

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF FLUSHING

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PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: APRIL 11, 2011

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

WEB ADDRESS <http://www.flushingtowship.com>

MEMBERS OF PLANNING COMMISSION

Mark J. Newman, Chair

John Cuddeback

Jerome Doyle, Vice Chair

Ronald Flowers

Richard Buell, Secretary

Robert Gensheimer

Mark Purkey, Board of Trustee Representative

Julia A. Morford, Recording Secretary

PRESENT: Mark J. Newman, Jerome Doyle, Richard Buell, Ronald Flowers, Robert Gensheimer and Mark Purkey

ABSENT: John Cuddeback

OTHERS PRESENT: Planner Doug Piggott of Rowe Professional Services Company

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 7:04 p.m. by Planning Commission Chair **MARK NEWMAN** with Roll Call and the Pledge to the American Flag.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: PURKEY MOVED, seconded by Buell to adopt the Agenda with the addition listed under "New Business" Numeral 2, Planner Doug Piggott regarding Master Plan Issues. **MOTION CARRIED.**

ADOPTION OF AGENDA AS AMENDED: FLOWERS MOVED, seconded by Gensheimer to adopt the Agenda as amended. **MOTION CARRIED.**

III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: FLOWERS MOVED, seconded by Gensheimer to approve the Minutes of March 14, 2011 with one (1) change. **MOTION CARRIED.**

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. PUBLIC HEARING – AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS 20-200, 20-400, AND 20-1804 OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF FLUSHING ZONING ORDINANCE TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND TO PROVIDE RULES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, PLACEMENT, AND USE OF ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IN THE TOWNSHIP.**

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 7:09 P.M.

- A Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Flint Journal on March 27, 2011
- Each Planning Commission Member received:
 - a. A copy of the publication along with the affidavit of publication, which is in accordance with the township ordinances per State Law
 - b. a copy of the Public Hearing Notice

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED REGARDING THE PUBLIC HEARING:

None

DOYLE MOVED, seconded by Purkey to approve and suggest adoption to the Board of Trustees of the changes to the referenced section of the zoning code.

ACTION OF THE MOTION:

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Doyle, Buell, Flowers, Gensheimer, Purkey, and Newman

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: Cuddeback

MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 7:12 P.M.

- 2. Doug Piggott of Rowe Professional Services Company – Update to the Master Plan**

Planner Doug Piggott (Mr. Piggott) of Rowe Professional Services Company assisted Flushing Township twenty (20) years ago in initiating the Flushing Township Master Plan; the Plan needs to be updated.

1. The issue would be the extent which the Township would like to take:

“The existing format could be used identifying the areas that need to be updated verses the “look nice” technology.
- a. The Data Base (Part 1) of the Master Plan Consists of:
 1. History of Flushing Township - structures and centennial farms; two (2) farms are still in existence
 2. Soils – a map can be generated on the G.I.S. maps showing the soils.
 3. Population Characteristics – most of the population in 1990 was taken from the 1980 and 1990 census; census performed every ten (10) years and was

done on a short or long form. Data (American Community Survey (ACS) will be released every year starting 2011 – won't have to wait every ten (10) years to get the information. New data can be put into the population characteristics.

4. Housing – from the 1990 census
5. Attitude Survey - Public Input which consisted of:
 - 1) Vision:
 - a. *Attitude Survey* was sent out to everyone: property owners, mobile homes, apartments, etc.; most expensive way to get everyone's input.
 - b. *Formalized process* to come to a meeting and talk about the ways community is changing; what are the top three (3) things they would like to change/build on; vision for the future; identify the characteristics they would like to build up; good quality input but low attendance.
 - c. *Random Selection* could be done and would be a lot cheaper.
 - d. *Web site*
 - 2) Open House:
 - a. set up tables with a certain interest at each table (ex: transportation, trails, pedestrian walkways, residential land use) and have the individual discuss their interest.
 - b. most people like to voice their opinion for five (5) minutes and then leave.
 - c. the “ganging” issue does not take place.
 - 3) Stakeholder Interviews
 - a. where ten (10) to fifteen (15) people to want to document their opinions as to what should be addressed by the Planning Commission

- It was felt the phone interviews would be more productive. With the web, people from out of the area would be giving their opinions; people should be required to give their name and address (on the web) because some people will put the same comment on the web fifteen (15) times or more.

The Importance of the Update of the Master Plan:

1. To ensure there is a Plan that is useful to the Planning Commission when making decisions when individuals come before the Planning Commission.
2. Insure the legal validity of the zoning decisions. The affects of the *2006 Michigan Zoning Enabling Act* and *2008 Michigan Planning Zoning Enabling Act* was that it pointed to the fact in order for the zoning ordinance to be valid there had to be a Master Plan.
3. The current Master Plan will be twenty (20) years old next year, the validity of the Plan is seriously questioned. The Township has to be able to demonstrate that the Planning Commission has gone through a thorough review of the Plan, not just a five

(5) year review of the Plan, update of the Plan, adequate to say this is a new Plan and good for so many years.

