

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
October 16, 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, Secretary Gerald Eidt, Trustee Martin Wright, Commissioners Dali Giese, Rod Imhoff, Ron Cook, Joscelyn Brown-Timm, Ger Schultink and Vice Chair Rex LaMore.

ABSENT: none

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

MINUTES APPROVAL

Commissioner Imhoff moved to approve the minutes of August 21, 2012 with the following amendments: Correction of Commissioner Schultink to close the PH. Page 4 under Master Plan review change equipment to space. Page 2: c in capital should be capitalized.

Seconded by Commissioner Cook.

Motion Carries

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. David Pierson, 1305 S. Washington Ave.

On behalf of his client and the applicant: Dr. Gregory Shannon.

Mr. Pierson submitted a letter at the request of Dr. Shannon to the Planning Commission along with a survey for the Haslett Rd. property showing the shared drive option. Mr. Pierson then addressed the Commission noting that on Shoemith Rd. 6 lots are proposed, 5 for residential and 1 for commercial agriculture. Haslett Rd. proposal is for 9 lots, 8 for residential and 1 for commercial agriculture. The waiver from the PC is required for the shared drive without the required frontage. Feels the ZBA was wrong in asking the Planning Commission to look at anything other than the waiver for the required frontage on a shared drive and stated his objection to the Zoning Board of Appeals sending this to the Planning Commission for review since he felt the commission reviewed this earlier. On behalf of his client, he asked that the Planning Commission grant the waiver even though the configuration may not be what anyone else or the Planning Commission would do as the Ordinance does allow for the setback with a buffer and would preserve the look of Haslett Rd. Applicant feels this is best arrangement for the property. Wetlands are approximate as they have not been delineated. Along with agricultural uses there are subdivisions west of the property and similar parcels in the immediate area. Waiver of the required frontage should be allowed. Screening could be used between the parcels to address the front facing the back of adjoining parcels. Urges action this evening so that this matter can go back to the ZBA.

A member of the Planning Commission asked: How is the applicant gaining access to the area for farming due to amount and size of wetlands? Mr. Pierson replied that the applicant understands that under statute, farm roads are allowed in wetlands and does not feel this would be a hindrance to the use of the agricultural portion of the parcel.

With agreement from the Commissioners, Chair Fielek moved the Shannon Review before New Business.

Mr. Doozan of McKenna Associates reviewed his letter dated October 9, 2012 concerning the proposed splits for the Haslett Rd. parcel and waiver for the required frontage. It was noted that the Planning Commission previously denied the waiver for the required frontage with the only difference being the drive configuration. The applicant would not need the Planning Commission approval for the shared drive if the proposal had the required road frontage. Explained the calculation of the maximum number of lots and that the 9 parcels comply with the option requested by the applicant in the Zoning Ordinance as outlined in 18.02(E)1. Because of the amount of wetlands, the applicant needs to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the assessor that the resulting parcels have sufficient useable area according to the zoning ordinance. The applicant has not demonstrated this on parcels one and two. Mr. Doozan identified deficiencies in the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions regarding planting of the buffer and an inefficient maintenance program for the shared drives. The use of the remainder parcel should not be restricted to commercial Ag only but also allow for protected open space. The layout of the parcels with front of parcels facing the back of parcels is also considered poor planning. The proposal submitted does not take into consideration the criteria listed in the zoning ordinance. There are several other options for the applicant to use other than the shared drives without the road frontage.

PC Discussion:

- The previous split of the farmhouse from the parcel does not affect the current proposal.
- The applicant could submit a design for the required frontage for a shared drive however not for the number of splits proposed.

Commissioner Schultink moved to deny the requested waiver for the required frontage for the shared drive due to the deficiencies outlined in the McKenna Associates review letter submitted on October 9, 2012.

Seconded by Vice Chair LaMore.

Discussion:

Applicant has not met the intent of the shared drive to provide for the development of the parcel for benefits of the public and does not meet the spirit of the ordinance. Vice Chair LaMore noted that the applicant had no sense of the Zoning Ordinance, and that the proposal provides no clear public benefit. He said that the proposal lacks any awareness of the community's vision and goals.

Motion Approved.

Would have to ask for waiver in order to get 5 lots due to lack of usable frontage.

Commissioner Schultink moved the Planning Commission recommend to the ZBA a denial of the proposed boundary change for the Haslett Rd. parcel as the design does not reflect the intent of the zoning ordinance as addressed in the review letter from McKenna Associates dated October 9th, 2012.

Seconded by Commissioner Imhoff.

