



"A Community For All Seasons"

Dexter Township

Planning Commission

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John Shea
Chair

Kenneth Tappe
Vice-Chair

Mary Adams
Secretary

Vickie Kooyers
Twp Board Rep.

James Korcek
Thomas Lewis

Molly Wade
Commissioners

Kim Jordan
Recording Secretary

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, April 26, 2011 7:00 PM

Present: John Shea, Chair; Ken Tappe, Vice Chair; Mary Adams, Secretary; Vickie Kooyers, Township Board Representative; Molly Wade and Tom Lewis.

Also present: Patrick Sloan, Director of Planning and Zoning

Absent: James Korcek

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

I. Approval of Agenda - Motion by Lewis, supported by Tappe, to approve agenda as submitted. **Carried 6-0.**

II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes - Motion by Tappe, supported by Wade, to approve the minutes, for March 22, 2011, as amended. **Carried 6-0.**

III. Public Comment – None

IV. Action Items –

1. Public Hearing for Master Plan –

Shea Welcome everyone and opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 PM.

Carl Lesser, 9221 Island Lake Road, Dexter – said he thinks that some of the proposed text in the Master Plan over-regulates property owners, which he is opposed to. He gave a few examples of what he thought was unnecessary to regulate.

Lesser referenced the current proposal of North Lake United Methodist Church to add a steeple to the church. The previous steeple was removed in 1947. He said that just the application fees alone to construct the steeple were going to exceed over \$1000.00. He thinks this is an excessive amount to charge for something that was at one time already there, and replacing it would not alter and/or change the foot print of the building. Lesser believes the Township is over-regulating the North Lake United Methodist Church.

Lesser also said he has a problem with the lot size standards in the Agriculture (5 acres) and Rural Residential (2 acres) Districts. Particularly, he questioned the regulation of having to have a 2- or 5-acre minimum lot size to build on. He said that is too much land for a home owner to maintain. One of the biggest problems they face is managing open space and the

wildlife. He stated that we have excessive numbers of sand hill cranes and geese. Also, coyotes have been spotted everywhere and are becoming a real nuisance.

Lesser also stated his opposition to having Commercial business only in one particular section of the township. He would like to see mixed uses and more small business throughout the township. However, the ordinance makes this very difficult for a new small business owner. There are just too many hoops and regulations to jump through and the permit fees are excessive and unattainable for some. He said we should have more mixed uses in the community.

Lesser said that he thinks the Master Plan is too restrictive and that we shouldn't be trying to control everyone and everything.

Shea noted that the Master Plan is only a guide for the development of Dexter Township and serves as a comprehensive view of what the Townships desires are for the future. It is not the intention of the Planning Commission to encourage land use practices that negatively impact agriculture.

Bill Gajewski, 9820 Stinchfield Woods, Pinckney – Had some Bioreserve issues. He handed out a memo with his concerns and comments to all members.

A copy of his comments/memo can be obtained at the Township and a copy will be attached to the approved minutes.

There were no further comments.

Shea closed the Public Hearing at 7:50 PM.

2. Discuss Medical Marihuana Regulations –

Shea gave an overview of where the Planning Commission stands at this time with regards to the Medical Marihuana Regulations.

He said that there was a local community meeting held; March 31, 2011, here at the Township Hall. Attendees included representatives from the Village of Dexter and the Townships of Dexter, Webster, Scio, and Lima. The purpose was to discuss what each community was currently doing and what their thought process was regarding regulation of medical marihuana uses.

Sloan noted that nobody committed that evening to working on a regional ordinance. However, another meeting is in the works that will include the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department to discuss potential enforcements issues that were raised at the meeting.

Shea said that the first and foremost issue before the Planning Commissioners is whether they want to register the care giver as a "home occupation".

Tappe said we need more time and he is in favor of recommending to the Township Board of Trustees that they extend the moratorium that is due to expire May 28th.

Sloan said that he has prepared a resolution for a twelve (12) month extension for the Trustees consideration that he will present to them for their May 17th meeting.

Lesser commented that there is no way we are going to know if anyone is growing marihuana. He is in favor and supports extending the moratorium so that more discussion and deliberations can continue.

Members agree they need more time to move forward given the circumstances of the Michigan Legislature and courts interpretation of the Michigan Medical Marihuana Act.

V. Township Board Update –

Kooyers informed the members that at the Regular Township Board meeting on April 26, 2011, the following items were addressed:

The Township Hall was filled with members of the North Lake Methodist Church which is located at 14111 N. Territorial Rd. This was in response to the information that the Director of Planning and Zoning, Sloan, gave to Church member Gordon Knight as to the process the Church would need to follow, as well as the estimated associated fees, to construct a steeple on the church: i.e. site plan preparation and review and approval by the Planning Commission for a “structural alteration” and a variance request to the Zoning Board of Appeals as the steeple would be located within the front yard setback of N. Territorial Rd. The Church will be celebrating its 175th anniversary this September and members want to again have a steeple on the Church as existed decades ago and have the new steeple dedicated at a special service. There was much public comment from Church members about the potentially prohibitive costs of the review process in relation to the scope of the project and some members felt that the steeple was not an alteration to the structure but a replacement of what was once there and did not understand why a review process was necessary. Church members also cited the historical presence NLMC has had in the community and the many services to the community it provides. Immediate remedy was sought from the Township Board to either substantially reduce or waive the application fees or to consider amending the zoning ordinance to enable the steeple project to go forward. The Township Board took action to schedule a special meeting with a few Church members to work through the issues at hand and would like to proceed in a timely manner in an effort to help the Church with its goals. I’m sure it would be greatly appreciated if the Planning Commission would consider meeting on a second Tuesday rather than a fourth Tuesday if necessary to aid in this process.

The Board approved Resolution 11-318 to amend the Dexter Township Zoning Ordinance 34-9 to be published April 28, 2011 with an effective date of May 5, 2011. The Resolution carried 5-1 with the addition of the words “and applicant if different than owner” inserted after the word “owner” in Section 18.19 J. and K. HOME OCCUPATION.

Kooyers reminded the members that there is an Election on Tuesday, May 3rd – polls are open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM; and,

On May 14th the Western Washtenaw Recycling Authority (WWRA) and the City of Chelsea are hosting a Spring Clean-Up Day for residents from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the WWRA facility. Dexter Township is helping to sponsor this event.

VI. Concerns of Commission Members, Director of Planning and Zoning, Supervisor, and Recording Secretary-

Sloan informed the members that Copper Meadows has been officially sold. According to the owner (Guenther Homes), they will soon construct two spec homes for show and 1 that is pre-sold already.

VII. Public Comment –

Lesser asked Shea if North Lake Methodist Church could appeal Sloan's opinion that the construction of a steeple is a "change of use" to the building.

Shea answered, yes. They can appeal the Director of Planning and Zoning interpretation of the ordinance to the Zoning Board of Appeal before coming to the Planning Commission.

VIII. Future Agenda Items –

Tuesday, May 24, 2011

1) Master Plan (Possible Action)

IX. Adjournment – Chair Shea declared meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Jordan, Recording Secretary

Mary Adams, Secretary