

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD MAY 13, 2010

Agenda

**SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE REVIEW (OSHTEMO SUNBURST 5K RUN/WALK) –
2345 NORTH 10TH STREET (PARCEL 3905-11-280-045)**

**SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE REVIEW (OSHTEMO TOWNSHIP) – 10645 WEST MAIN
STREET (PARCEL 3905-18-332-040)**

DISCUSSION OF CITY OF KALAMAZOO DRAFT MASTER PLAN

DISCUSSION OF ALAMO TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN UPDATE

A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, May 13, 2010, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Schley, Chairman
Kitty Gelling
Carl Benson
Fred Gould
Richard Skalski
Deborah Everett
Bob Anderson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Also present were Jodi Stefforia, Planning Director; Chris West, Associate Planner and one interested person.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. The “Pledge of Allegiance” was recited by the Commissioners.

Agenda

The Chairman asked if there were any changes to the Agenda. Being none, Ms. Gelling made a motion to accept the Agenda. Mr. Skalski seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

There was no public comment offered.

Minutes

The Chairman said the next item was the review and approval of the April 8, 2010 minutes. Ms. Gelling and Mr. Anderson made note of a few typographical errors. Ms. Gelling made a motion to approve the minutes with the typographical changes. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. The Chairman called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE REVIEW (OSHTEMO SUNBURST 5K RUN/WALK) – 2345 NORTH 10TH STREET (PARCEL 3905-11-280-045)

The Chairman said the next item on the Agenda was a special exception use review of a proposed 5K Run/Walk for the benefit of Oshtemo Township Parks.

Planning Director Jodi Stefforia introduced the request and reviewed her report dated May 13, 2010 which is incorporated herein by reference. She noted that the run/walk would occur on Saturday August 21st between the hours of 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM and would start and stop at *The Pointe* community center, a part of *CenterpPointe Church*. Ms. Stefforia then reviewed the special exception use criteria and gave information regarding the run/walk related to the criteria, incorporated herein by reference. Ms. Stefforia indicated that the applicant wishes to make this an annual event and is seeking approval for this year and in the future.

Mr. Skalski indicated that the Kal-Haven bike ride has staged from ~~*Center Pointe*~~ *Centerpoint* Church in the past without special exception use review and approval and he inquired why this event is seeking approval. Ms. Stefforia indicated that while she was not aware of that event, the present event is planned as a Township fundraiser and as such should get special exception use approval.

Mr. Benson inquired about the details of the vote that occurred at the previous Township Board Meeting regarding this event. Ms. Everett indicated that the Township Board gave approval for the race committee to enter into a contract with a professional race management company and that the Board did not give any special exception use or site plan approval.

Mr. Benson indicated that he would be more comfortable allowing this event to occur for one year and not give blanket approval for this event to occur every year. Mr. Benson then expressed his concern that there be enough restrooms for the expected crowd and that the race organizers pick up the refuse created by the race along the

entire course. Ms. Stefforia indicated that there would be 14 restrooms available inside *The Pointe*.

The Chairman indicated that comments should be saved for the Planning Commission discussion and that at this time questions should be directed to staff. He then inquired about liability during the race. Ms. Stefforia indicated that the Township's liability policy will cover the race. The Chairman then asked staff if there are any driveways along 10th Street that will be blocked during the race. Ms. Stefforia indicated that the southbound lane will be closed during the race and the northbound lane will remain open; it is not anticipated that driveways will be blocked. The Chairman indicated that he was worried residents would not be able to leave their homes during the race.

Mr. Gould indicated that there were a few residential drives along the southbound portion of 10th Street that would be closed. He assumed that a letter sent to residents near 10th Street would indicate that the southbound portion of the street will be closed. He stated his concern that residents would not be able to leave or enter their drives during the race. He also stated that he was worried about accidents that could occur between drivers and runners/walkers.

The Chairman then invited the applicant to make his presentation. Mr. Ron Martin introduced himself to the Planning Commission. Mr. Martin indicated that the run/walk itself would take about 45 minutes and runners would be broken up enough to allow residents to enter or leave their driveways. He indicated the race committee is working with Classic Race Management to make this event a success.

At this point, the Planning Commission began questioning the applicant. The Chairman questioned the applicant about the band that would be performing during the race. Mr. Martin indicated that a bagpipe band would be playing at the turnaround for the course, approximately 1.5 miles from start/finish line. He also indicated a jazz band would be playing at the start/finish line.

