



DEXTER TOWNSHIP

PLANNING & ZONING

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DATE: February 9, 2015
TO: Dexter Township Planning Commission
FROM: Zach Michels, Director of Planning & Zoning
RE: Draft 2015/2016 Work Plan Recommendation

2015/2016 WORK PLAN SURVEY

It's good to have goals. This work plan acts as the Planning Commission's recommendations to the Township Board and identifies the goals for the Planning Commission and the Planning and Zoning Department. This work plan builds on the 2013 and 2014 work plans but differs by expanding from a one-year period to a two-year period. **The items are generally ranked by priority level, as determined by a survey of the Planning Commissioners.** Some items are not ranked but serve as a record of desired actions or areas identified as needing attention.

Staff has prepared a draft work plan in order to receive input from the Planning Commissioners. Where a complete consensus was achieved for a question, only that answer is showing. Where there was no consensus, the most popular answer is highlighted in green and all other answers receiving votes are highlighted in grey.

ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENTS

There are numerous areas of the current Zoning Ordinance, enacted in 2003, that need attention. Extensive revisions were identified as part of the 2013 work plan in order to make the Zoning Ordinance more user-friendly, remain consistent with state and federal law, reflect the Master Plan, and better reflect the community. The Zoning Ordinance Review Committee (*aka "Pizza Club"*), a group of Board of Trustees members, Planning Commissioners, Zoning Board of Appeals members, and staff, have been working on revisions to the Zoning Ordinance since spring 2013. Several amendments to the Zoning Ordinance have already been enacted as part of this process.

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Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Adopt an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance concerning signs.	High	2015
2) Adopt a new Zoning Ordinance, with the following identified amendments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Review and revise special land use and site plan review processes;</i> b) <i>Review and revise zoning ordinance amendment processes;</i> c) <i>Develop specific standards for unique neighborhoods throughout the community, such as the lake districts and Dexter-Pinckney Road west of Hudson Mills Golf Course;</i> d) <i>Clarify language concerning yards (front yard, lakefront yard, side yard, rear yard, etc);</i> e) <i>Review parking standards and revise, if necessary;</i> f) <i>Review and revise planned unit development standards and consider allowing for residential PUDs;</i> g) <i>Review building height definition and revise, if necessary;</i> h) <i>Review and revise fence standards for all uses;</i> i) <i>Clarify items that do not require zoning permits;</i> j) <i>Review accessory apartment standards and revise, if necessary;</i> k) <i>Review home occupation standards and revise, if necessary;</i> l) <i>Review storm water management standards to determine if more flexibility should be given to the Township Engineer and Zoning Administrator when reviewing/approving plans and revise, if necessary;</i> m) <i>Review zoning districts for consistency with the Master Plan;</i> n) <i>Amend communication tower standards to reflect new FCC and state laws;</i> o) <i>Amend extraction operation standards to reflect new state laws;</i> p) <i>Review livestock/animal standards and revise, if necessary;</i> q) <i>Incorporate performance-based, context-responsive, and form-based standards where appropriate;</i> r) <i>Consider creation of separate public districts, as outlined in the Master Plan;</i> s) <i>Develop administrative adjustment process;</i> t) <i>Consider incorporating other Township Ordinances into the zoning ordinance, as appropriate; and</i> u) <i>Others:</i> 	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Conduct annual review of (new) Zoning Ordinance.	High	
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	

Comments:

*Open space communities function essentially the same as residential planned unit developments.
Use Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner standards in revised zoning ordinance.*



ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS

A (new) Zoning Map will be prepared and adopted as part of the new Zoning Ordinance. A number of zoning map amendments have been already been identified or requested.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
<p>1) A number of zoning map amendments have already been identified as part of the new zoning map, as identified below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Washtenaw County West Lake Nature Preserve from Rural Residential to Public Lands;</i> b) <i>Klave's Marina on McGregor from Rural Residential/Lakes Residential to Recreation Conservation;</i> c) <i>Residential properties along Linck Drive from General Commercial to Lakes Residential; and</i> d) <i>Residential properties along Eastbourne and Westbourne from Recreation Conservation to Rural Residential or similar.</i> 	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>2015</p>
<p>2) Review the zoning map for consistency with the Master Plan, identify any changes that may be necessary, and incorporate into a revised zoning map.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2016</p>
<p>3) Review zoning map amendment requests made by property owners and incorporate into a revised zoning map where determined to be appropriate. The following properties have requested amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Residential properties west of Hudson Mills Metropark along North Territorial from Recreation Conservation to Rural Residential; and</i> b) <i>Residential property on the west side of Dexter-Pinckney between North Territorial and Peach Mountain from Commercial to Rural Residential.</i> 	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2016</p>
<p>4) Consider allowing property owners to petition for a conditional zoning map amendment as part of the new Zoning Ordinance.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2016</p>
<p>5) Other:</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2016</p>



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Dexter Township is required to have a capital improvement plan. This plan will help with long-term budgeting and ensure that the infrastructure and facilities that the Township maintains remain in good condition. Individuals have been appointed to a committee to develop the capital improvement plan.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Prepare and adopt a simple capital improvement plan.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
2) Revise existing capital improvement plan and add more details.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	



