

**WILLIAMSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
October 19th 2010**

CALL TO ORDER

The Williamstown Township Planning Commission convened at 7:30 pm at the Williamstown Township Hall located at 4990 Zimmer Road, Williamston, Michigan. Chairman Michael Fielek called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

PRESENT: Chairman Mike Fielek, Vice-Chairman Rex LaMore, Secretary Gerald Eidt, Commissioners Rod Imhoff, Ger Schultink, Dali Giese, Joscelyn Brown-Timm and Board Representative Martin Wright.

ABSENT: Commissioner Ron Cook

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Consultant Chris Doozan of McKenna Associates and Planning Assistant Wanda Bloomquist

MINUTES APPROVAL

Motion by Eidt to approve the minutes of the meeting with the correction of the by-law recommended changes.

Seconded by Imhoff.

Motion Carries

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBLIC HEARING

Opened at 7:40 Review of procedures for PH

Rezoning request from AG-C to AG-SF.

Gregory Shannon

Parcel #: 33-03-03-08-100-003

ChrisDoozan reviewed letters addressed to PC dated 10/4/10 and 10/6/10

- Would Amend zoning map from AG-C to AG-SF
- Primary concern: depletion of prime farmland
- parcel could be split into 4 parcels depending on drain commission and health dept.
- two options available currently for dev in Ag-C
- could accommodate desired number of parcels as zoned
- loss of farmland-ag preservation important to township
- contribution of preservation not just farming
- irrevocably lost
- soils: some soils appropriate for septic systems
- if rezoning approved: perk required before splitting
- 27.06 review considerations for rezoning addressed

Summary and Recommendation:

- Is in conflict with the Master Plan

- Loss of 50 acres valuable farmland, in contrast with the Master Plan
- Reasonable use exist under current zoning
- Could create a domino effect
- Denial will not result in exclusionary zoning.

Recommend denial

Presentation by applicant: Greg Shannon

Disagree with McKenna

- makes it economically unfeasible to farm
- financial income & breakdown from farm-going broke
- Meridian Twp approval
- no matter how done-would make 4 parcels
- brought up past proposal
- use of Ag-so would be mostly pasture-mostly green space
- asking for consistent zoning of area
- can't afford to keep losing money
- hard to keep ideal of farming
- went through points 27.06 review points: 1. Unsightly small lots along road 2. Master plan outdated. 3.conditions are ag-sf 4. yes 5. no 6. cannot speak to it but would make zoning consistent 7. Yes 8. Yes. 9. Yes will stop development and keep in ag-sf will stop from massive development 10. no

Conclusions: 1. Yes but ag progressively less viable 2 no- need engineered septics - leases for a third of elsewhere 3. ag not viable 4. case by case basis no one buying farm land at this price examples of higher priced in 2006. Will be losing money 5. Aware there is lots of other ag-sf.

Recap of above – same privileges as neighbors. Noted density of approved neighboring parcel in Meridian Twp.

Clarification of two above points

Chris spoke with Meridian Twp Planning – approval of development has expired

Master Plan adopted in 2006- not old and out dated.

Public-

Those in favor:

Emma Hepfer 265 Haslett Rd: 80 acres adjacent to Dr. Shannon- economics does not cover cost of land. Does not object just worried how it will affect her- knows about the lost of money

Those opposed:

Lester Matheson 352 Shoesmith: McKenna did an excellent job of summary could expand on points Proposed use row crops; new use: not row crops but parcel development. Sorry for bad investment/ concerned about environmental impact. Stop off for sandhill cranes. Let's stop sprawl of development Larry Jorgenson 250 Shoesmith:. Reiterate bad investment-bought for sole purpose of development-not farming agrees with Lester.

Dennis Voldez 330 Shoesmith: agrees with mckenna and other arguments: add; Williamstown Township unique not Meridian Twp. very rural- adding larger lots and more development not characteristic of Twp.

Tess Tavormina 352 Shoesmith: environmental impact important with preservation under AG-C- Worried about stewardship.

Emma Hepfer-res since 1947. Will affect her if rezoned. Farm rental does not cover taxes.

Dr. Shannon: option for preservation will still create 4 houses-just asking for what others have.

Questions from PC:

When did he purchase? 2004 for hunting- not doing a lot that can be done on Ag-C.

Motion by Schultink to close Public Hearing.

Seconded by Eidt.

