

WEST TRAVERSE TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday March 12, 2025

Chair Hollerith called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Roll Call: Hollerith, Forster, Thompson, Remus, Dohan, Osetek

Absent: Green

Visitors: Ed Taylor, Lindsey Dotson, Scott Thompson

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Approve Agenda as presented or with additions: **Thompson made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Remus seconded. Six (6) ayes one (1) absent.**

Public Comment – none

Approval of 2-12-25 Regular Meeting Minutes: **Forster made the motion to approve the minutes of February 12, 2025, as presented. Thompson seconded. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent.**

Unfinished Business –

- a. **Master Plan Review** – Lane recapped and provided a Timeline and Step Sheet in the meeting packet, noting that the Planning Commission is on track.

- i. Review Draft Chapter 1 – Introduction: Lane stated the Introduction is in its final form and noted the similarities to the current plan. Hollerith thanked Lane for his hard work and the time dedicated to it. Hollerith asked if the Commissioners had any questions. Osetek said it was informative.

- ii. Review Draft Chapter 2 - Demographics: Lane reviewed the Demographics chapter. There was discussion focusing on housing assessments and strategies. Lane noted the demographics have been updated with the current Census data. Forster asked about how best to address the housing situation. Lane stated that the PC needs to be comfortable with the strategies for the long-term language of the Master Plan. Hollerith had questions about defining rentals and how they should be named: short term, summer rentals, etc. Osetek questioned summer population versus seasonal population and if that should be addressed as well. Thompson questioned if the word “*should*” be replaced with “goal or intent” and that it needs to be reflective of the community. Remus asked about the definition of “*affordable housing*” and if it should be changed to “*obtainable*.” Hollerith stated that language is important and that it is reflective of who the Township is and that feedback from the community, during public hearings, could help with the language.

Proposed: 03-12-25

Approved: 05-14-25

iii. Chapter 4 – Existing Land Use: Lane presented an overview outlining existing land uses and how they are being utilized. Lane noted similarities to other communities. Dohan noted the need to update the references to 2019 records. There were specific changes noted regarding updating patterns of land division and clarifying recreational areas. Hollerith noted that Township 80 needs to be on the updated map and that Harbor Point needs to be referenced under “Pattern and Land Division.”

- b. Postponed decision: Lane referenced Case #7-2024, 6135 and 6331 Hughston Rd and the issue of the Polo Field application from Wesley Scott Devon noting that Devons’ has since sold the property. Lane sent an email and letter to Devons (included in the packet) inquiring about the status of the application. Devons response was that yes, they sold the property, and they will not be pursuing the Polo Field any further but that the new owners of the property may. If the new owners choose to do so, they will need to start a new application process. Lane stated that under the Ordinance, the board needs to deny or postpone Devon’s application. If denied, it will go to the Township Board for approval of the denial. Hollerith called for a motion to deny or postpone. After its discussion, the Planning Commission adopted the following; ***Thompson offered the motion: After holding a public hearing on September 11, 2024, and further considering this request at a public meeting on December 11, 2024, and based on the deliberations of the Planning Commission at both meetings, and the analysis contained in the corresponding memos provided by the Township Planning & Zoning Administrator, I, Molly Thompson, move to deny Case #7-2024, a request for special use permit approval as submitted by Wesley Scott Devon to allow for the parcels at 6135 & 6331 Hughston Road, parcel #'s 24-16-15-03-200-010 & 24-16-15-03-400-005, to be used as a recreational area for Polo matches, because the applicable standards of the West Traverse Township Zoning Ordinance have not been met as provided in the Planning Commission meeting minutes from September 11, 2024 and December 11, 2024. Dohan seconded. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent. Motion to deny adopted.***

New Business – none

Other:

- a. Zoning Administrator Report – included in packet. Lane discussed amending the Birchwood PUD allowing for duplexes consisting of twenty-eight (28) units within fourteen (14) separate buildings. A public hearing will be required, then if it’s approved or denied, it will need to go before the Township Board. The board discussed a possible conflict of interest with Commissioner Remus as he sits on the Birchwood Board. Lane stated that the West Traverse Township By-laws speak to “Reasonable Appearance of Conflict” regarding the Birchwood PUD. Discussion followed regarding whether to have a meeting in April or to push the next meeting to May so all Planning Commission members would be present for the Birchwood PUD. Dohan questioned if there would be any negative impact if the meeting were delayed. Thompson made the motion to push the Birchwood PUD Application to May to allow all Commissioners to be present. Dohan seconded. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent. Hollerith asked Lane and Peters to post notice of April cancellation on the website.

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- b. Township Board Representative Report – none
- c. Correspondence – Lane noted a copy of the letter from the Devon's regarding the Polo Field.

Planning Commissioner Comments (open discussion) – The board decided to add Chapter 5 to the May agenda along with the Birchwood PUD application. Hollerith asked if Lane needed to confer with the Township Attorney regarding possible conflict of interest. Hollerith expressed his thanks to the Planning Commission for all their hard work on the Master Plan.

Public Comment – Lindsey Dotson asked if she could email suggestions/comments to Lane. It was agreed she could.

Next Meeting: Planning Commission next regular meeting will be held May 14, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. unless a new case presents itself. Then the meeting would be held at its regularly scheduled date and time, April 9, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment: **Forster made the motion to adjourn at 6:37 p.m. Thompson seconded. Six (6) ayes, one (1) absent.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jim Osetek, Secretary

Transcribed by:

Amy Peters

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