MASTER PLAN REVIEW

The Master Plan is intended to guide Township decisions concerning land-use decision and other actions. The current Master Plan was adopted in 2011. State law requires review of master plans at least once every five years. While a major revision does not appear necessary at this time, preparations should be made for an upcoming revision.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Review the Master Plan and identify areas needing attention, in addition to those noted below:		
a) Update Census data, as necessary;		
b) Update build-out analysis using most recent Census date and recent developments;		
c) Replace SEMCOG's 2035 projections with its new 2040 projections;	High	2015
d) Consider incorporating the Washtenaw County Complete Streets Plan by reference;	Medium	2016
e) Consider incorporating the CAPT/DART Access Plan by reference;	Low	
f) Update traffic count date, as necessary;		
g) Include pavement surface evaluations and ratings (PASER) data on public, paved roads;		
h) Update floodplain data with new FEMA date;		
i) Review Future Land Use Map and adjust, as necessary; and		
j) Others		
2) Determine Master Plan review process.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Prepare survey to support Master Plan review.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Prepare and promulgate request for proposals if Master Plan review will include outside consultants.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
5) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	



TOWNSHIP ORDINANCES

There are several Township Ordinances related to planning, zoning, and land use that should receive attention following adoption of the Zoning Ordinance. Review will focus on eliminating any conflicts within and between ordinances and ensuring that the ordinances are easy to understand and use.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Review and revise Private Roads Ordinance and incorporate into Zoning Ordinance, if appropriate.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
2) Review and revise the Land Division Ordinance.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Review and revise the Anti-Blight Ordinance.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Review and revise the Noise Ordinance.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
5) Review and revise the Dangerous Building Ordinance.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
6) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	

Comments:

Incorporate Land Division Ordinance into the Zoning Ordinance.

Incorporate Noise Ordinance into the Zoning Ordinance.



FEE SCHEDULE AND FORMS

Application forms and the fee schedule are the gateway to a new project. They should help the applicant and the Township and accurately reflect the Township's cost to process an application. With the upcoming revision of the Zoning Ordinance, many of the forms will need similar attention.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Review the Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals/Planning and Zoning Department fee schedule and revise, if necessary.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
2) Revise Site Plan application form.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Revise Special Land Use application form.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Revise Open Space Community application form.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
5) Develop Planned Unit Development application form.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
6) Revise Land Division application form.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
7) Develop Boundary Line Adjustment application form.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
8) Develop Sign Permit forms.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
9) Develop Administrative Adjustment forms.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
10) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	



CONTINUING EDUCATION

Because of the complexity and ever-changing nature of planning and zoning law and best practices, it is essential for members of appointed and elected bodies and staff to receive continuing education.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Continue to provide MSU Extension Citizen Planner courses for new members of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals.	High	Continually
	Medium	
	Low	
2) Provide on-site training for Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Board of Trustees.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Arrange to have speakers come to Planning Commission meetings from the Water Resources Commissioner's Office, Dexter Area Fire Department, Chelsea Area Construction Agency, etc, as time allows	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Despite the fact that Dexter Township has had zoning for over 40 years, planning and zoning remains a mystery for most people. Increased outreach will help reduce confusion and (hopefully) reduce the number of violations while engaging citizens in a productive manner.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Publish a regular newspaper article about planning and zoning.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
2) Develop educational pamphlets for the following: a) Zoning permits, b) Signs, c) Site plans, d) Special land uses, e) Administrative adjustments, and f) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Work with neighboring communities to speak at local schools about planning and zoning.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Review and revise materials available on the Township's website and reorganize the website, if necessary.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
5) Communicate with local businesses and realtors concerning the Township's sign standards.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
6) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	

Comments:

Internet is a better channel than newspaper.

Communicate sign standards with applicants.



CODE ENFORCEMENT

Without effective code enforcement, Township Ordinances exist only on paper and cannot appropriately achieve their goals. As noted in recent annual reports, the Township's code enforcement has significant room for improvement. Improvements are necessary to ensure timely, appropriate, and equal action in all cases.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Adjust and revise code enforcement processes and tracking mechanisms.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
2) Revise notice of violation letters.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Train staff on code enforcement process and expectations.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Investigate all complaints within one week.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
5) Resolve all complaints within 45 days.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
6) Review all older, unresolved violations and take appropriate actions.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
7) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	

Comments:

All complaints resolved within 30 days.



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Dexter Township is not responsible for maintenance of public or private roads within the Township, but it does provide resources to the Washtenaw County Road Commission and to some private roads for improvements or maintenance. A Transportation Improvement Committee will be able to gather data and make recommendations for responsible investments in the transportation system.

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Rankings may change and additional items may be added during the Planning Commission's review.

Description	Priority Level	Year
1) Develop a charge/mission for a transportation improvement committee.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
2) Advertise for and appoint members to transportation improvement committee.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
3) Prepare recommendations for transportation improvements for inclusion in the capital improvement plan.	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	
4) Other:	High	2015
	Medium	2016
	Low	

Comments:

Bike lanes to remove bicycle traffic from vehicle traffic lanes.

Establish policy for Township involvement in private road maintenance programs with homeowner's associations, determine and set funding standards.



CATEGORY RANKING

The general categories below have been ranked according to responses from Planning Commissioners from a survey. Individual items within the general category may have a higher or lower ranking.

Description	Priority Level
1) Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment	
2) Zoning Map Amendment	
3) Township Ordinances	
4) Code Enforcement	
5) Capital Improvement Plan	
6) Continuing Education	
7) Master Plan Review	
8) Fee Schedule and Application Forms	
9) Community Outreach	
10) Transportation Improvement Committee	
11) Other:	

01.23.2015