



Minutes

THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Thomas Township Public Safety Building, 8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609
November 12, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Ruth McDonald called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in addition to Mrs. McDonald were: Rod Iamurri, Rick Lorentzen, Dale Halm, and Diane LaMountain. Also present were Dan Sika, Director of Community Development and Connie Watt, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer and one interested party.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Agenda:

It was moved by Halm, seconded by Iamurri to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes:

It was moved by LaMountain seconded by Halm to approve the minutes of October 15, 2014 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Communications – Petitions – Citizens Comments – None.

6. Hearings-None

7. Presentations-Site Plan Approval for the Construction of a Cold Storage Building at Edgewood Village Mobile Home Park.

Cecil Szepanski was present to present/discuss the Site Plan he presented for the addition of a cold storage building measuring 36' X 50' (1,800 sq. ft.) that will be located 100' east of the center line of Williams Creek Drain at Edgewood Village Mobile Home Park. Iamurri questioned the need for any type of landscaping to block the view of the building if the residents had a concern. Szepanski said he does not see any concern with it and feels they would not feel a need for it due to the fact that at this time there is a place there to park RV's and there has been no objections. Sika added that Szepanski has worked with the Community Development Department and all zoning requirements have been met including the placement of the structure outside of the County Drain easement. The Site Plan has been approved by the Fire, Police and D.P.W. Departments and it is going to be a good addition to the mobile home park. Motion was

made by Halm and seconded by Iamurri to approve the Site Plan for the addition of the cold storage building at Edgewood Village Mobile Home Park with the contingency that Szepanski must submit a sealed set of plans to the Thomas Township Building Inspector. Motion passed unanimously.

8. *Sign Board of Appeals – None*

9. *Old Business-A. The Parking of Recreational Vehicles in Front of Home-Discussion Only*

Sika explained to the Planning Commission that a Thomas Township resident has had a concern with a Recreational Vehicle, which is parked in a compliant manner according to the Zoning Ordinance, blocking the view from his home because of where it is allowed to be parked. He presented a drawing to the Planning Commission to depict what the Zoning Ordinance currently allows and explained that any RV can park behind the defined front yard. Furthering that with an example of the road right-of-way being 33' from the center line, from that point back 35' an RV cannot be parked. If the RV is parked at or beyond the 68' it is compliant. Some lots allow for this others do not and the RV may have to be parked to the side of the home or in the back yard area as long as the side setbacks are met. Sika added that normally the complaints that are received are from those who are not parked in compliance. He has brought this before the Planning Commission to explain the concern and get a poll of the Commission to see if they wish to pursue a change to exclude RV's from the front area of homes in all cases. A "straw poll" was taken with all members present unanimous in their decision to leave the Ordinance as it is at this time.

10. *Old Business B-Proposed Road Right-of-Ways from Saginaw County-Discussion Only*

Sika reminded the Planning Commission that at the last meeting a brief discussion was held concerning changes that might want to be considered with regards to proposed road right-of-ways on the three (3) main arterial roads in Thomas Township, Gratiot, State and Miller. This to bring uniformity and consistency to these roads. For example: Gratiot Road has a number of different road right-of-ways which means a lot of staggering of buildings, signage and sidewalks. The Road Commission provided us with a map of the Future Road Right-of-Ways for these three (3) main roads. What we'd like to do is set a uniform distance so everyone has a consistent setback and signage as well. Sika added that he'd like to draft an Ordinance and bring it to the Planning Commission and have a Public Hearing on this matter sometime within the next two (2) months or so.

11. *Old Business C-Riga Township Wind Turbine Ordinance-Discussion Only*

Sika said that while the Riga Township Ordinance relating to Wind Turbines was very well written and covered a lot, he felt it was too detailed and technical to be a fit for Thomas Township. He told the Planning Commission that after reviewing a number of other Wind

Turbine Ordinances for other Michigan communities he has found some that would better suit an Ordinance for our needs. He stated that these examples will be given to the Planning Commission for review in their December packets and can be discussed at that meeting. McDonald questioned if there should be a great concern over the possibility of wind turbines being placed in Thomas Township. Sika responded that there is no way to say for sure but it would certainly be in the best interest to have an Ordinance in place prior to that happening if it may.

12. New Business A-Sidewalk Maintenance Text Amendment-Discussion Only

Sika informed the Planning Commission of complaints that have been received regarding vehicles parking over sidewalks as well as trees and shrubbery that are not trimmed and left to grow over sidewalks. Both of these have created safety concerns for pedestrians. The current text of the Sidewalk Maintenance portion of the Ordinance does not cover either of these problems. It is felt that there is a need to be able to address this when the issue arises. The text amendment will be brought before the Planning Commission in January for a Public Hearing and possible approval.

