinance should consider hiring a code enforcer to look for violations and not require complaints.
- Citizen complaint and petition was needed to begin process for rehabilitation of Beeman Rd.

home.

- Code enforcement officer may be needed in the township.
- Is this something the Township could request of the police department?
- Code enforcement officer could give tickets.
- Health safety and welfare is the responsibility of the Township
- Recommend to the board to look at the blight ordinance.
- Consensus of the commission is to not recommend registration of rentals.
- Definition of residential housing: Single family dwellings.
- Rentals are a business and industry.
- Registration would only show the township where the rentals are.
- Cannot restrict renting.
- Consensus of the commission to recommend the board looks more closely at the Blight ordinance before looking at the rental licensing. Would like a resolution from the commission to the board at the next meeting.
- Consider a contract with Meridian Code enforcement.
- Rental property is a business: use business ordinance. Delhi 3.9
- It's no good to have an ordinance that is not being enforced.
- Could cost of code enforcement be passed on to the property owner?
- Ticketing and fines would help.
- Compliance is the main impetus.
- Resolution would show intent to clarify what the PC would like to see addressed by the board.
- Brian Bird 167 Germany Rd.: Understood that the police assessment could possibly cover code enforcement. This should be looked into to see if this could be done. Could be part of the contract.
- Add hours to existing personal to do code enforcement.
- Code enforcer would be complainant.
- Citizen requirement to sign complaint should be changed. The Township should be proactive in enforcement.
- Blight ordinance was last revised in 9/93.

Resolution will be brought back for consideration by the commission at the next meeting.

### **Ordinance Review: Article 25 through Article 29**

Art 8-18 were approved by the Board with auction regulations at the February meeting.

Mr. Doozan made the following recommended revisions:

- Section 2.24 Wetlands: conflicts with wetlands ordinance. Need a cross reference to the wetland ordinance.

#### Article 25

- 25.01: change "Master land plan" to "master plan"
- 25.03 b 1: change to future land use map.
- Planned development does not mean high density.
- 25.03 D: remove the word "reserve"
- 25.03 E 4: Discussion regarding non-residential buildings. Is 100 ft. appropriate? Agreed to remove 100 ft.
- 25.03 H: Add: 8 to address landscaping design. Allowances may be allowed that enhance the natural features
- 25.03 I 4: Walking trails can be added.
- 25.03 N: where non-residential adjoins residential
- 25.03 J: question why all roads need to be paved. PD is another level of development. No change

- 25.05 F: remove future land use.
- 25.06 A: remove the word “further” in second paragraph

Article 25A:

- 25.06A: Conflict between paragraph 1 and 2 to be addressed
- 25.02A f: cross the d off the word required.

Art 25.00B Mixed use

- 25.04B: Special uses move outdoor cafes and eating areas to principle permitted use
- 25.05B A: main entrances shall be oriented to Grand River
- 25.05B B: add definition of butt joint. Foundation material: change to 2 ft. above grade from 3 ft.
- 25.05B E. lighting: add to middle of first paragraph: unshielded on wall
- 25.05B G: planting is in ROW.
- 25.05B J: recommend adding a sentence that display cases shall not extend further into the sidewalk.

Article 26.

- Footnote (d) add driveways.
- Discussion of setbacks and minimum square footage requirements.
- Footnote Q and FF deal with Ag uses conflict between the two. Suggest removing Q. Setback should be associated with height. Height is not as critical. Agree to height and setback being equal.

Will begin review of Article 27- Article 29 at the next meeting.

**Planning and Board Reports and Review**

Township Board

March meeting moved to the 7th. Board called for a Public Hearing on budget and police assessment for the March meeting.

Planning Staff

Park Committee is working on improvements for the park.  
Surveys are going out in the assessment notices next week.

Review

Approved meeting dates.  
Ordinance review will continue next month with Article 27.  
Will bring a resolution back to the next meeting regarding rental regulations.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Giese moved to adjourn at 9:45**  
**Supported by Commissioner Imhoff**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm**

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**Wanda Bloomquist**  
**Recording Secretary**

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**Secretary Gerald Eidt**