

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD OCTOBER 14, 2010

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**Agenda**

**REVIEW OF DRAFT ONE OF THE GENESEE PRAIRIE SUB-AREA PLAN**

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A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, October 14, 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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bob Anderson

Also present were Jodi Stefforia, Planning Director; Chris West, Associate Planner.

**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 September 9, 2010 minutes. Ms. Gelling made note of a few typographical and content errors. Mr. Benson

made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Gelling seconded the motion. The Chairman called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **REVIEW OF DRAFT ONE OF THE GENESEE PRAIRIE SUB-AREA PLAN**

The Chairman said the next item on the Agenda was a review of draft one of the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area plan.

Planning Director Jodi Stefforia presented the first draft of the Genesee Prairie Sub-Area plan to the Planning Commission. She noted that this plan resulted from the public input sessions that were conducted to gather information from stakeholder groups as well as the input that was gathered when the consultants presented a preliminary plan to the Joint Board meeting on September 23, 2010. She asked the Planning Commission to give their comments on the draft.

The Chairman indicated that as this is a draft it would be appropriate for all Planning Commissioners to give their comments on the draft and then have the rest of the Planning Commission respond to these comments in a discussion.

Mr. Gould indicated that this draft was the best first draft that has been presented to the Planning Commission from the consultants so far. He also stated that he believed all of the public input sessions that have occurred so far have given the Planning Commissioners many opportunities to see how the plan has been drafted. He then went on to say that it is unlikely that the Township will have much control over how Western Michigan University develops their land and that the Township should be ready to address these issues when this area develops.

A discussion then ensued as to the correct vision for the Colony Farm Orchard property and how development should be planned in this area. The Chairman indicated that he has felt that WMU will develop their property in a way that is best for the University's interests. He also indicated that at this point in the planning process, it is appropriate for the Planning Commission to represent the will of the residents of Oshtemo and push for this area to be planned in a way that fits the overall vision that residents have provided through various public input sessions.

Mr. Skalski stated that from previous meetings with Bob Miller from WMU he has been given the impression that WMU will work with Oshtemo Township when the CFO develops in order to be good neighbors. He added that WMU has a history of working with neighbors during the development of the existing Business, Technology and Research (BTR) Park by reducing the impact on adjacent neighborhoods. He also stated he felt that WMU would work with the Township to implement development principles in the CFO area that are similar to those in the BTR Park.

The Chairman stated he was under the impression that WMU would like to allow light-manufacturing uses. Ms. Stefforia indicated that this is correct. The Chairman indicated that he did not feel that manufacturing was appropriate for the CFO area and he gave statistics from the public input survey and visioning sessions that he believed supported

his stance. Discussion then ensued about what types of uses would be appropriate in this area.

Ms. Everett indicated that WMU will want to develop this property. She also noted that WMU has a history of developing its sites with sustainability in mind and has not paved over the entirety of the BTR Park allowing room for open space preservation. The Chairman then added that he thinks that the relationship with WMU should be on more of a partnership basis and that WMU should be taking into account Oshtemo Township's desires for the development of the CFO property. He also said it is the Planning Commission's responsibility to assure that the Township's desires are put into the sub-area plan.

Ms. Gelling indicated that she would like the Planning Commission to have direct contact with Bob Miller or other representatives from WMU in order to better understand what they want to do with this property. Ms. Stefforia indicated that she would communicate with Bob Miller to try and get a better idea of what WMU would like to do in the CFO area in the way of manufacturing and then report her findings back to the Planning Commission with the second draft of the sub-area plan.

Discussion then ensued between the Planning Commissioners as to whether they were individually satisfied with the future land use plan for the CFO area.

Mr. Benson stated he felt that Bob Miller's comments were encouraging but that the Planning Commission must follow the will of the Township residents when setting the future land use for this area.

The Chairman indicated that he felt that traffic would likely increase along Drake Road if manufacturing was allowed within the CFO area. Ms. Gelling agreed and added that traffic is already bad at Parkview and Drake especially when classes are being let out. Ms. Everett added that she didn't envision a large manufacturing plant to be developed in the CFO area and that it would likely not increase traffic along Drake Road any more than other types of development would. She also stated that it is obvious that the CFO area will be changing in the future and that Oshtemo should plan for that change accordingly and in conjunction with WMU.

Ms. Everett stated that the description of the uses allowed in the Enterprise Park designation should probably be revisited and altered. Ms. Stefforia added that the Enterprise Park designation could be changed to include language emphasizing that it is intended to be an expansion of the BTR Park that is developed in a coordinated fashion through campus-like sites. She also added that provisions could be made that would not allow uses that would fit in the I-1 Industrial District to be allowed in the Enterprise Park designation. She also added that it may be appropriate to include a new designation on the future land use map for the CFO area because there is another area within the Genesee Prairie sub-area that is also designated as Enterprise Park.

The Chairman reiterated his point that WMU is the Township's neighbor and as a good neighbor they should be willing to work with the Township just as the Township has been

willing to work with them. Ms. Stefforia stated that since we do not know their exact intentions it would be good to get further input from them as to what type of and to what extent manufacturing is desired in the CFO area.

The Chairman asked the Planning Commissioners if they would feel okay with allowing staff to make changes to draft one, present a second draft to the Planning Commission, and then send a copy of the second draft to WMU for their review and comments. The Planning Commissioners agreed that this would be appropriate.

The Chairman then asked the Planning Commissioners to give their thoughts on the sub-area plan overall. The Planning Commissioners then indicated the parts of the plan that they thought needed some changes.

Mr. Skalski indicated some content changes as well as changes to the existing land use map. Mr. Benson and Ms. Everett also indicated some content changes. Ms. Gelling indicated that the document was wordy in some places and could be pared back.

The Chairman indicated that the entire document should be checked to assure that the correct tense is being used. He also indicated that he wasn't sure that the public input process indicated that the area designated Conservation Residential on the future land use map should include RR, R1, or R2 Residential District zoning. He also said he didn't see Enterprise Park description calling for manufacturing but said that provisions for clean industrial manufacturing in Genesee Prairie could be added to the document.

Ms. Stefforia indicated that these changes will be made and a revised second draft would be submitted to the Planning Commission.

### **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **Planning Commissioner Comments**

There were no Planning Commissioner Comments

### **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:  
October 18, 2010

Minutes Approved:  
November 18, 2010