13. New Business-B-B-1 District Text Amendment-Discussion Only

Sika discussed that the current wording of the Zoning Ordinance for B-1 Districts doesn't cover restrictions and guidelines as do all the other Zoning Districts. His proposal would be to amend the B-1 District information to include basic guidelines to clarify what can be built and how large the structures can be to include minimum ground floor areas, building heights, maximum lot coverage and density. This will be brought before the Planning Commission in January.

14. New Business-C-Master Plan Review Power Point Presentation

Sika explained that at the last meeting a copy of the Thomas Township Master Plan was given to each Planning Commission member. Sika explained to the Planning Commission that it is required to review the Master Plan every five (5) years. The last time a review was done on the Thomas Township Master Plan was 2009. He furthered by saying it needs to be reviewed to see if the goals are ultimately the same, if any dramatic changes or any adjustments are necessary. (See Power Point of the process that should be followed). He has noticed that some of the demographics and statistics have become outdated but all in all the Township is following the Master Plan pretty well. The Planning and Zoning Act requires that they look at everything in the Plan and not just portions of it. A Power Point of process was provided. Sika added he will be putting this on the agenda for 2015 to complete the review and may hire a professional planner to give their opinions and comments. Those along with the comments and concerns of the Planning Commission will be discussed and changes made as necessary. He asked that the members read over the Master Plan and if they have any concerns or questions along the way to please contact him.

15. Receive and File All Correspondence-None

16. Adjournment

Motion by Iamurri seconded by LaMountain to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. ***The next meeting date is December 17, 2014.***

Respectfully submitted by Connie Watt, Planning Assistant/Code Enforcement Officer

Thomas Township Planning Commission
November 12, 2014
Master Plan
Five Year Plan Review Procedure
Presented by Daniel Sika

**Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008
as amended**
Michigan Planning Enabling Act,
M.C.L., 125.3801

**Purpose of the Michigan
Planning Enabling Act**
Single set of procedures for
municipalities to follow. Includes
Township, City, Village and the County

Michigan Planning Enabling Act
Copy of this Act is being handed out
to each Planning Commission
Member to review

Elements of the Master Plan Guide

- Michigan State University Extension
- Check List #1H
- The Five-Year Plan Review
- Other sources of information
- Michigan Planning Enabling Act
- Current Master Plan

Elements of the Master Plan
Maps, plats, charts, and descriptive,
explanatory, and other related
matter. Sec 33 (1)

Elements of the Master Plan

A future land use map is required as part of the land use plan element of the master plan. Sec 33(2)(d)

Elements of the Master Plan

Show the Planning Commission's recommendations for the physical development of the planning jurisdiction Sect 33 (1)

Elements of the Master Plan

Recommendations for implementing any of the Master Plans proposals. Sec 33 (2)(e)

Elements of the Master Plan

Should has a section detailing recommendations for implementation. Sec 33(2)(e)

Elements of the Master Plan

Documentation that the Planning Commission made careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth within the Township, with regard to neighboring jurisdictions. Sec (31(2)(a)

Elements of the Master Plan

Documentation that the Planning Commission consulted with representatives of neighboring jurisdictions in respect to their planning so that conflicts in Master Plans and zoning are avoided. Sec 31 (2)(b)

Elements of the Master Plan

Documentation that the Planning Commission cooperated with all departments of the State and Federal Government and other public agencies concerned with programs for economic, social, and physical development within the planning jurisdiction and sought the maximum coordination of the local unit of governments programs with these agencies Sec 31(2)(c)

Elements of the Master Plan

A zoning plan (M.C.L. 125.3203(1)also M.C.L. 125.3305(a) a proposed schedule of regulations by district that includes at least, building height, lot area, bulk and setback. Sec. 33(2)(b)

Elements of the Master Plan

The standards or criteria to be used to consider rezonings consistent with the master plan.

Elements of the Master Plan

An explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map. A description of each zoning district, and a proposed zoning map.

Elements of the Master Plan

A description of each of the zoning districts including proposed new ones, the general purpose of each district, a general description of the class of uses to be permitted in each district, and the general locations for those types of districts. Use classes include single family residential, multiple family residential, commercial, multiple family residential, commercial, office, industrial, agricultural, forestry, and mining, etc.

Elements of the Master Plan

A proposed zoning map showing the location of proposed zoning districts. This could be accomplished by referring to the existing zoning map and then including a map with proposed district changes and the reasons under which those changes should be made in a manner consistent with the master plan.

Elements of the Master Plan

Discussion of other elements that
might also be included in the master
plan.