

PROPOSED MINUTES  
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING  
4338 BEELINE ROAD  
ALLEGAN COUNTY  
HOLLAND, MI 49423  
(616) 335-3050

May 9, 2017

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bob Slikkers called the Special Planning Commission Workshop meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Slikkers explained the meeting has been called specifically to review the Master Plan which is required by the State of Michigan to be done every five (5) years. This can be done by hiring a consultant or it can be determined that one might not be needed. This will be part of the conversation this evening.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Slikkers, Linda Howell, Randy Becksvoort,  
Jim Lorence, David Weishaar  
MEMBERS ABSENT: David Weishaar  
STAFF PRESENT: Noah Sall – Deputy Assessor/Deputy Zoning Administrator  
Ron Bultje – Township Attorney  
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION

Slikkers started the discussion by saying that he reviewed the plan and thought about whether there are items of concern. Do we need something between R-1 and R-2 district zoning? There has been a lot of development within the last 6-9 months and asked Attorney Bultje for insight on upcoming trends. We should consider how to control growth taking into consideration citizen feedback such as what has been brought forth in recent public hearings. Does our current plan match our vision for what we see for our township? A review will also be a time to clarify any language as needed. If an outside consultant is needed, an interview process would be required to select the best suited for our township needs, one with a high level of experience specific townships similar to Laketown. Main Street was one consultant that has submitted information on their services.

Howell said she has given thought to the potential for an R-1.5 zoning, particularly on the north side of the township where municipal utilities are available. There is a pressure point between the older AG uses and recent development. She would also like the plan cleaned up as it relates to parcels that were grandfathered into their zoning, i.e., the Lamar property on 66<sup>th</sup> Street as C-2, is it still used as commercial property? She would also like to review mineral uses to avoid a situation such as the

Nestle versus northern township where water is being extracted in large amounts. Currently, there is no language to address a situation like that. Slikkers agreed, stating it may have been beneficial when the Flying J project was presented. We should be proactive in addressing future projects.

Lorence said as a newer board member, he will be an observer as he does not have the history the veterans of the board have with their knowledge and wisdom. He will make comments as he sees fit.

Becksvort asked if there is an advantage to having a resort residential area zoning. Would that be advantageous for Mac Hills? Slikkers said that is a good point as most all requests are for lots that are not in compliance with current zoning.

Bultje responded that residential resort has been discussed in the past but would recommend and overlay be considered as has been done in other townships. It may reduce the number of requests that come before the ZBA. Becksvort asked for an explanation of an overlay. Bultje explained that an overlay is a separate set of rules that would have the underlying ordinances of a given district to address specific conditions. Grand Haven used an overlay on U.S. 31 and M-45 to control the appearance of the city's entrance corridor so it applied to a specific area of the district. In regards to addressing mineral uses, historically, local units were not allowed to engage in extractions of natural resources unless you could prove the act is detrimental to valuable natural resources. The landowner may extract it, mine it to get it out and sell it. The theory is you cannot go to another area of the township but it is still the landowner's entitlement to take it out of their property as long as there is no impact on surrounding parcels. Slikkers said we have an ordinance on sand mining and Bultje said it is specific to a limited number of districts. Howell said when it comes to nonresidential use; can we put in anything that would limit the commercial byproducts like the trucks, noise, etc.? Bultje said absolutely we can. Howell asked if in the Zoning Enabling Act, is there a difference between extracting and processing? Bultje said yes. Bultje said some townships have looked at fracking in that context, not a huge threat here but if it becomes an issue, may consider including it. Bultje said another concept discussed last June was to require large scale residential developments (defined as more than 7 homes) go through the P.U.D. process. Howell added that some developers first ask to change the zoning and then come forward with the development plans later. Density calculations by zoning districts should also be reviewed. It will be important to have a clearly defined P.U.D. process in place. Howell said it made sense to rezone Copper Leaf from R-2 to R-3 but the next one that comes in, where it doesn't make sense. Slikkers likes the P.U.D. route where it allows us to consider. Howell said if someone comes in asking to rezone, and then comes in without a P.U.D., would we want to require it when asking for the rezoning.

Lorence asked how we know what our township wants in regards to density; you don't own land for other people's benefit. Slikkers said one of the things he tells people, if you don't like what happens with land next door, buy the land it so you can control what happens. People who own land can do what they want with it within the ordinances but it can be subject to neighboring developments. There are a few larger parcels in this township that are ripe for potential development. Slikkers said it seems the farther south you go people seem to value larger lot sizes and wildlife and not enough people in that area want to see big development and pay for the municipal utilities. Slikkers said the northern corridor will get busier with the new development because the municipal utilities are already there.

