

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

LiveMinutes of Regular Meeting October 21, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marlene Chockley at 7:08 P.M. at 8350 Main Street.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL **AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Roll call:	
Janet Chick	Present
Marlene Chockley	Present
Brad Cousino	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Larry Roman	Present
Mark Stanalajczo	Present

Also present:
Township Manager Howard Fink
Mary Bird, Assessing & Building Assistant
Planning Consultant Leah DuMouchel,
Beckett & Raeder
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented.
Motion carried 7-0 on a voice vote.

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Craig Warburton, 450 W. Joy Road, apologized for causing any offense with his comments at the last meeting, commented on some Commissioner responses to the presentation by Kris Olsson at that meeting, and commented on the proposed motion regarding Biltmore.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Chockley referred to one communication received from a citizen.

7. REPORTS

7A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported that the Board approved spending up to \$60,000 to build a meeting room in the second floor of the Public Safety Building and created a downtown planning group.

7B. ZBA

Did not meet.

7C. Staff Report

Nothing to report.

7D. Planning Consultant

DuMouchel reported she held a pre-application meeting with a business interested in building on Jomar Drive.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9A. Biltmore Land, LLC; Discussion/Proposed Motion.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that the Northfield Township Planning Commission advises Biltmore LLC that it would welcome a formal proposal for development that utilizes the many tools within our zoning ordinances available for Agricultural (AR) zoned properties previously identified. These tools include, but are not limited to, cluster development, open space preservation, and density bonuses. The proposal shall recognize the desire for growth that is envisioned within the Northfield Township Master Plan and must comply with all current zoning.

Comments from Commissioners included:

- It is the role of Township administration or consultants, not the Commission, to solicit proposals for development.
- The entire Commission previously agreed that a full review of the Master Plan should be done, rather than a review of one area for any developer, and the motion is not a solicitation, rather it is an answer to Biltmore's question about what the Township would like to see built on the property they are interested in.
- The motion will let Biltmore know the Township is interested in their proposal if they have one.
- The motion does not address Biltmore's desire for MDR density.
- The message in the motion—we have ordinances and standards that must be complied with—is appropriate to send to any developer.
- Mr. Stollman is aware of what is possible under the ordinance, but wants rezoning to allow more density.
- The process regarding this land has gone on too long, and it is time to be clear.
- A motion like this should have been made after Biltmore submitted their request for a Master Plan amendment, but doing it now is also appropriate.

- **Motion #2: Iaquinto called the question.**
Motion carried 7-0 on a voice vote.

Original motion carried 5-2, Roman and Chockley opposed.

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. MINUTES

October 7, 2015, Regular Meeting There was discussion about the level of detail that should be included in minutes. Three corrections were made.

**Northfield Township Planning Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting Public Safety Building
8350 Main Street
October 21, 2015**

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that the minutes of the October 7, 2015, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. Motion carried 7-0 on a voice vote.

12. POLICY REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

A. Citizen Survey: Progress update from Planning Commission Chair. Chockley noted the contract with Cobalt is for a year and reported on input from community groups she met with recently. There was discussion about whether such actions should be taken in light of the motion made by the Planning Commission in September about the survey and what the expectations are of Cobalt and Commissioners at this point.

At Roman's suggestion, it was agreed that Stanalajczo and Chockley will write a letter to Cobalt asking them to initiate their process of developing a community survey for the Township, and to provide copies of the letter to other Commissioners.

B. RTM Zoning Designation. DuMouchel referred to her memo of October 14th summarizing her review of the RTM district and said she does not see a problem with eliminating the 25% floor area limitation on manufacturing as an accessory use. Commissioners discussed alternatives that would allow more types of businesses to be established in the RTM district, including increasing the square footage allowed for industrial use to 50%, while still maintaining the character of the district. Comments included:

- To protect neighboring uses the zoning ordinance should not be changed to accommodate industry trends. . .
- Many types of industrial operations do not have noticeable effects outside the building even when more than 50% of the space is being used industrially, and performance standards can provide controls to prevent undesirable effects.
- Performance standards are essentially unenforceable from a practical standpoint.
- A review of the entire district should be considered, perhaps using a form-based approach.
- Perhaps this zoning no longer fits well with the types of businesses being developed.

It was agreed DuMouchel should do additional research and provide more information to the Commission.

C. Residential Development investigation. It was noted that a discussion will be scheduled at a November meeting about possibly changing minimum lot sizes in agriculturally zoned areas. The potential effects of doing

that (on the Township, on individual property owners, etc.) were briefly discussed as well as other planning tools that could be used in conjunction with such a change.

D. Scheduling for Next Several Agendas.

Commissioners made suggestions of items to be included on upcoming agendas:

- Review of existing priority list, and commit to being more aggressive in addressing them.
- Changes to the RTM district on the next agenda.
- Changes to Commission by-laws at one of the next two meetings.

The Board discussed potentially canceling the November 4th meeting to allow interested Commissions to attend a Michigan Association of Planning seminar about waterfront communities.

- ▶ **Motion:** laquinto moved, Chick supported, that the November 4, 2015 meeting of the Planning Commission be canceled. **Motion carried 7-0 on a voice vote.**

13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Craig Warburton expressed disappointment that the motion regarding Biltmore did not address the requested change to the Master Plan and said he is opposed to the five acre minimum zoning being reduced. **Udo Huff**, 6431 Whitmore Lake Road, supported the idea of allowing more manufacturing in the Township and objected to the three minute limit on speaking time. **Wayne Dockett**, Township Board Trustee, 9097 Main Street, said the Board and Commission are both responsible for the problems regarding the community survey. .

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners urged support of local businesses.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

November 18, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Roman supported, that the meeting be adjourned. **Motion carried 7-0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 P.M.

Prepared by Lisa Lemble.

Corrections to the originally issued minutes are indicated as follows: Wording removed is ~~stricken through~~; Wording added is underlined.

Adopted on -----, 2015.

Marlene Chockley, Chair

Mark Stanalajczo, Secretary

Google OCR was used to produce these Minutes. This set of official Meeting Minutes and many others are available from the Township website only in a scanned form. As such, they cannot be searched. So we used Google to converted them to searchable text. Adding injury to insult: the scanned format is unreadable by the screenreaders used by the visually impaired. We believe this to be an accurate transcription but it was, after all, automatic. We corrected three mistranscriptions. There may be more.

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