

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF FLUSHING
6524 N. SEYMOUR ROAD
FLUSHING, MICHIGAN 48433
810-659-0800 FAX: 810-659-4212
PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION
DATE: JANUARY 13, 2004 TIME: 7:00 P.M.
WEB ADDRESS <http://www.gfn.org/flushing/index.html>

MEMBERS OF PLANNING COMMISSION

Jerome Doyle, Chair	Richard Buell
Robert Gensheimer, Vice Chair	Brian Bunker
Eric Swanson, Secretary	David Gibbs
Ronald Flowers, Board of Trustee Representative	

Jerald W. Fitch, Building Inspector
Julia A. Morford, Recording Secretary

PRESENT: Doyle, Gensheimer, Buell, Flowers, Swanson, Fitch and Morford
ABSENT: Gibbs and Bunker
OTHERS PRESENT: Dave Rowe of Inland Seas Engineering and Aaron Bowron

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 7:05 p.m. by Planning Commission Chair Jerry Doyle.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: SWANSON MOVED, seconded by Flowers to approve the Agenda as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
None

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Continuing Review of Master Plan Update Report

DOUG PIGGOTT (PIGGOTT) of Rowe Inc (Rowe) presented the most recent revised Draft Report by the Flushing Township Planning Commission on the Five Year Review of the 1992-2012 Flushing Township Master Plan.

PIGGOTT stated that approximately a year and a half ago, the State Legislative adopted amendments to the Township Planning Act; the law that authorizes the townships to adopt and develop an adopted plan. Every five (5) years a township that has a plan must review the plan to determine whether or not the plan needs to be updated or adopt a new plan. Every Planning Commission or planned community that had a plan that was over five (5) years old at the time the law went into affect, was required to do the review.

PIGGOTT proposed a two part proposal to the township: **Part I** - a proposal to do the review cutting the data that would be useful if there was an update. **Part II** was the actual update. The Township Board of Trustees approved the proposals which had begun the work on the analysis of the Master Plan.

Section 5 of the Master Plan "Implementation" identified nine (9) different indicators to help the Planning Commission determine whether or not the community was developing and things had occurred as planned. **PIGGOTT** prepared a Draft that compared the current conditions with the nine (9) indicators. The original Draft was presented to the Planning Commission at the December 2003 Planning Commission Meeting. Several issues in the Draft had to be reviewed by **PIGGOTT** and the Assessor, which was then revised, so that rather than being a report from Rowe to the Planning Commission stating the indications, **PIGGOTT** incorporated the revised indicators into the text of the original plan, which was the "Finding of Facts" by the Planning Commission to the Township Board and the Public as to whether or not there had been a need to update the Plan.

PIGGOTT reviewed the nine (9) indicators: (**Note:** Item number (question) is in **bold** print; regular print is the 1992 findings; the italic print is the most recent revision).

Item 1 – Has population growth occurred during the planning period at the rate projected in the plan?

The 1992 plan used the GLS Region V population projections as the basis for future plans. These predicted a 2000 population of 10,158. The actual 2000 census population was 10,230 which is less than a 1% from the projection.

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that population growth in the Township has generally followed the projections in the plan.

Item 2 – Has the housing growth and mix of housing types matched the projections in the plan?

The 1992 plan assumed the mix of new construction within the Township would result in a 2000 housing composition of 3,158 single family homes, 116 multi-family homes and 905 mobile homes. This would represent an 11.5% increase in single family detached homes, a 222.2% increase in multi-family residences and an 88.9% increase in mobile homes due to an anticipated expansion of an existing park.

The total number of swelling units was 7% less than the projected, but there were actually more single family homes and multi-family units built than projected. It should be noted that the difference between projected and actual housing was more than the difference between projected and actual population. This can be explained by the fact that the average number of persons per household did not decrease as quickly as the plan expected.

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that the housing growth and mix in the Township has generally followed the projections in the plan. The extent to which Mobile Home development did not meet the projections is the result of property owners with properly zoned property not choosing to develop. While multi-family development did grow at a faster rate than projected, it is still a relatively small portion of the Township and there is land available in the Township for additional multi-family development.

Item 3 – How has the cost of housing increased in relation to the household incomes in the Township?

In 1990, the median value of an owner occupied home was \$71,500 according to the census. In the 2000 census the median value of an owner occupied home was \$135,500 which is a 90% increase. In comparison, the median income in 1990 was \$45,000 while in 2000 it was \$60,946 which is 35.4% increase.