Motion carried

Deliberation will take place at the meeting on November 16th, 2010

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Nomination of Officers

Sub-committee consisting of Commissioners Giese and Brown-Timm.

Brown-Timm nominated the current slate of officers to serve 2010-2011.

Seconded by Giese.

Discussion: Appreciation for the knowledge, service to the community and time commitment of current officers.

Motion Carries

By-laws Review

Review of draft changes: Board was concerned with suggested language in draft minutes. Draft minutes did not reflect the actual recommendations. The recommended changes will insure that commissioner can participate as community member.

General intent to leave so there would not be an undue influence of fellow commissioners. Discussion of last potential conflict was with gun club site plan review and it worked well.

Motion by Schultink to adopt recommended changes with the addition of the word “commissioner” after the word “participate”.

Seconded by Eidt

Motion carried

Medical Marihuana

Discussion included:

- Discussion of white pages: excellent paper.
- Some communities: Federal law violation not allowed. Will invite challenge in court
- Hope definitions can come through from task force
- State addressing rules: following act.
- Wait until model from task force.
- Task force: caregivers and patient on task force? If not-should be.
- Issues addressed by Meridian Twp: not a business as you can't sell. Should stay as home based business. No authorization for marketing to a wide customer base.
- Validity of opinion of circuit court and Court of Appeals.
- Legitimate for truly ill.
- Moratorium for 6 months.
- Current status of dispensary: unsure. Discussion of Greenleaf- affected through court.
- Anything started would be illegally started. Only if legally started would be grandfathered in.
- A patient is exempt from ordinance. Caregiver also?
- Look for EL minutes of October meeting to see how they are addressing it.

Continued Review of Article 8

Y. Recreation Facilities

- (1)B Reference NDNRE regulations also State and federal for gun clubs.
- (1)E.3 fencing height consistent with building code?
- 2. add indoor shooting ranges- reference state and federal standards
- 2(B) add noise along with loitering

Z. Religious institutions: need to reference definition additions

AA. Residential care facilities

- Licensing: change name of state department

CC. Stables

- 1(B). Remove minimum 5 acres? This is in regard to stables. Discussion on minimum lot size. Should follow density. Agreement of 5 acres
- 2(C) setbacks: what to do when site plan is not followed. Non-conforming use could be issue when sold. Needs to be stressed about following site plan.
- 3(C)4 , 1(C) and 2(C) front setback line for pasturing and arenas- not up to road? Why not? Agreement: should be okay to right of way.
- Change setback also in AG-SF, RR and RE. Agreement.
- 3(G)iii Change \$ signs to bullets
- 4. Remove “bona fide farm”
- Discussion: Living quarters not in arena? Issue of accessory apartment. Must have principle residence before Arena. AG-C resident care taker. Agreed to leave as written

GG. Retreat Centers

- 7. Change Heading. remove: hours of operation, retain “no sleep over’s”

HH. Landscape Contractor Operations

- 2 Discussion: Problem with language regarding Skid equipment. Location of where this allowed would be reason for language. List language of where permitted. AG-SF is where currently allowed- minimum. Worried to turn into road contractor as HH is low impact. Change to what equipment can be allowed. Remove 1st sentence. Agreed

II Outdoor events

- Correct “AOutdoor” to “Outdoor” and change Application to # 2.
- 4(A) take out ‘may’
- 4(f) take out “=” sign

JJ. Nature Centers, Demonstration Farms:

- 6. Update agency names

Begin with KK for next review.

Please get suggested changes or discussion points to Planning Assistant prior to meeting to facilitate getting through the Ordinance Review in a timely manner.

EECBG Grant

Update: Sub committees are moving through the Trails and Greenways Amendment and the Grand River Green Zone Article. Review of the Trails and Greenways will take place at the November meeting.

Competition results and awards will be presented on November 16th.

The bus shelter has been ordered and will be placed on Grand River adjacent to the parking area at the park.

Planning and Board Reports

Township Board: Town Hall Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 24th at 6:00 regarding the ballot language for police protection

Planning Staff:

Commissioner Giese and Planning Assistant Bloomquist will be attending the Planning Conference this month. Have not heard as of yet from Meridian or Williamston regarding holding a joint meeting.

Planning Commission Chair:

Review of the meeting

Motion by Eidt to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Giese

Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Wanda Bloomquist
Recording Secretary

Gerald A. Eidt, Secretary