

WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING
In-person and via ZOOM
October 6, 2021

Call to Order at 7:07 p.m.

Roll Call: In person: Mangus, Jacobson, Wroubel, via Zoom: Dean,

Unfilled seats: Two commissioners, Board Representative and PC Representative to the ZBA unassigned

Also in attendance: Zoning Administrator Hall and Recording Secretary MacLean

Set / Adjust Agenda: Add New Business: Discussion of meeting dates and move unfinished business #1 Mr. Grobbel before Reports

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: None.

Public Comment:

Linda Slopsema, 9693 Miami Beach Rd, a lot of good information came from the field trips. Other communities use overlay districts and the industrial districts.

Denise Peltonen, address, Kalkaska and Cadillac had industrial areas in disrepair, renovated and helped. Notes there are known power issues in other states.

Public Hearing: None

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Jacobson, second by Wroubel to approve September 8, 2021, meeting minutes.

Roll call: Dean-yes; Jacobson-yes; Mangus-yes; Wroubel-yes. All in favor. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Notes from the people who attended the field trips will be part of next month's correspondence.

Reports:

Zoning Administrator Report, Hall: Be prepared for a preliminary site plan review next month.

Risk management presentation.

Magazines provided for pertinent information. Non-conforming use is something that should be addressed in the zoning.

Michigan Planner magazine regarding relationship of Master Plan to zoning. Will get everyone a copy.

December 8, Home Occupation virtual/on-line training. Contact the Clerk.

Can do sub plans within the master plan. Receiving a lot of calls of interest on the M72 corridor.

Chair's Report, Mangus: Township Board Rep report. Failure to communicate with the board is a long term problem with the PC.

Township Board Rep., Not assigned

ZBA Representative,: Not assigned

Committee Reports: None.

Additional Items: None.

Unfinished Business:

1. Master Plan Review, Mr. Grobbel:

Grobbel addressing the Master Plan review.

Time frame is approximately 12 months or less. Five main items to bring current into state conformity.

Would like an editable digital copy of the current Master Plan.

In this next month update the demographics with the most current census data, probably 15 – 20 pages; will supply draft copy of the review; inventory of all of your roads and streets.

Within a couple months we will get an electronic survey instrument for feedback.

Facilitated input sessions planned for January or February and one in the summer.

The Master Plan (MP) is going to get longer.

You cannot do zoning (law) if it is not in the MP.

Marijuana needs to be included in the MP. Need to address the topic of marijuana as it moves forward for the next 20 years.

We will be talking about vision and values then we will tackle the details.

The last section is going to be zoning updates.

Is it appropriate to work on zoning issues that are not in the MP? Yes. We don't stop business.

2. Marihuana Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Status report: The board has agreed to start taking applications as of October 15. There may be some discussion regarding taking applications at the Board meeting. The Zoning Administrator will take applications and it is currently set for the Board to make the decision.

The Township Board just reduced the number of licenses to be permitted at the last board meeting.

Reports on field trips:

Kalkaska has a group that approves the applications, not just one person they recommend that it not be elected officials.

The other entities do not recommend accepting applications before the zoning is in place.

Highlights:

The three communities were very different. One was very pro (Vassar) and one very con (Middleton) that were down state. Vassar was all in, it was all about the money. Blight issue able to be addressed.

There are millions of dollars involved just to get started. These entities could buy up our whole industrial district. Big corporations work with them. Professionals addressing issues immediately. Crime was not a big issue. If we are not careful we will have a problem in our township.

If they can make the operations work within a village I don't know why we can't make it work in our Ag and our Industrial. Things can get big very quickly. Kalkaska has an interview before they can even get an application. There are good operators and bad operators. Building sizes. Got a lot of good input from the communities. We can make it work.

Mangus: looking at the ordinance we are working with, what are things you think need to be addressed?

Jacobson: building size, how we let the businesses into our community (pre interview). Vassar asks for funding annual to cover enforcement. Old buildings are getting a facelift and the community is looking better and makes property values go up.

Wroubel was impressed with Vassar's ordinance, would like to compare side by side. We don't have a police force. That (police force) is not in the PC's purview. "No transfers of licenses" is a general ordinance item.

Dean: Complete reliance on the state ordinance – if it is regulated at the state level they just let that be it.

Recommendation what you want to hold people to account on, spell it out clearly. Renewal / Annual license fee \$5000 each year – per the general ordinance not as part of the SUP. A different group does some evaluations throughout the year so there are not issues when the state does their evaluations. Law enforcement inspects facilities annually.

Get copies of the applications – that is the Board's work.

Mangus: Noticed that these other communities have their businesses in Industrial – expand industrial zone? Bring this more to the Industrial area.

Video training, step by step process. Did anyone get to watch the video? The first half is more pertinent to the PC and the last 20 minutes is specific to zoning. Try to get through it before the next meeting. They strongly encourage the use of a map to specify what can be done where. Can see that helping to streamline the process. At the general ordinance level they need to have a process for appeal.

Can be a multi-year process and a check list of what exactly needs to be done in what order.

Zoning ordinance is subject to a referendum.

Direction and intent regarding Marihuana ZO amendments: do we want to do nose to tail review? Possible subcommittee? Go through line by line based on the new found information?

The board does not need to follow the MP when they pass an ordinance. We will be doing both at the same time, MP review and marihuana zoning. Whatever comes from all of the other areas the Master Plan, the board, the vote, etc., we need to make sure we are putting out the best ordinance we can. We need to move medical through as soon as possible as there is no contention there.

We need to get people on the PC.

New Business:

1. Article 5, zoning districts, shifting to a map based system, as discussed with Mr. Grobbel. Will be addressed in the Master Plan review. Take the map, look at one district at a time, review and adopt each district or all of the

districts at one time.

Per Bob: Repeal Article 5 and then adopt the map Bob has been using and then look at each district. Overlay districts.

Get a fresh copy of the maps.

Mickey Dean is not available on Wednesdays for the next couple months

MOTION by Jacobson, second by Wroubel to move the meetings to the first Friday of the month through January.

Roll call: Wroubel-yes; Jacobson-yes; Dean-yes; Mangus-yes.

Continuing Education: video presentation, “MRA Municipal Marijuana Education 2021”, available on YouTube, [MRA Municipal Marijuana Education 2021 - YouTube](#).

Commission Discussion/Comments:

Summary to the board: Met with Mr. Grobbel moving forward with the master plan and the check list; reviewed the observations of the field trips; video training highlights; step by step of the draft zoning ordinance applying what was learned from the other communities; education information from ZA, Wroubel attended risk management training; Article 5 zoning districts; changed meeting dates to the first Friday of the month through January.

Next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 5, 2021.

Public Comment:

Denise Peltonen, permit applications compared to other communities (that is the Board’s purview), specific step by step. Heidi Vollmuth, private citizen, 8388 Winnie Lane, we have county and state police departments, concerned about the cost of police and availability and location.

Adjournment: 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Lois MacLean,
Recording Secretary