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NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

8350 Main Street

Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

Attn: Marlene Chockley, Chairperson

Dear Northfield Township Planning Commission,

Unfortunately circumstances prevent my attendance at your December 16th, 2015 regular meeting and your agenda has items of great importance. Please accept these comments in lieu of my personal attendance, I would appreciate them being read into the record as correspondence in the course of the meeting agenda.

You are considering review 4 of potential changes to the planning commission by laws. These by laws are less than 2 years old and are comprehensive and complete without modification. Regarding the modifications being proposed, please consider the following notes.

Section 4.10 the listed options for development review are notably absent of any sort of refusal, rejection or denial. As written it provides only for approval.

Section 5.2 regarding removal of a commission member, the wording "written changes" is probably intended to say "written charges".

Section 5.6 By striking all wording about finances, operating expenses and budget, the commission is deferring all responsibility to the legislative body. It is an irresponsible position to take and allows another body to limit or control activities.

Section 7.3 By declaring the commission secretary as the liaison to township staff responsible for execution of commission activities, you are bypassing the professional paid township manager to whom the department's report. Further, by removing responsibility for recording and security of minutes and records, such responsibility is implied to be transferred to township staff, If that is the point, the department or individual responsible should be spelled out. Keeping of minutes is required by State statute. Further, if the secretary is not going to be the facilitator of correspondence, notices and minutes, the party to whom that

responsibility is deferred should be specified. Further, the list of duties does not seem to include recording votes, either voice or roll.

Section 8.1 If the superior role of the chair as defined by Roberts Rules of Order is to be compromised to include a consultation with the secretary to cancel a meeting, the criteria for determining the cancellation should be defined. Is it inferring concurrence or merely notice?

Section 8.6 Removal of the six member affirmative vote to alter the Master Plan is not in keeping with State statutes. At best it could be changed to "requiring a 2/3 to 3/4 majority", per the Enabling acts.

Section 8.7 By adding "clarifications from commission" there is the inference the comments from the public are in error or are uninformed. It would be more genuine to label a new agenda item as "responses to public comment from commissioners", not from the commission unless discussion and consensus is determined to represent the entire commission.

Section 8.9 By removing item D, you are indicating the appearance of impropriety is OK? Please remember actual removal involves charges, public hearing and a vote by the legislative body. By removing this you are inferring there is behavior afoot that might fall into this definition. Item D is important as written and should not be removed. Further, the affirmative vote of six members meets the requirements of State statutes for modifying a master plan. As written, a simple majority vote of a minimum quorum could present change to the master plan with as little as 3 affirmative votes. The magnitude of importance for this document should require the highest degree of consensus for change. Reducing the requirements makes the master plan subject to factional interests over the general good. State statute requires 2/3 to 3/4 majority vote for Master Plan changes.

Section 10.1 Our State statutes require posting in a newspaper of general circulation for proper public notice. Anything less is putting our township residents at a disadvantage compared to all the townships that do follow State statutes.

Section 11.1 This change would seem to make the selection of parliamentary rules an a la carte choice annually, which then would have direct affect on interpreting the minutes and records of action. Clearly, almost all townships and governmental bodies from the boy scouts up use Roberts Rules of Order and it should be consistent and indented in the bylaws. I am glad to see the made up "Roberts Rules simplified" from revision 3 not included in this revision. Surely our township is sophisticated and advanced enough to use the preeminent standard for parliamentary procedure used all across this county, state and country.

In closing, I would suggest that if the commission is so intent on weakening the Master Plan by reducing the majority necessary to modify, perhaps that question should be put to the township citizens as part of the Planning Commission's pending survey.

Thank you for the time and attention afforded me,

Craig Warburton