

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
4338 BEELINE ROAD
HOLLAND, MI 49423

COMBINED MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION

and the

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MARCH 31, 2008

Held at the Felt Mansion 6597 138th Avenue

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Bob Cook called the rescheduled regular monthly Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Al Meshkin called the rescheduled regular monthly Downtown District Authority meeting to order.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Roger Prins, Bob Cook, Bob Slikkers, Ed Stielstra, John Lamb, Dick Darby, Peter Ta, Marcia Perry, Bob Schaaffnaar, Steve Schilling, Al Meshkin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Al Dogger, Ken Draisma

ALSO PRESENT: Terry Hofmeyer – Township Supervisor
Ron Bultje - Township Attorney
Diane Ybarra - Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Bob Cook reviewed the February 6, 2008 Planning Commission minutes. **A motion was made by Roger Prins and seconded by Bob Slikkers to approve the minutes as submitted. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED.** Al Meshkin reviewed the DDA minutes of February 27, 2008. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Bob Schaaffnaar and seconded by John Lamb to approve the minutes with a change in the next meeting date from April 2 to March 31. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE III. OLD BUSINESS – None

ARTICLE IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. COMBINED MEETING TO DISCUSS THE BLUE STAR CORRIDOR

Al Meshkin introduced the Planning Commissioners and the Downtown Development Authority members. Al explained that seven of the DDA members are property owners in the corridor area owning approximately 13 of the 46 parcels.

Bob Cook explained that the Planning Commission has been reviewing the Blue Star Sub Area Master Plan and invites the DDA to provide feedback on the plan. At the end of the process, the Planning Commission would like to establish a document that the DDA can agree with. The Commission has decided to divide the corridor east of the I-196 Interchange as highway commercial and the larger mixed use industrial/commercial/residential. This does not affect the zoning but the planning portion of the process. Al explained to Steve Schilling that his property on 64th Street is not affected by it because he is not directly on the Blue Star Hwy. Bob Cook asked if any members of the DDA had objections to the way the divisions have been established.

Marcia Perry asked for clarification of the divisions and stated that given the explanation, it is hard to object to it.

Bob Cook asked that the group go through the document section by section. Ron Bultje asked if the official planning process has been put in place. Al Meshkin responded that the official process has begun.

Ed Stielstra asked if the introduction is official verbiage. Al Meshkin responded that it is and it will be part of the official document. Marcia questioned the second sentence in the second paragraph of the Zoning section and its affect on the mobile home park. Al provided the explanation that it would not affect the mobile home park. Al commented that the commercial zoning language should be updated. This document is in the planning stage for the Master Plan which will also involve zoning reviews with recommendations to the Township Board for necessary approvals. Marcia Perry asked if the DDA would be able to make recommendations to the Planning Commission in their planning process. Bob Schaafenaar asked why certain areas were lined out. Al Meshkin responded that he made the changes based on feedback that he received from the Planning Commission members to simplify the document.

Marcia Perry made several comments in regards to the verbiage used in the Natural Features section such as the working farms turned to open vacant land which is not entirely correct. Al will make amendments. Marcia also noted the value of scenic

views and how this natural feature should be noted in the document. Bob Cook reaffirmed that we are planning for change and not preservation.

Under the Infrastructure section the last two sentences will be changed to reference public utilities without specific details beyond that the Township has negotiated an agreement that provides public sanitary sewer east of the interchange.

In regards to the Transportation section, it was suggested to review the current speed limits and the State requirements for the driveway spacing. Bob Cook questioned the date on the Laketown Township Future Land Use Map. It should be 2005.

Al Meshkin reviewed the concept of "highway commercial" being more tourist oriented and recreational in the Vision Statement section. One sentence in the statement suggests bike paths and pedestrian traffic. Bob Cook asked if this type of use would be recommended in the Master Plan. Al suggested using the terminology "shared use path". Ed Stielstra suggested that this area should be inter-connected for pedestrian traffic of any sort. Marcia Perry stated that pedestrians currently do use the shoulder of the road. The new development should emphasize the importance of including such methods for pedestrian traffic. Al will draft new language for the vision statement to include comments made.

Marcia Perry commented on the ability to have agricultural zoning in the DDA to include the option for mixed use. Ron Bultje commented that the Right to Farm Act will cover this.

Bob Cook explained that the Blue Star Sub Area Planning Principles apply to both the highway commercial and mixed commercial use. Dick Darby noted the front door and building orientation under point two. Al will amend this section to allow for alternate orientations. Ed Stielstra asked if the deep lots might be addressed in this area of right of ways. Dick Darby noted that many of the trees on the Blue Star Highway are very old and would have to be replaced in order to maintain the tree canopy as noted in the document. It may be reworded to include a tree line and not necessarily maintain the tree canopy. Marcia wants some qualification to maintain those trees that are healthy and desirable. Al will amend the language to better address trees.

Marcia Perry questioned the change in zoning for the current agricultural properties. Al Meshkin and Ed Stielstra discussed the goal of the new ordinances. If this plan is directed to soliciting for economic growth and an increase in employment opportunities or to regulate what types of businesses might be invited to participate in the DDA.

John Lamb questioned the 500 foot requirement under the Industrial/Commercial/Residential Mixed Use Area. Al Meshkin explained that the intent is to have the commercial properties closer to the road and the residential

developments more toward the back of the lot. John questioned why he should have to stay away from the back of his property line to appease a potential residential property owner. Ed Stielstra explained that it would be more transitional and not so stark. John asked if the 500 foot is to be used as a buffer for the residential. Ed explained that there is no way to deal with a partial parcel so we feel this may address that. Ron Bultje explained there would be a buffer in the rear for the commercial owner. Perhaps the 500 foot is too specific and should be more generalized. Bob asked for clarification of what deep lot property owners' options would be for back lot parcels. Al explained that early on in the planning process, the rings would not show actual property lines. It is better to provide a more broad brush concept of commercial/industrial near the road and residential back. Bob Cook stated that once you put an absolute number it is difficult to vary from that. Ed disagrees that there should be a set number and not noted as a concept. Ron Bultje commented that if we would take out the approximate 500 feet, the general concept could suggest the recommended distances with stated guidelines.

Al Meshkin will make revisions and date the document and distribute.

ARTICLE V. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ellen Fitch of 3665 63rd Street asked for clarification of the commercial bubble extending to the 63rd Street area that is primarily residential. Al Meshkin explained that if public utilities are extended, it makes better sense to have it accessible on both sides of 63rd Street. Bob explained that this would also allow for a traffic signal if warranted. Ellen stated that the traffic comes from the south side of 63rd Street but not the north side.

Dick Darby stated that commercial properties facing 63rd Street toward the east would fit well. Ed Stielstra stated that there would be mixed commercial use options there. Dick stated that he would like to see a traffic light at that intersection. The highway commercial extends to the creek and the mixed commercial extends to 63rd Street.

ARTICLE VI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Bob Slikkers and seconded by Roger Prins to adjourn at 8:49 P.M.