PC Discussion:

- Do not need to address the administrative ability of the ZBA to send to the PC for review.
- This proposal varied little from the last.
- The applicant did not take into consideration the recommendations of the PC from the previous request.
- Observed that the applicant did not address concerns for preservation of wetlands, rural character or the Township vision as addressed in the Master Plan.

Motion Approved.

Shoesmith Rd.

Chris Doozan of McKenna Associates reviewed his letter regarding the application for boundary change by Dr. Shannon on the 50.1 acre site. The application is for 6 lots, 5 for residential buildings and one for commercial agriculture. This is only one of several options for the applicant to use. This option allows the applicant a maximum of five lots and is in conflict with 18.02(E)1 of the Zoning Ordinance. The second page of the letter addresses the confusion of applicant regarding the number of lot splits. Buffer requirement leaves concern of enough information and potential for controversy. Access to parcel C appears compromised due to wetlands however an affidavit can be provided addressing this issue. As with the Haslett Rd. proposal, the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions do not address planting of the buffer and is too restrictive regarding the use of commercial Ag and should allow for open space.

Vice Chair LaMore moved the Planning Commission recommend to the ZBA denial of the proposed splits on Shoeman Rd. due to the deficiencies identified in McKenna Associates letter dated October 9, 2012.

Seconded by Commissioner Imhoff.

Discussion: none

Motion approved.

The Planning Commission discussed the definition of parcel and lot. Mr. Doozan noted that the definitions are different in the Land Division Ordinance and the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission discussed Dr. Shannon’s options if his proposal is turned down. Dr. Shannon can submit new applications under the revised zoning ordinance.

Discussion and explanation of the FOIA request to the Commissioners followed.

Election of Officers

Vice Chair LaMore reviewed the charge of the subcommittee. Due to the large change in the Commission this year it was determined that the by-laws could be suspended for a month to accommodate the changes.

Vice Chair LaMore moved that the Commission agree to a modification as outlined in the by-laws 10.1 to delay the election for one month until there is a complete body of the PC to elect a slate of officers in November due to the election.

Seconded by Commissioner Brown-Timm.

Discussion:

Vice Chair LaMore will run the meeting in November.

Supervisor recommends replacement of member to the PC with Board approval.

A minimum of 5 members are needed on the PC according to statute.

Motion approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Master Plan Review

Grand River Corridor Analysis

Chris Doozan reviewed the recommended revisions to this chapter of the Master Plan. Note the decrease in traffic along the Grand River Corridor. Source of existing land uses based on total acres abutting the road. The Township has the opportunity to shape development in township and keep development in the city. Reviewed the highlights of the Market Analysis. The Township needs to look at meeting the needs of other population segments with a mix of housing types. The Green Zone has the flexibility to accomplish this. Section 6.6 deals with public opinion based on the latest survey. 6.8 addresses view sheds, the relationship with planning and the use of native plants, etc.

The Opportunity Assessment addresses open space preservation and open space development as an alternative to conventional development.

Environmental Design addresses LEED-ND standards. The need for pathways and off road pathways is emphasized. New development along the Red Cedar River should also be included. The chapter concludes with the Grand River Avenue design and references the Green Zone. Summarizes uses permitted in the Green Zone and potential result.

Discussion:

- Question of the use of semi-public on the use map.
- Consistency between Table 1 and the map on page 6.4.
- Ranking of Table 1.
- Pipeline will be shown on existing land use map.
- Utility capacity to Grand River Corridor properties.
- One of the 425's with the City has expired.
- Add information regarding the Zimmer and Grand River improvements.
- Would like to address public transit more.
- Consideration of a tree preservation ordinance
- Tri-County Planning will be providing language addressing the Urban Service Management Studies and placement of language in the Master Plan. Will also look at language addressing the guidelines for changing the Service Boundary.

Review will continue next month.

Planning and Board Reports and Review

Township Board

The Audit is complete and everything looks good.

Planning Staff

Thank you again to Ron Cook for his years of service.

Tri-County activity was discussed regarding the transportation charettes that will be done and the grant obtained by Tri-county.

Planning Assistant will forward links to issues being addressed by Tri-County.

Congratulations to Vice Chair LaMore for being elected to the MAP Board of Directors.

May have 2 SUP/Site Plans before the Commission next month for I-1 property on Corwin Rd.

Planning Commission Chair

Chair Fielek thanked the Commission for allowing him to serve. He will be elected to the Treasurer's position in November.

Review

The recommendations of the Planning Commission will be brought forward to the ZBA for consideration.

The election will be held in November with the approval by the Planning Commission regarding the by-laws.

Commissioner Giese moved to adjourn.

Supported by Commissioner Brown-Timm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Wanda Bloomquist
Recording Secretary

Secretary Gerald Eidt