

OSHTEMO CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AUGUST 14, 2008

Agenda

PUBLIC HEARING - LED SIGN AREA AND OTHER TEXT AMENDMENTS

DISCUSSION ITEM: MASTER PLAN

A meeting of the Oshtemo Charter Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, August 14, 2008, commencing at approximately 7:00 p.m. at the Oshtemo Charter Township Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Schley, Chairman
Deborah Everett
Lee Larson
Bob Anderson
Kitty Gelling
Carl Benson
Fred Gould (arrived 7:20 p.m.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Also present were Jodi Stefforia, Planning Director; Mary Lynn Bugge, Senior Planner; James Porter, Township Attorney, and approximately one other interested persons.

Call to Order

At approximately 7:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order. The "Pledge of Allegiance" was recited.

Agenda

The Chairman called for approval of the Agenda. Ms. Gelling made a motion to approve the Agenda as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Benson. The Chairman called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

The Chairman asked the pleasure of the Planning Commission members concerning the minutes of July 24, 2008. Mr. Anderson made a motion to approve the Minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ms. Everett. The Chairman called for a vote on the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING - LED SIGN AREA AND OTHER TEXT AMENDMENTS

The Chairman stated that the next item for consideration was the public hearing on the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding setbacks, LED sign area, sign height and lighting, as well as various other items. The Chairman asked to hear from the Planning Department. Ms. Stefforia submitted a report to the Planning Commission, and the same is incorporated hereby **herein** by reference.

Ms. Stefforia then proceeded to take the Commission through the proposed text changes as more fully set forth in her report. The Chairman asked if there was any public comment. Ms. Borgfjord said she was glad to hear of the proposed changes. She thought they would be beneficial to the community.

The Chairman called for Planning Commission deliberations. Mr. Benson said he was not comfortable in approving the LED changes after the fact. He said if there was a violation of the Ordinance, he did not believe it behooved the Township to correct the Ordinance to bring a property into compliance. Ms. Stefforia said that the party at issue had applied for a deviation from the Ordinance, and it was the Township Planning Staff who actually encouraged them to apply for a text amendment. The Chairman said that he understood Mr. Benson's reaction, but that the proposed changes were being recommended by Staff, and he understood how the Commission had arrived at this point.

Ms. Gelling thanked the Staff for their efforts. She thought that Staff's recommendations were warranted and should be moved forward. The Chairman again stated that he understood Mr. Benson's comments, but he thought the resulting outcome was good, and therefore, he recommended that they move forward on this issue.

Mr. Larson made a recommendation to change the proposed text in Section 76.130 concerning Grade, Finished to read as follows:

“The final elevation of the surface of the ground after man-made alterations to the natural grade are completed.”

It was the consensus of the Planning Commission members to accept that recommended change.

The Chairman asked Mr. Gould if he had any strong feelings against making the proposed text amendments, particularly the LED lighting issue. Mr. Gould said he felt that it was reasonable. Ms. Gelling agreed.

The Chairman asked if there was a need for discussion on the proposed change to Section 66.200. Attorney Porter noted that the proposed text would bring the Ordinance into compliance with State law. He also noted that he had never seen a depth-to-width ratio variance request denied by the Zoning Board, and he believed this would expedite these changes without any adverse effect on the public.

Mr. Larson said he understood the reasons for changing Section 66.200, but wanted to make sure that they still met the setback provisions. Ms. Stefforia pointed out that it was not the setbacks which were being addressed but the building separation. A discussion then ensued with regard to the building separation provisions. Mr. Larson raised a question as to whether the changes were consistent with what they wanted to see in a residential development. After a fairly lengthy discussion, including moving the building separation provisions to another location in the Ordinance, it was the consensus of the Planning Commission to delete this Section from the proposed text change and bring it back at a later date when the issue of building separation could be addressed separately.

Mr. Larson then made a motion to recommend the proposed text changes to the Township Board, as amended, consistent with the memorandum provided by the Planning Department. Ms. Gelling seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEM: MASTER PLAN

The Chairman said the next item up for consideration was a discussion of the Master Land Use Plan. There was a fairly lively discussion regarding identification of interests, interest groups and individuals to be involved in the Master Land Use Plan process. It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission that the Planning

Department and Planning Commission use all reasonable means of accessing diverse interest groups and to encourage the widest amount of participation throughout the community in developing the new Master Land Use Plan.

Any Other Business

None.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

None.

Planning Commissioner Comments

Ms. Everett reminded everyone of the Oshtemo Fun Days set forth August 16, 2008.

The Chairman commented on recent developments with regard to sustainable communities and encouraged reviewing recent articles regarding the same.

Mr. Gould asked about the proposed Michigan Association of Planning Conference at the Radisson. Ms. Stefforia encouraged Planning Commission members who wished to attend to do so and indicated that the registration fee would be covered by the Township.

Adjournment

There being no further Planning Commissioner comments, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Minutes Prepared:
August 18, 2008

Minutes Approved:
September 11, 2008