

- D R A F T -

**Whitewater Township Planning Commission
Minutes of 06/03/09 Regular Meeting**

Call to Order

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

Roll Call

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

Members Absent: None.

Also Attending: Planning/Zoning Administrator Meyers, Planning Intern Akers, Recording Secretary Pulver, and 7 others.

Set/Adjust Agenda

The agenda was set as written.

Approval of Minutes

Meyers stated the 05/06/09 minutes should be amended to reflect the publication date of 04/23/09 in the Elk Rapids News for the Sign Ordinance Public Hearing. Mangus moved, seconded by Lyons, to approve the 05/06/09 Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. **Motion approved 7-0.**

Conflict of Interest

None.

Public Comment

None.

Reports

Correspondence

Meyers stated the Township Board considered amendments to the Planning Commission Bylaws as presented by the Planning Commission and adopted a version without the revised language regarding conflict of interest.

Meyers stated the Sign Ordinance (Article XXX) was approved by the Township Board on 05/21/09. The County Planning Commission identified minor items that will be reviewed and considered by the Planning Commission in the future.

Meyers provided her April 2009 Report (copy attached to minutes).

TC-TALUS

Meyers stated there was no TC/TALUS meeting due to lack of agenda items.

Township Board Representative

No report.

Chair

No report.

Old Business

1. Open House Discussion

Meyers stated a good response has been received to date from the open houses and from correspondence received from the public. Supervisor Lake requested that Meyers write a request for proposals (RFP) for the community survey (copy attached to minutes). Meyers stated the cost for the survey would be lower than the estimated \$8,000 - \$15,000 range if a random sample is used; however, she acknowledged the desire by all to receive input from every resident and property owner.

Meyers stated she identified approximately 14 firms, organizations or colleges to receive the RFP. The RFP may also be listed on some professional websites as well as a local builder's group from which to solicit bids.

Meyers stated if the Township Board is able to approve the RFP within the next week, a survey design group could be formed shortly thereafter. Possibilities of a survey design group were discussed with 3 to 5 members being the optimum number for efficiency. Members should include representation from the Township Board, Planning Commission (including ZBA) and a member of the public who is well-read and interested in Township issues. Several meetings of the survey design group will need to be held prior to 07/01/09, as well as several meetings with the consultant that is selected.

Discussion:

--Amount available is \$12,000, which was approved by the Township Board last year and carried over. The grant applications submitted were denied, so no additional funds are available at this time.

--Want to be able to reach all residents with a survey, both property owners and non-property owners. Would like to be able to cross-reference lists, such as voter's registration or other, to reach all Township residents and not send duplicate mailings.

--Ask the consultant if it would be appropriate to provide the opportunity for someone who did not receive a survey to complete one. This could be done through an announcement in the newsletter. The concern is to include input from all residents while ensuring the integrity of the survey process.

Meyers and other Planning Commission members discussed the potential composition of a survey design group that would ideally represent all interests of the Township. Scheduling difficulties/time commitment of people who may be very qualified and interested but are tied up with the growing season or who may otherwise be unavailable were considered.

Boyd moved, seconded by Savage, to request that the Township Board consider appointing a Survey Design Group at a special meeting with the following recommendations:

Ardella Benak
Arnell Boyd

Township Board representative
Township Board/Planning Commission representative

- D R A F T -

Kimberly Mangus	Planning Commission representative
Patrick Miller	Planning Commission/ZBA representative
Vaughn Harshfield	Public at Large representative
Leslie Meyers	Planning Commission representative

Roll call vote: Lyons, yes; Mangus, yes; Miller, yes; Savage, yes; Zakrajsek, yes; Boyd, yes; Courtade, yes. Motion approved 7-0.

Meyers suggested that the group that is selected should immediately begin to meet and formulate topics and survey questions.

2. ZBA Ordinance

Meyers stated the public hearing on this matter will be heard on 07/01/09 due to a publishing error.

New Business

1. Pre-Application Conference

Meyers stated she held a pre-application conference today and explained the procedure she used. She assembled the Planning Commission Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and herself, and met with the prospective applicants to discuss their proposal prior to receiving a formal application. Meyers asked for discussion and feedback from the members.

Discussion:

--Good interchange with the participants. Even though no approvals or guarantees are provided at the conference, it gives everyone the opportunity to meet informally and find out some of the concerns and expectations. Great concept from the perspective of a developer.

--Will take out much of the guesswork on the part of the individual that comes before the Planning Commission; they will learn what will be expected of them when they do come before the Planning Commission with their request.

--Members of the pre-application conference will change yearly as officers change. If one of the members cannot attend, the Zoning Administrator can find another member who is available.

--There is merit to making the process part of the regular policy. The practice was informally done when the pet resort concept was recently presented to the Planning Commission. The informality makes for an easier verbal exchange. Also, a level of engineering can be removed if some concerns are noted and resolved before submitting a formal proposal.

--Meyers stated she enjoyed being able to tell them her concerns from her perspective but not necessarily how to specifically address them--items they may not have considered previously. It provides feedback for the prospective applicant to consider before taking their proposal to the Planning Commission. At the meeting held today, as an example, she stated her concerns. They were not ready to address them, but now they can think about it while they develop their plan.

--This will provide an opportunity to get to know some of the members of the Planning Commission and they can feel at ease and feel like they are being heard. They will feel welcomed by Township representatives and if the meeting goes well, they will be encouraged to progress with their ideas. Unless they are seasoned developers, it may be the first time going before such a board.

--Meyers stated she doesn't foresee many professional seasoned developers coming before the

- DRAFT -

Planning Commission; she sees property owners creatively dealing with issues that everyone is facing right now with difficult economic times.

--Word will get out that the Township is viewed as progressive and user-friendly.

Meyers will work on including the pre-application meeting into the site plan section of the Zoning Ordinance. She guessed that the larger developers will already know what will be expected regarding zoning and other requirements or they will find it on the web site.

Public Comment

None.

Continuing Education - Lakefront Issues

Motion by Boyd, second by Lyons, to table Continuing Education - Lakefront Issues to 07/01/09 to enable use of the Power Point presentation on a slideshow projector. Motion approved 7-0.

Motion by Boyd, second by Savage, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion approved 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Pulver, Recording Secretary