



Minutes

THOMAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Thomas Township Public Safety Building, 8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609

January 18, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

Rod Iamurri called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in addition to Mr. Iamurri were: Ruth McDonald, Dave Sommers, Steve Yockey, and Jennifer Curry. Also present was Dan Sika, Director of Community Development.

Absent: Doug Bird and Patrick Lynch.

1. *Call to Order and Roll Call*

2. *Pledge of Allegiance.*

3. *Approval of Agenda:*

It was moved by McDonald, seconded by Yockey to approve the Agenda for the January 18, 2017 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

4. *Approval of Minutes:*

It was moved by Sommers, seconded by McDonald to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2016 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

5. *Communications – Petitions – Citizens Comments – None.*

6. *Presentations-None*

7. *Hearings-None*

8. *Sign Board of Appeals-None*

9. *New Business*

A.-Mobile Home Park Zoning Review

Sika summarized that when the Ordinance was reviewed. Previously MHP were allowed in several zoning districts. This was a good thing since it is necessary to have a place for them in the community but it is necessary to control the zoning district. Placing the mobile home parks into the MHP zoning would actually help them by making them conforming. If there was something catastrophic at this time, they couldn't rebuild without ZBA approval. The sale of Edgewood Park brought this issue to light. The solution would be to place all three mobile home parks (Edgewood, Kris Kay and Thomas Crossings) into the Mobile Home Park zoning and rezone them to that district. Iamurri questioned if expansion of these parks is currently possible. Sika answered that they could expand if they currently have the land to do so. Sika added that if it was agreeable to add these mobile home parks to the proper district, he would notify the parks and first discuss with the owners. He felt they would have no objection since it would be to their benefit. The second thing would be to educate the residents around the parks. He suggested putting together a one page explanation when they receive notice of the rezoning. Motion was made by Sommers, supported by McDonald to begin the necessary steps to rezone each of the three mobile home parks to the Mobile Home Park District. Motion passed unanimously.

B-Possible Text Amendment to the B-4 Area-Wide Business District to allow Multiple Family Housing again.

Sika explained that when the Ordinance update was done there was a one line omission from the B-4 Zoning District uses regarding allowing multiple family housing. If added back this would correct it. The other choice would be to leave it as is. Sika explained by leaving the line out it prevents apartments in the B-4 zoning district which have gotten out of control in Saginaw Township. It would also prevent duplexes, triplexes and other multi-family units. The Township Manager dealt with this in Saginaw Township. There are other zoning districts that would allow for multi family dwelling units. It is thought that there can be a lot of issues with non-owner housing especially in regards to how the property is cared for.

If someone wanted to construct an apartment or something like Swanhaven right now, zoning would have to be changed as well as the Future Land Use map for it to take place. Sommers questioned if it affects the affordable housing required as part of the Master Plan. Sika stated currently the Township does have affordable housing available, so it wouldn't matter in that regard. Iamurri felt that with the way the ordinance currently reads at least there is some control. Yockey expressed concern that if it is changed it could open things up that could be a potential future issue. Sommers suggested waiting for a two-three year period and revisiting this to see if there has been any demand for multi-family housing in the B-4 District. Sika said there would

be no harm in doing that. A motion was made by McDonald and supported by Yockey to table the decision and revisit the concern for one year. Motion passed unanimously.

C.-Roberts Park Trail Update

Iamurri gave the background information of the agenda item regarding completion of the trail extension. He added that as part of the Sidewalk/Trail Committee a study was presented that referred to the use of the trails and how pleased residents were with them. Sika reviewed the Power Point created by the Parks & Recreation Department showing the step-by-step process of completing the Roberts Park Trail Extension.

D.-Planning Commission Annual Report-2016.

Iamurri explained that the enclosed report showed the highlights/topics of the 2016 Planning Commission meetings and what had been accomplished. He added that a big part of it was the update to the Master Plan. He added that feedback showed they had done an excellent job with the update. A motion was made by Sommers, supported by Yockey to approve and file the 2016 Planning Commission Annual report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

10. *Old Business*

A.-Medical Marijuana Articles-Discussion Only.

Iamurri stated that several Medical Marijuana articles had been presented to the Planning Commission in their packets for them to review. This way they could see what if any steps might need to be taken. Yockey questioned Sika as to why Saginaw Township had passed an ordinance when it was his understanding that if nothing is done then these facilities were prohibited. Sika answered that it was unclear as to why they decided to do so but he was correct that if you do nothing then these facilities are not allowed. Sika added that he will continue to provide the articles and materials for the education of the Planning Commission. He added that in Saginaw Township on the evening of March 8, 2017, a training session will be held regarding Medical Marijuana and current laws.

B.-Revised 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Iamurri stressed to the Planning Commission the importance of their attendance at each meeting. He said he'd like if they could provide a thirty day notice for any absences, with the understanding that something such as illness or emergencies do come up.

11. Receive and File All Correspondence

A.-Thank You card from the Lamountain Family.

Iamurri asked that the Planning Commission be sure to take a look at the Thank You card from Diane's family. He added she was a great member and will be missed, as will all of the Planning Commission members that have recently passed (Bintz, Thompson, and Lorentzen).

B.-Planning & Zoning News-November 2016

Additional Comments: Iamurri referenced the MTA Magazine article in which Thomas Township had been recognized for the production and display of the Christmas decorations along Gratiot Rd.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Sommers seconded by McDonald to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. ***The next regular meeting date is February 15, 2017.***

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