Howell said the other piece that limits it is utilities. If they are present, you can go with smaller lot sizes.

Slikkers asked commissioners for feedback on contracting with an outside consultant. Howell would like to see Bultje's language on large existing P.U.D.'s, it may be a place to start and then see if there is a need to hire a professional planner to guide where it belongs. She would also like to see a special use chapter on minerals. As for the resort overlay, unless it is drafted to make life easier for the Mac Hills, is it a fight we want to fight? Ron said we have talked about a different district before but think the problem has always been what is a uniform set of rules that generally applies to everything up there? Slikkers said the majority of the township is not concerned with what happens in Mac Hills so do we want to spend resources to make a change. Howell said in essence it puts the onus on the property owner and Bultje said when we say yes, we can put conditions on approvals as deemed necessary.

Howell suggested having Noah Sall and Meshkin research any grandfathered parcels that may need to be updated. Slikkers said it should at least be in our review. Bultje said a year ago Meshkin provided a list of developments with the average density to keep in our site as well. Howell confirmed with Bultje that there are no exclusion issues. Slikkers said the maps need to be updated and asked Sall how close are we to having digital maps. Sall responded Allegan County has updated their taxing maps in past 4-5 months and are all accessible on line to the public. In terms of the zoning maps, he feels they are all up to date with the exception of a few parcels. If an applicant's request involves adjacent property outside of the township, those maps would not likely be on the township website. Bultje said if they are in notice area even outside of township, they are part of the notice. Slikkers said he would prefer a bigger view for the applicant packets used for the meetings. Slikkers said he tries to get ever parcel that comes before for application; will google map it and also walk it if possible.

Becksvoort asked if the AG was reviewed last June and said he is not in favor of any change in that area. Slikkers said there was some discussion regarding that area. Howell said we should check on the neighbor south of Chef Container to see if they are interested in an updated zoning district, as in commercial or light industrial. Becksvoort asked what would be the estimated cost of a consultant. Bultje said it depends on the level of services requested; it could be a few thousand dollars or \$20-\$40,000. Slikkers said he personally would not want to get to the point of turning the project over to a consultant as he feels it would be money we don't need to spend. Howell said like any consultant you can buy ala carte services. Bultje said there is value is having a professional who is knowledgeable in township planning to share thoughts and exchange insights.

Following discussion it was decided to request Meshkin send letters to solicit interest in the project to these individuals: Tim Johnson, Mark Sisson, Phil Meyer and Andy Bouwman.

#### ARTICLE IV. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ryan Bosscher of 967 Laketown asked about the mineral extraction and if the critical dunes are protected. Bultje said not necessarily but is easier to prove serious consequences if they were mined. Bosscher said as a township resident on the northern border, when he was looking for

housing for his family, he found affordable housing only in Laketown Condominiums. He would encourage higher density with more affordable housing or require developers a maximum density of four units, not one on one acre parcels. He agrees that the southern section should remain more rural atmosphere. Bultje said some townships have areas where they plan for “x” amount of housing stock and set a maximum and minimum for density.

Mitra Delaney of 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue said thank you, good job and appreciate your words that how do we know what our township wants (Lorence) so good to ask people what their desires and thoughts are.

Tom Crum of 144<sup>th</sup> asked if there is any way to control the houses on the north side to be more affordable. You cannot find anything because the prices are so high, can you control that with the developers. Ron said no, only through supply and demand. Lorence said we can to some degree. Slikkers said he heard where we are in real estate cycles and if it hasn’t happened already, we would be over supplied so a pricing reduction should occur. That could happen in Laketown with the 200+ units that are just going in and could depress the price. Howell said it’s a challenge to have a lot of houses on small lots, what is that going to look like in a few years. The county maps are very good. Looking ahead, thank you for looking down the road rather than reactive. Look at the City of Holland, how much have they spent studying the Civic Center, they could build a Taj Mahal for what they studied so be careful with our money when you talk about a consultant.

Noah Sall said the county maps are really good so he will try to include them in future notices when appropriate. Noah said he will provide improved views for future maps. Slikkers would like the area noticed and right around the noticed area.

#### ARTICLE VI. ADJOURNMENT

**A motion was made by Becksvoort and seconded by Lorence to adjourn the meeting at 7:15pm. Chairman Slikkers called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**