

**Whitewater Township  
Planning Commission  
Minutes of 3/3/2010  
Regular Meeting**

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Zakrajsek called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Members Present: Lyons, Boyd, Courtade, Mangus, Savage, Zakrajsek

Members Absent: Miller, Excused

Also Attending: Zoning Administrator Meyers and 6 members of the public

**Set/Adjust Agenda**

Add Budget to New Business #5 and Move New Business #1 following the first Call to the Public.

**Approval of 2/3/10 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Mangus: Under the Public Hearing, Mangus requested that “and held for seven days” be added to the end of her statement.

Motion by Savage to accept minutes with the change, seconded by Lyons.

**Motion carried 6-0.**

**Conflict of Interest: None declared**

**Public Comment: None**

**Public Hearing: None**

**New Business:**

**1. Affordable Housing Presentation**

Sarah Lucas, Regional Planner for NWMCOG introduced herself as a member of the Grand Traverse Affordable housing Task Force. She explained that the Task Force is a networking group made up of builders, realtors, lenders and government officials interested in affordable housing. Affordable housing invokes a different meaning to most. Affordable housing is defined as housing cost that are less than or equal to 30% of annual income. In Grand Traverse County, this equates to an annual income of \$50,000 for a family of four. The Task Force defines this as work force housing, i.e. police officers, nurses, teachers, etc.

Many of the issues that preclude work force housing can easily be addressed through zoning. Specific ideas to correct the imbalance include:

- Inclusionary zoning
- Approval procedures
- Dimensional Requirements
- Mixed Using Types
- Accessory Structures

Another important thing to consider is where you locate housing types – proximity to services is key. She provided the Commissioners handouts and directed them to their website for additional information.

**Reports:**

Meyers stated she had done things differently regarding reports. She has included a copy of all standing committee minutes. This way the Commissioners would be able to review all minutes thoroughly and ask specific questions instead of two minute summaries.

Mangus asked that all master Plan Committee minutes be included as well.

**Correspondence: GAAMPS**

**Zoning Administrator: Report attached**

**Road Committee: Minutes attached**

**Disaster Plan Committee: Minutes attached**

**TC TALUS: Minutes attached**

**Township Board Representative, Boyd:** Update on Emergency Service committee (minutes attached) – The lack of communication with Elk Rapids, Acme, Rural and Metro is pathetic; Township Board Meeting - working on budget issues. All wages have been frozen. Needed equipment will be funded if possible. While required equipment is the responsibility of Rural Fire, they have no money. The Board doesn't want to compromise the safety of our volunteers. Also, Solid Waste has asked all elected officials to complete a survey regarding their wishes for recycling and solid waste plans for the future.

**Chair, Zakrajsek: None**

**Old Business:**

**1. Master Plan** – Meyers stated that she didn't provide any information regarding the Master Plan. It is time to determine what direction we should go with this. Several of the members have asked for an 8 page or 20 page document. State law now determines minimum requirements per a handout that was in an earlier packet. This document cannot be measured in inches or pages. The mission is to accomplish the goal – a plan that addresses the Township's desires for development and also meets, at a minimum, Statute requirements.

Meyers will condense the 17 page document of musts, shalls and shoulds of the MSU document and reassemble the disc with sample plans for commissioners and forward to all members next week.

The next PC meeting will be devoted to Master Plan discussion.

**New Business**

**2. Temporary Structures** – Meyers updated the Commissions regarding the last ZBA meeting in February. As the PC recalls, ZBA Liaison Miller reported at the January meeting that the ZBA had requested that the PC consider amending the Zoning Ordinance with regard to temporary structures. Three of the last ten cases have dealt with the allowance of an existing home to be used during the construction of a new home. All three requests were granted with conditions. At the February meeting the ZBA was

asked to consider the use of a travel trailer on a temporary basis until a home could be built. The request was denied due to several factors including lack of sanitary facilities and no permits being pulled as of yet for the new home.

The question is now, should the Planning Commission consider an ordinance to allow for the use of temporary structures during the construction of a home?

Savage stated that times are different from when he grew up – sanitary issues are now of great concern.

Mangus said that there is a need for a way for all people to move up. Property rights must be addressed.

Savage added that this is not up north anymore.

Boyd asked how far do we go with this? Where should it be allowed?

Mangus said that we should allow for temporary seasonal housing with proper sanitary facilities.

Courtade added that property values must be protected.

Boyd stated that if you want to recreationally camp, go to a campground.

Meyers asked the Commissioners to first answer the first question – Should the ZA be directed to prepare language to allow for the use of an existing house while a new home is constructed? The Commission responded yes.

Next, the Commissioners were asked if the ZA should be directed to prepare language to allow the use of a temporary structure during the construction of a new home. After additional discussion, the Commissioners agreed to look at language for consideration.

Meyers stated that she would begin work on the issues and bring it back to the May meeting.

**3. Should we regulate outdoor wood furnaces?** Chairman Zakrajsek asked that this item be placed on the agenda.

Savage asked if the Commission members liked wood furnaces or not?

Boyd stated that some allowances may be needed to protect against smoke and blight.

Zakrajsek added that some are very tastefully done while others are less attractive. He is concerned that there are no regulations dealing with what is burned in them.

Courtade asked if we should be concerned with height, smoke, setbacks, location? Elk Rapids Township and Village have both banned them. Also, that we need to address the issue as energy needs are changing. She also mentioned that the Citizen Planner has boiler plate language available.

Mangus feels that we should start with generic language.

Meyers will prepare information for discussion at the May meeting.

**Public Comment:** Mike Jacobsen, 7031 Skegemog Point Road, said that he appreciates the comments made about limited zoning controls. Further he feels that the way property values are determined is wrong. Value cannot always be measured in dollars, but that history, memories and happiness must be considered.

**Continuing Education – Master Citizen Planner Presentation – Lois MacLean**  
Postponed until next meeting.

**Motion to adjourn at 8:58 pm** by Savage, seconded by Boyd. **Motion carried 6-0.**  
Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie Meyers