

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday August 14, 2024

Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Green, Murphy, Hollerith, Moore, Osetek, Forster, Dohan

Absent: none

Visitors: Ann Hylant, Joey Arbaugh, Ross & Denise Maunders, Brady Grump

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda as presented or with additions: **Dohan made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Forster seconded. All ayes.**

Public Comment - Joey Arbaugh from Pine Tree Trail voiced serious concerns regarding illegal tree trimming on the Bluff, the danger of washouts, road repairs from washouts, bluff instability, easement issues and tree trimming that is being done without permits. She also stated that the Shoreline Bluff Protection Ordinance should have been in place years ago which would be helpful in enforcing trimming. There was a lawsuit in the past regarding this. A letter was sent to Heritage Hwy from MDOT regarding the tree trimming and easements. Ann Hylant mentioned the letter as well regarding the topping of trees. Ross & Denise Maunders wanted their concerns regarding the Terra Firm Project/Bosker construction project on State Road heard. They asked to have the planning commission members come out and view the construction from their side so they can see the severity of the slope and the dangers therein. Concerns for safety of the people living near the slope along with property values were noted. Brady Gump also noted safety concerns and perhaps the possibility of Terra Firm constructing a fence on their side as Evergreen Subdivision Association has fencing restrictions.

Approval of 7-10-24 Regular Meeting Minutes: Correct spelling of Margaret Winslow's name. Remove sentence, "*HP will consider golf course rezoning to R2*", replace with, "Points 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were addressed and acceptable to the committee". Remove sentence, "*avoiding adding the golf course*" and the word "uses of". Replace with "Homes structures were discussed". Green asked to have the wording of, "*board of trustees*" changed to "Township Board". Chair Moore questioned if ZA Lane did in fact say in his Zoning Administrators report, "*They will be bringing forth a SUP application for a recreational area*". Lane confirmed that yes, he did state that. **Dohan made the motion to approve the July 10, 2024 minutes as amended. Green seconded. Roll Call vote: Green – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollerith – yes, Osetek – yes, Forster – yes, Dohan – yes, Moore – no - noting previous comment that the minutes still lack detail. Six yes, one, no.**

Unfinished Business – none

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New Business –

- a. Public Hearing for Case #05-2024 Zoning Amendment: consider the draft amendments to the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance pertaining to the raising and keeping of chickens as a non-agricultural use. Chair Moore opened Public Hearing opened at 6:38 p.m. No discussions from the public. Chair Moore closed the Public Hearing at 6:43 p.m. Letters were received in favor of chickens in the township. Green stated concerns about property values and home owner associations. Hollerith commented on the coop's locations to housing, size of the coops, fertilizer disposal, concerns about slaughtering, external illumination, whether or not a fee should be charged and concerns about enforcement for ZA Lane. Committee agreed coop size not to exceed 200 sq ft (16x20). All of Hollerith's questions/concerns were addressed and the board decided against charging a fee for chickens. Chair Moore asked for a motion to approve. **Osetek made the motion following a Public Hearing on August 14, 2024, stating I, Jim Osetek move to recommend approval to the Township Board of Trustees Ordinance #2-2024, which will amend Article 4 of the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance by adding Section 415, pertaining to the raising and keeping of chickens as a non-agricultural use. Moore seconded. Roll Call vote: Green – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollerith – yes, Osetek -yes, Forster – yes, Dohan – yes, Moore – yes. All yes.**
- b. Draft Application – Private Access Ways: This amendment was introduced in May, brought back for review/comment. Dohan raised concerns about Emergency Vehicle Access and dimensional requirements. Chair Moore noted the difference between a driveway which is for a single-family residence and that a Private Access Way leads to two or more properties. Lane noted there is specific language for Private Access Ways that have to have a site plan. Chair Moore asked if a reference to the code be added to the site plan application as to explain EMV requirements and rename it the "Application Checklist" to limit confusion. Hollerith questioned if these private access ways needed "street names" so EMV's could locate them. Lane will check into that. Hollerith also questioned if building permits will not be issued until after the Private Access Way was/is completed. Also questioned if there would there be a fee for this application. **Hollerith made a motion to approve with suggested comments. Forster seconded. Roll Call vote: Geen – yes, Murphy – yes, Hollerith – yes, Osetek –yes, Forster – yes, Dohan – yes, Moore – yes. All yes.**
- c. Master Plan review – Lane gave an introduction regarding the Master Plan. At least every five years, the Planning Enabling Act requires the planning commission to review the Master Plan. Lane noted that this review is right on time, a few months early. Lane gave three options for Master Plan review: Option 1 – Continue with current Master Plan determined by the PC that as it is written is good. Option 2 – Tweak or Update noting that the majority of the Master Plan is still relevant. Will require 42 days for review. Updating it would mean updating the demographic information to reflect the latest census, etc. Option 3 – Total rewrite, if needed, would require a 63-day review. If that is the case, Lane would share the community goals and objectives in the future land use map as those dictate irrelevancy or accomplishment. Lane asked if the committee needed more time to consider this. Chair Moore questioned what is the Master Plan, why do we need it. Lane explained that it's a conceptual document or guide designed to look out 10-20 years to

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determine the vision of how the land will be used in that future. Chair Moore asked the committee if further review was needed. Consensus of board is that it is an ongoing document and additional review is needed. Lane will include data from Rec Committee. Moore stated it would be useful to have the old map as a guide for future discussions. Brief discussions of commercial and agricultural properties being in R1 along with comments regarding water overlay and seven points mentioning natural resources were mentioned.

Other

- a. Zoning Administrator Report – Lane noted report in packet. Polo Field SUP received, will be on September agenda. Brief discussion on the number of horses, stables and their website where they mention private riding lessons.
- b. Township Board Representative Report – Green informed the committee of the ECRC report, 2025 project and the new sewer maintenance contract that was approved by the board and signed.
- c. Correspondence – Chair Moore made reference to the “Save the Date” letter received.

Planning Commissioner Comments (open discussion) – Chair Moore stated that Green discussed one half of Harbor Points history at the last meeting and he wishes to share the other half with the board. Moore pointed out the PUD concept that came before the board a few years ago had similar goals and objectives. The planning commission board at that time denied the recommendation of the request with the county agreeing. He noted the contrast of seven votes to deny recommendation versus six – one vote with this board to approve recommendation. At that time, the past board had a cumulative 65 years of experience whereas the current board has only roughly 6 years. Some board members questioned that if it was perceived that they didn’t know what they were doing. Moore just wanted it pointed out. It is very clear to him that things are different now with a new board, new zoning administrator and a new township secretary. He also wanted the board to know, in full transparency, that in the previously denied application the paperwork for the HP (applications and etc.) were crafted from the then township staff and the township attorney using township funds. Moore stated he was personally threatened with a lawsuit from the last meeting, that some members may have an agenda and feels that now is the time for him to step down and is resigning. Board members commented on his stepping down stating that while we all agree to disagree, they have enjoyed working with him.

Next Meeting: Planning Commission Regular Meeting September 11, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment: **Forster made the motion to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. Green seconded. All ayes.**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Jim Osetek, Secretary

Transcribed by:
Amy Peters

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