- The attached (Exhibit A) is what is currently in the Master Plan; there are certain elements that are more important than others. Elements such as “History”, “Soils”, don’t have to be changed.
- Some of the details have already been completed: transportation will be supplied by the Genesee County Road Commission and Genesee County Planning Commission; agriculture information comes from the Agriculture Census. The Flushing Township Planning Commission has to determine how important farmland preservations is in the Township.
- Areas of Planning and Zoning are very important. Starting in 2001, anytime an adjacent jurisdiction adopts or amends a Plan, the jurisdiction is supposed to send a copy to Flushing Township.
- Mapping – should be placed on a map. Some communities are going verbally for the mapping.
- Land Use will cost time and money; the Planning Commission should be able to review the land use and see the changes from 1990 to current. Recommendation would be to use the same classifications as used in 1990. The biggest expense would be collecting the data.
- The zoning shows how the property is zoned – not how the property is used. There could be farmland zoned residential, vacant property could be zoned a variety of ways. You cannot always tell from an aerial view how the property is used.
- Township Economy can be updated by using the 2011 Census data.
- Community Facilities is the extension of water and sewer lines and can be mapped.

Part 2 – Goals and Policies (Future Issues to be addressed)

- What are the key issues to be address!
- Assets and Problems - to be balanced, need to look at assets to build on and not just problems that need to be fixed. The Goals would then need to be changed. Example: years ago, affordable housing was the problem, today the homes are not selling.
- Policies are the more refined action statements related to the Goals. If the Goals are changed, then the Policies need to be changed; sometimes the Policies adopted twenty (20) years ago don’t apply today.
- Recommended to have someone help with the **Goals and Policies** process even if the Planning Commission has the Data.
- The current Plan is divided into “Land Use”, “Future Land Use”, “Zoning”, “Transportation”, and “Capital Facilities”.
 - a. “Zoning” is a new element and not in the current Plan and is required per the *2008 Michigan Planning Enabling Act* which states that if the community has a zoning ordinance, they must have a zoning plan.
 1. Zoning Plans state “this is our future land use” plan and here is our “Zoning Ordinance” and here is how the two (2) interact. The process is to make sure if a case went to Court there wouldn’t be any questions regarding the ordinances.

- b. "Transportation" is not what the township is going to do with the roads but taking a look at what Genesee County Road Commission is going to do in the future and how it will impact the "future land use" in commercial and residential areas. Example: going from three (3) lane roads to five (5) lane roads.
- c. "Capital Facilities Plan" talks about the water and sewer system and is a requirement under the new law pertaining to the connection between infrastructure and land use; if an area has municipal water and sewer there is greater possibilities for commercial property (high density area). The community has control over the extension of the property for future land use.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION:

- 1. Most of the people that live in Flushing Township work outside the township.
- 2. Currently, Flushing Township doesn't have a gas station.
- 3. A lot of things that had been predicted, based on the community, didn't take place; certain locations were not allocated for certain types of zoning because the Planning Commission always felt "bring the information to the Planning Commission and they would decide if what an individual was asking was reasonable and where did the individual want to put it".
- 4. There does need to be some updates but it seems like the community is digressing instead of progressing.
- 5. It was felt that the Planning Commission needed to take the information, mentioned by Mr. Piggott, and get the updated information to make a decision about updating the Ordinance and the Plan; it would not be a big change.
- 6. The township is not progressing but in limbo.
- 7. Roads are at a standstill. It was felt at one time that four (4) lanes would be better to increase the traffic flow; the accidents started happening. A decrease in accidents started when the road commission went from four (4) lanes to three (3) lanes; there was a left turn lane, one (1) lane that went straight through, and a bicycle lane; the Federal Government indicates that ten (10%) percent has to be used for a bicycle trail. Elms Road will eventually be another Linden Road with five (5) lanes.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. There needs to be an Implementation Plan.
- 2. Plan Maintenance used for the Five (5) Year Review.
- 3. Use the Land Use Plan.
- 4. Take a look at population, public input as to the issues, before reviewing the Goals.
 - a. Start with the survey that was done twenty (20) years ago with five (5) key questions which the Planning Commission needs to have answered.
 - b. Provide a survey on the Web as an alternative. Could required "fields" so there would not be duplicates.
 - c. Recommended using a statistical survey.
- 5. There needed to be work sessions with Mr. Piggott; the price range would be \$10,000 to \$20,000 but could be structured over two (2) fiscal years.

6. The General Public doesn't realize the expertise that is involved in the Planning and Zoning Area; liability carries the best advertising for updating the Master Plan.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

8:13 P.M. – OPENED TO THE PUBLIC FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

8:14 P.M. – CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

VII. BOARD COMMENTS:

1. **PURKEY** felt the Planning Commission could use the Old Master Plan as a guide line and have the Assessor obtain the data.
2. **FLOWERS** stated that traffic patterns have already been done; all that needs to be done is get the information and keep updating the information; Transportation and Census changes can be worked on a little at a time to be ahead of schedule which would be cheaper.
3. **DOYLE** felt there was a good plan in the past and all that needs to be done is just update the plan to make it successful.
4. **NEWMAN** was frustrated at the Master Plan because the government dictates unfunded mandate requirements; don't want to spend a lot of money and time; should use the information and resources which the Planning Commission already has. Only have to concentrate on twenty (20) years.

VIII. MEETING SCHEDULE: NEXT REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 9, 2011 AT 7:00 P.M.

REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING DATES:

MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2011 AT 7:00 P.M.

MONDAY, JULY 11, 2011 AT 7:00 P.M.

MONDAY, AUGUST 8, 2011 AT 7:00 P.M.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: Due to lack of business matters, **NEWMAN** adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

MARK J. NEWMAN, Chair

JULIA A. MORFORD, Recording Secretary

RICHARD BUELL, Secretary

Date of Approval