The median price of housing was shown in the census data does indicate a significant increase in the gap between what township residents can afford and what a house costs. However, the Planning Commission finds that the issue of housing affordability is less severe than shown in these numbers because they do not reflect the cost of housing in the mobile homes in the Township, there is land available in the Township for high density development, and the township standards for minimum lot size and width on parcels with water and sewer permit affordable single family housing to be built.

Item 4 – How have the changes in adjacent municipalities future land use plan or zoning maps affected the Township?

At the time the 1992 plan was being adopted, Clayton Township and the City of Flushing had or were in the process of adopting new land use plans which were reviewed by Flushing Township prior to the Township Master Plan being adopted. These plans have not significantly changed since then. These two communities have since adopted zoning ordinance that coincide with their plans.

Last year Hazelton Township adopted a new plan that was essentially the same as their previous plan as it relates to Flushing Township with the exception that it recognized a couple of commercial rezonings along Sheridan Road (M-13) that had previously been approved. The only change to the zoning map was the previously mentioned rezonings.

Mt. Morris Township adopted a new Master Plan in 1998. The new plan differed from the previous plan in areas adjacent to Flushing Township in several ways. 1) The area designated for a mobile home park in the southeast corner of Elms Road and Mt. Morris Road is not designated Office/Commercial. 2) The portions of the sections adjacent to the county roads along the township line that were planned for single family residential development have been redesignated rural agricultural/low density residential. 3) About a third of Section 30 has been redesignated medium density residential to allow for development of up to two units per acre.

Montrose Township adopted a new Community Master Plan in 1995. The plan identifies most of the land along the northern boundary with Flushing Township as Agriculture with a minimum lot size of 20 acres. The principle exception is in Section 31, where a portion of the section is designated “Residential/Farm” which allows residential development at a density of 1 unit per 5 acres. On existing subdivision in Section 35 it is also recognized.

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that no significant changes have occurred to surrounding communities land use plans or zoning ordinances that would require revision of the Flushing Township Master Plan.

Item 5 – How does the Township rank in the Farmland Assessment by the Township Planning Commission?

In 1991 the Township Planning Commission participated in a survey to determine their opinion, based on data provided them, on the need to protect farmland from non-farm development. The results of the survey were that the Planning Commission felt there was a moderate need to protect farmland because of the value farmland is to the township economy, there was a moderate need to protect farmland due to the development pressures in the area that would lead to the conversion of farmland to non farmland uses, there was a moderate need to protect farmland due to the threat of parcel splits and farmland fragmentation, and there was a moderate need to protect farmland due to a lack of current controls in place to protect farmland.

The current Planning Commission took the Farmland Assessment and the results were generally the same, indicating that there was a moderate need to protect farmland because of the value farmland is to the township economy, there was a moderate need to protect farmland due to the development pressures in the area that would lead to the conversion of farmland to non farmland uses, there was a moderate/high need to protect farmland due to the threat of parcel splits and farmland fragmentation, and there was a moderate/high need to protect farmland due to a lack of current controls in place to protect farmland.

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that no significant changes have been identified through the Farmland Assessment that would require revision of the Flushing Township Master Plan.

Item 6 – Have there been any changes to the Flushing Township/City of Flushing/Flushing School District Parks and Recreation Plan that affects the plan?

Since the adoption of the Township Master Plan, the Parks and Recreation plan has been updated twice. Changes related to the Township include the designation of a Township Park that has begun construction, and proposals for development of walking trails connecting the Township and the City of Flushing.

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that no significant changes have been made to the Flushing Township/City of Flushing/Flushing School District Parks and Recreation Plan that would require revision of the Flushing Township Master Plan.

Item 7 – Have there been any changes in traffic patterns or road improvements that affect the plan?

The drawing of a map shows the significant changes in traffic along the major roads in the Township, primarily along Elms Road and Mt. Morris Road. (See map in the “Fact of Findings”).

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that no significant changes have occurred to traffic patterns within the Township that would require revision of the Flushing Township Master Plan.

Item 8 – Has the sewer system been extended beyond the limits set in the Master Plan?

The future land use plan anticipates that extension of the sewer would serve as the control of development at urban densities and proposes that such extension be limited to the area designated on the future land use map as “Single Family Low Density Residential”. A review of the updated sewer map shows that no sewer lines were extended outside that area.

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that there has been no deviation from the current plan’s policy regarding extension of sewer beyond the area designated “Single Family Low Density Residential”.

Item 9 – Has there been expansion of the commercial development outside the Mt. Morris/McKinley Road area anticipated in the plan?