There being no more questions of the applicant, the Chairman opened the meeting for public comment. There being no public comment, the Chairman closed the public comment portion of the meeting and began the Planning Commission's deliberation. Ms. Stefforia indicated that the Township had received an anonymous letter in support of the run/walk. The letter also indicated that a trail along 10th Street, connecting West Main Street to the Kal-Haven Trail, is needed as soon as possible.

The Chairman directed the Planning Commission to judge this application according to the special exception use criteria for the immediate site, the start/finish line at *The Pointe*, but if Commissioners had strong feelings regarding the course design, they should say so.

Ms. Everett indicated that she would be abstaining on this issue because she is part of the race committee.

The Chairman asked the other Planning Commissioners if they had any thoughts on granting the applicant multiple year approval for the run/walk. Mr. Benson and Mr. Skalski indicated that they thought approval for one year would be more appropriate.

The Chairman inquired if the applicant had paid a fee for their application. Ms. Stefforia indicated that they did not. The Chairman indicated that since no fee was paid, it would not be a burden on the applicant to apply for special exception use approval again next year.

Ms. Gelling indicated that she thought the proposal would be a good addition to the Township and she would support granting approval to conduct it annually. She also said that this event would piggy-back well with Oshtemo Days.

The Chairman indicated that events like this could get out of hand but he felt confident that this event would be under control due to the Township managing the event. He also indicated that funding the parks is a good goal and that he hopes this event is a success.

Ms. Gelling indicated that the professional management, police presence, and planned volunteers are good for this event. She inquired whether this event will always benefit the Township parks. Mr. Martin indicated that this run/walk would always benefit the parks.

Mr. Skalski indicated that the Planning Commission needs to treat the applicant (the Township) as they would any other applicant and present an unbiased review of the application. The Chairman agreed with Mr. Skalski but added that all applications are different and they should all be judged on their individual merit.

Mr. Benson showed general support for the application but indicated that from past experience with the Perrigo Run he knows that many people attend these events. Due to the possibility of increased crowds in the future, he would support a one year special exception use approval.

Mr. Gould supported the application but showed concern for the safety of runners/walkers and nearby residents. He also stated concern that the gravel mining operation on G Avenue may be active at the time of the event.

The Chairman reviewed the special exception use criteria and noted that the job of the Planning Commission was to make sure this particular land use would not be detrimental to the public welfare. He was comfortable with what was being proposed.

The Chairman called for a motion. Ms. Gelling made a motion to approve the special exception use for the event to be conducted on an annual basis. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gould. The Chairman called for a vote and the motion passed 5-1 with Mr. Benson voting against and Ms. Everett abstaining. Mr. Benson indicated that he was in favor of the event but believed that approval for one year was more appropriate.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE REVIEW (OSTHEMO TOWNSHIP) – 10645 WEST MAIN STREET (PARCEL 3905-18-332-040)

The Chairman said the next item on the Agenda was a special exception use review of the proposed placement of a public water system pressure reducing station on a vacant parcel. The Chairman asked for staff to present.

Planning Director Jodi Stefforia introduced the request and reviewed her report dated May 13, 2010 which is incorporated herein by reference. She gave information about the site and indicated that since this is an essential public service with a building special exception use approval is necessary. Ms. Stefforia indicated that the site required a variance due to insufficient frontage and area; a variance was granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals on April 27, 2010. She also indicated that a front setback variance is also needed for the building and will be sought by the applicant at the May Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. She stated that the building would be similar to other pressure reducing stations in Oshtemo and that a driveway permit is needed from MDOT.

Ms. Stefforia then reviewed the special exception use criteria and indicated that staff believed the proposed building met the criteria.

Ms. Stefforia noted that Ms. Everett would be abstaining from the discussion and vote because of her role on the Township Board in voting to acquire the land for the pressure reducing station. Additionally, Mr. Anderson would also be abstaining due to his role as a liaison to the Zoning Board of Appeals he has voted on the variance that made this substandard parcel buildable for the purposes of the pressure reducing station.

