

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Rhodes.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL FOR PLANNING COMMISSION** – Members present: Chairman Fountain, Vice Chairman Douglass, Commissioner Petrucci, Commissioner Colaianne and Commissioner Germane. Absent: Commissioner Kalenauskas. Commissioner Phillips arrived at 9:18 p.m. Also present: David Nicholson of McKenna Associates.

4. **ROLL CALL FOR TOWNSHIP BOARD** – Members present: Supervisor Rhodes, Clerk Ulrich, Trustee Hill and Trustee Kuhn. Absent: Treasurer Horning and Trustee Wyland. Trustee Phillips serves on both groups and arrived at 9:18 p.m. Also present: Director Olney.

5. **APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 19, 2004 SPECIAL JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION AND TOWNSHIP BOARD AGENDA** – Move to approve the February 19, 2004 Joint Planning Commission / Township Board meeting agenda as amended. Motion Germane. Second Colaianne. Voice Vote. Motion Carried. 9-0-4.

In item #5, change September to February.

6. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC** – There being no response, the call to the public was closed.

PUBLIC HEARING

NEW & OLD BUSINESS

7. STATUS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Drafts of the plans have been distributed. 65 days are allowed for any response from those receiving the draft. A public hearing will be set for the plan. The Planning Commission will adopt the final version of the plan and it will then go to the Board for action. The process will take until the end of June or possibly the first part of July for adoption. Input from other communities will come to the Planning Commission in writing for consideration.

8. DISCUSSION TOPICS

--Signs – Article 9 – Matt Germane is the sign specialist for the Planning Commission. He will be working with a committee that will meet in March to begin a revision of the sign requirements and regulations.

Compliance with the sign ordinance is a major problem in the Township. Many signs go up without permits or review. The Planning Commission has an issue with some businesses coming in and following the process for sign approval while others just put up whatever they want with no review or permit. Enforcement is a function of the Township Board. Clerk Ulrich noted that enforcement has to be a priority in order to get control of the sign situation.

Commissioner Colaianne suggested administrative approval of signs according to the ordinance requirements with an appeal process to the Planning Commission or Board for variations on the ordinance requirements.

Overly restrictive sign regulation can be detrimental to the business atmosphere in the Township. Trustee Kuhn stated that signs serve a necessary function for locating businesses, delivering information and should be easy to read. Regulation must be flexible.

Commissioner Germane suggested removing the Sign Ordinance from the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Nicholson agreed that this would make it an easier process to remove signs that do not follow the current regulations. A time period could be determined for the sign to conform to the current regulation rather than being grandfathered indefinitely.

Commissioner Douglass – Board input would be welcome in the early stages of the revision process. Enforcement will be a key component of change.

Commissioner Colaianne agreed and added that compliance will increase with serious enforcement.

Clerk Ulrich would like to see a philosophy statement for the sign ordinance. E-mail would be an efficient method to update the Board on the status of the revision process and to get feedback from the Board.

Trustee Kuhn - When developing regulations for signs, keep in mind the difficulties of enforcement of those regulations.

--**Lighting** – Again, enforcement is the issue to get the lighting to be what was approved on the site plan. Mr. Nicholson advised leaving lighting in the Zoning Ordinance since it is a land use issue.

Commissioner Colaianne – Not complying with the site plan is a per se nuisance. Enforcement may take some technical equipment and the expertise to use it.

--**Cell Towers** – Chairman Fountain – The current ordinance is outdated.

Mr. Nicholson – Encourage towers on public property so the community will benefit from the money collected. Towerless networks are being developed and technology moves forward.

Commissioner Colaianne – Licenses rather than leases are a better way to go and give the Township more control.

-- **Subdivision Ordinance** – The current ordinance is very old. Even though there are few subdivisions coming in, an updated ordinance must be in place.

--**Accessory Structures** – Review is needed on land splits which create isolated structures (a barn with no house) as well as setback issues.

-- **Research and Development Park District Article 26** – Updates are needed to have the ordinance ready for the coming growth including buffering between diverse uses.

-- **Article 29** – Director Olney – A flow chart for site plan compliance would help give consistent directions to applicants about the process of site plan approval.

Commissioner Colaianne - A new numbering system for applications would help when there are changes to a previous site plan. It would make tracking changes much easier.

Commissioner Germane left at 9:07 p.m.

Clerk Ulrich – The new ordinance provisions must include standards for electronic submissions of information.

--**Capital Improvement Plan** –The subcommittee is developing a timeline. A lot of analysis is needed to develop financing options for the improvements outlined in the plan. Parks and Recreation could develop a vision for the future and come to the Planning Commission with ideas.

9. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY – Trustee Hill distributed a document. It included bullet points from a Michigan Townships Association presentation. There are areas of the Township which have deteriorated or are in the process of deterioration. The areas must be contiguous. Trustee Hill reviewed the requirements to establish a DDA.

Director Olney left at 9:40 p.m.

Mr. Nicholson offered to provide sample DDA setups.

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Colaianne – A survey was received in the tax bill. The questions were not easy to answer because of the way they were phrased and that there was no context for some of them. The number of responses also impacts the validity of the survey. It does not represent a valid sample of attitudes in the Township. There should be revision of the process and the interpretation of the information gathered.

Mr. Nicholson left at 9:50 p.m.

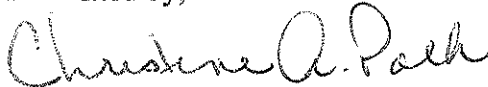
Commissioner Douglass – There is good information in the Planning and Zoning newsletter.

12. ADJOURNMENT – Move to adjourn. Motion Rhodes. Second Kuhn. Voice Vote. Motion Carried. 9-0-4.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

These minutes are a preliminary draft until final approval.

Submitted by,



Christine A. Polk
Recording Secretary



D. Kalenauskas
Planning Commission Secretary

Next Planning Commission Meeting – February 26, 2004