The commercial development outside of the Mt. Morris/McKinley Road area has primarily been redevelopment or improvements of existing sites, not development of new sites. The amount of commercial development in the Township has been relatively minor.

Based on the above information, the Planning Commission finds that there has been no expansion of commercial development beyond the area designated for that development that would require revision of the Flushing Township Master Plan.

* * * * *

PIGGOTT stated the Draft would be a report from the Planning Commission to the Township Board. Everything is complete with the exception of a paragraph on Township Letterhead which would state:

“based on the following information, the Planning Commission at this time does not find a need to update the Plan and confirms the current plan as a township Master Plan.”

PIGGOTT stated there has not been a lot of rezoning and it would not be an indicator of change. Another issue, that has not been of the Indicators, would be to review the Goals and Policies of the Plan; if it is felt some of the Goals and Policies are out of date, or if applying the

Goals and Policies to a particular rezoning or to a particular case, it would be determined that the plan would not work. If the Planning Commission should find there are changes, it could be a basis for updating the plan, or it could simply be a phase for reviewing the particular Goals and Policies. The Planning Commission has the authority to amend the Plan at anytime.

GENSHEIMER wanted to know if it was the Planning Commission's responsibility to "grow" the area and have development prosper so as not to have a stagnant area or is it the Planning Commission's function to keep people and land in place.

PIGGOTT stated there were several options:

1. provide land for all uses where there were demonstrated needs – can't lock out growth in an orderly manner.
2. not obligated as a community to adopt a policy for promoting growth

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PIGGOTT:

- responsibility of the Planning Commission to obtain a vision for what the community growth would be and there is no obligation on the part of the Planning Commission to adopt a specific agreement. The Planning Commission is not obligated to promote any one vision.
- if there was a concern from the Planning Commission where there had been a change in view on private property or maybe there should be a change in view of private property about the need to promote additional development, the Planning Commission could, without updating the complete Plan, have a visioning session or some other kind of public input session to decide if there needed to be a revision.
- the rights of a person to split their property for sale, the township's ability to regulate the split is extremely limited. The State has stated that under certain circumstances that an individual can split their property and the only questions the township can ask is: do you meet our minimum lot width, lot area requirements, and do you have access.
- no individual can accuse the Planning Commission of being an "out of step" Planning Commission.
- The Township (Planning Commission) should establish a standard. The township could raise the standard to a minimum lot size which would create two things: 1) increase the cost of housing and 2) people that purchased the property when the minimum lot size was 9,900 square feet with water and sewer and if the minimum was raised to 20,000 square feet there would be a lot of people who would feel their property would be devalued.
- high density is no problem in Flushing Township
- the Planning Commission has to keep their eye on the ball and be careful what the impact would be.

CONCERNS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

- **GENSHEIMER** stated that no one likes change but he does not want the Township to sit back and "miss the boat" if the Planning Commission should be too conservative.

- **DOYLE** felt demand is the biggest issue; whenever there is interest in a particular direction, the Planning Commission should be alert enough to see an issue coming.
- **FLOWERS** felt the development that is being requested now from builders is the development along the road which the farmers can make more off the development of an acre or two than a plat.
- **DOYLE** stated if a community promoted development ahead of time, there would be a problem of not having the ability to pay for the development.
- **GENSHEIMER** wanted to know how the Township could work with the City of Flushing so that each would promote the other municipality.
 - a. **PIGGOTT** mentioned the Township and the City of Flushing could have a multi-jurisdictional meeting where the two Planning Commissions met on a yearly basis and discuss joint issues of concern.
- **BUELL** stated he has no perspective to stimulate development in the Township.
- **GENSHEIMER** does not want a resident to look refer back in sometime in the future and say the Planning Commission was “asleep” at the realm of things.
- **DOYLE** mentioned there is a big problem now that manufactured homes are costing more money and are almost eliminating the individuals that would like to purchase a smaller home; they in turn purchase a manufactured home.
- **SWANSON** stated it was easier for young people to purchase a manufactured home because the lending institutions would not lend the money to build a home.
- **DOYLE** stated that plats would solve the problem; when the individual comes into the township for the development of plats, defining to the Planning Commission what will be built, what the individual has in mind to do. The Planning Commission conditions the individual to a point to where “if that is what you want to do, this is what you have to do.”
- **JERRY FITCH (FITCH)**, Building Inspector stated he felt that if sewer lines were extended out to where there were no sewer lines, wouldn’t that make development that much easier? He would much rather have a developer come to the community and have to put the money out of his pocket to install the sewer line and if it is costing him to install the sewer line, regardless of the size of the lot, there will be a better development; he will promote and make the development work.
- **SWANSON** stated he would like to tell developers that he (Swanson) would install the sewer and water but the developer would have to put in the open space.
- **SWANSON** felt open space would be the only incentive for developers to put in open space.
- **DOYLE** stated the Planning Commission has to put together a plan which would be up to date and rational and is updated from time to time to make sure that things are or are not changing; if there are changes, it has to be updated.
- **SWANSON** felt there needed to be better control over developments.
- **BUELL** inquired as to Flushing Township having 13% of the housing units being mobile. In comparison to other townships, where does Flushing stand? In Genesee County, Flushing Township would be in the middle. Other Townships: Genesee Township has 30%; Fenton Township has 8 or 9%; Clayton Township has 14 or 15%.