Ms. Gelling inquired about any noise that would be created from the proposed building. Mr. Skalski indicated that a similar building near his residence only created noise when a technician came, which occurred about once a week. Ms. Stefforia and the Chairman indicated that the noise from West Main Street and the nearby private airport were more noticeable than any additional noise created by this station.

Mr. Benson indicated that the duplex to the east of the proposed station is very close to the proposed building and that landscaping should be added to buffer the view of the building from the adjacent property.

The Chairman invited the applicant to comment on the proposal. The Chairman indicated that the applicant was not present. The Chairman opened the meeting for public comment. There being no public comment, the Chairman closed the public comment portion of the meeting and began the Planning Commission's deliberation.

The Chairman indicated that this proposal is for an essential public service building and asked the other Planning Commissioners to give their opinion regarding the proposal.

Ms. Gelling had no issue with the proposal.

Mr. Skalski indicated that he believed screening the proposed building from nearby properties was important and that staff should work with the City of Kalamazoo to provide sufficient landscaping.

The Chairman called for a motion. Mr. Skalski made a motion to approve the special exception use with the condition that sufficient landscaping be added to help screen the view of the building from nearby properties. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gelling. The Chairman called for a vote and the motion unanimously with Mr. Anderson and Ms. Everett abstaining.

DISCUSSION OF CITY OF KALAMAZOO DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Ms. Stefforia indicated that the Township had received official notice of the draft Master Plan from the City of Kalamazoo which is now in the public comment period. Her review memo regarding the draft Master Plan is incorporated herein by reference.

She said she had reviewed the plan and was concerned with the future land use plan for the North Drake Road area. In particular, she had concern that the future land use near the cemetery on North Drake Road, Mixed Use, was incompatible with the adjacent uses in Oshtemo Township. The future land use plan called for high density residential of up to 24 to 36 dwelling units per acre and mixed-uses in this area.

Ms. Stefforia indicated that the City had considered a rezoning of this area to high density in 2001 which the Township had opposed. She stated that a working group of staff and planning commissioners from Oshtemo Township, Kalamazoo Township, and Kalamazoo City had met several times in 2004 to create a collaborative plan for the North Drake Road area. The working group, at that time, had agreed that high density residential was not appropriate in this area. There had been consensus that densities that encouraged home-ownership were more appropriate. In 2005, the City did amend the Master Plan to adopt a reference to the study and principles agreed upon by the working group.

Ms. Stefforia indicated that the City planners have been informed of the Township's concern over the proposed future land use plan. The City planners have acknowledged the Township's concerns and have agreed to change the future land use designation for this area on the plan once the public hearings for the full Master Plan are completed at the end of the month. The City planners indicated that the new designation will be "Refer to 2005 North Drake Area Plan"; the failure to do so in the draft plan was an oversight. Ms. Stefforia recommended writing a letter to the City Planning Commission confirming the change to the plan and reference to the 2005 study and expressing opposition to a designation of Mixed Use for this area.

The Chairman indicated that no official action would be taken on this issue and the Planning Commission should just discuss the draft plan. He recommended following staff's recommendation to write the letter as described. Ms. Gelling agreed.

DISCUSSION OF ALAMO TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Ms Stefforia indicated that the Township had received a draft Master Plan update from Alamo Township. She indicated there was nothing of concern to Oshtemo in the update. She recommended writing a letter to Alamo Township stating Oshtemo has reviewed the update and has no comment. The Planning Commission concurred.

Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Planning Commissioner Comments

Ms. Gelling indicated that she attended the Social Equity in Planning seminar hosted by the Michigan Association of Planning Social Equity Committee. She enjoyed the seminar and learned a lot from it. She said that MAP will host more seminars like this in the future and recommended that other Planning Commissioners attend them.

The Chairman announced that the DDA has two upcoming workshops regarding streetscape master planning in the village area. The workshops will be held at the Oshtemo Community Center; the first one on Thursday June 3, 2010 at 3:00 PM and the second workshop on Thursday June 17, 2010 at 7:00 PM. He encouraged the Planning Commissioners to attend these workshops to provide input to the consultants.

Mr. Anderson indicated that he talked with State Representatives and Senators earlier that day who asked him about the Townships truck route litigation.

Adjournment

The Chairman asked if there were any further comments, and hearing none, he called for adjournment. Ms. Gelling moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Skalski seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Minutes Prepared:
May 14, 2010

Minutes Approved:
May 27, 2010