CONCLUSION:

PIGGOTT recommended the Planning Commission review *Section 3, Goals and Policies* and the basis of the Database; if there are any questions, **PIGGOTT** would return to the Planning Commission to review the material. The Planning Commissions' consensus has been that nothing has changed that much to allow for an update of the Master Plan, but with a review of *General Goals and Policies*, the Planning Commission would be headed in the direction which they (Planning Commission) thought they were but perhaps the attitude as to where they have been headed has changed. *Goals and Policies* could be reviewed by the Planning Commission without the help of **PIGGOTT**. Based on the changes, there may be recommendations regarding changes in overall density of the plan which in turn would serve as the basis for recommending amendments to the plan as far as minimum lot size. There would be a lot of perception and assumption involved. Assumption is that the larger the lot size in your community, the nicer the house would be, but not necessarily the case. There would be problems! **DOYLE** stated each case was determined on a case to case basis.

SWANSON MOVED, seconded by Buell to approve the Report by the Flushing Township Planning Commission on the Five Year Review of the 1992-2012 Flushing Township Master Plan with the amendment to recommend that the Plan be looked at in two (2) years for possible update. MOTION CARRIED.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. **Mud Creek Subdivision**

Process for Final Approval

- a. to obtain the final approval and for Planning Commission to review
- b. Planning Commission responsible for site plan approval
- c. Procedural process
 1. submit a site plan and if not complete
 2. make revisions and re-submit to Planning Commission for another site plan
- d. engineer checking the plans to make sure each item will be placed in designated area
 1. (should be in the zoning ordinance – per **PIGGOTT** if going to be a policy)
 2. developer pays the fee

PIGGOTT stated that with the additional engineer's review, it would add a cost for the developer but the Planning Commission would have to balance the advantage of having an additional level of insurance that everything had been built according to the plans that were submitted verses the additional cost to making sure everything had been built according. The cost could be reduced to the minimum necessary to gain the level of insurance by limiting it to specific items; this process should be in the ordinance.

With the procedure process, someone has submitted a site plan and it was approved contingent upon making the changes that were required by the engineer or which the Planning Commission

required; that would be the last time the individual would be seen. If the Planning Commission made the changes and would like for the individual to return to the Planning Commission with the plan with a letter from the engineer stating the engineering changes were made, and the plan was reviewed one more time in front of the Planning Commission, it could be completed without making any changes to the ordinances. The process would be: 1) table a Site Plan Approval until the changes required have been made and 2) resubmit the plans to the Planning Commission.

2. Requirements for Staked Survey – from the Zoning Board of Appeals

SWANSON reviewed the issue of a recent item on the Agenda of the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance where the correct point of measurement had not been measured properly; the house was set two (2) feet from the East property line. The home is already constructed. **SWANSON MOVED**, seconded by Gensheimer to put on the table to make an ordinance to require a staked survey before a building permit is issued.

BUELL would like for **FITCH** to contact other townships regarding their requirements for staked surveys,

3. Future Work Sessions

1. Goals and Policies
2. Updating of Ordinances
 - a. Private Drives
 - b. Staked Surveys
3. Engineering Final Approval (add to ordinance or procedure)

V. NEW BUSINESS:

None

VI. BOARD COMMENTS:

None

VII. MEETING SCHEDULE:

REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2004 – 7:00 P.M.

PROBABLE WORK SESSION – TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2004 – 7:00 P.M.

REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING – MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2004 – 7:00 P.M.

PROBABLE WORK SESSION – TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2004 – 7:00 P.M.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: FLOWERS MOVED, seconded by Bunker to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 p.m.

JEROME DOYLE, Chair

JULIA A. MORFORD, Recording Secretary

ERIC SWANSON, Secretary

Date of Approval

Planningminutes 01/13/04