

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, August 1, 2011  
2009 Township Drive  
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

**CALL TO ORDER:** Larry Haber, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Larry Haber, Chairperson  
Tom Jones, Vice Chairperson  
Bill McKeever  
Debra Kirkwood  
Jay James  
Absent: Brian Winkler (excused)  
Dave Spencer (excused)  
Also Present: Kathleen Jackson, Planning Director

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** by Kirkwood, supported by James, to approve the Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of June 6, 2011, as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES**

Bill McKeever – Zoning Board of Appeals

- Nothing to report at this time.

Debra Kirkwood – Township Board of Trustees

- At the July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board approved recommendations of the Parks & Recreation Committee for Hickory Glen and Maple Glen Parks.
- Also approved a motion for repairs to pavement at fire stations 1, 2 and 4.
- Reviewed contracts for Township officials in the Planning and Building Services.
- A firefighter's grievance was turned down.
- The Uptown Grille MMA event was approved for the second year.
- Sunday morning alcohol sales were discussed.
- The sledding hill was approved. It will be located on Welch road outside of the sewer treatment plant.

Jay James – Building Department

- Trilogy received their certificate of occupancy and they are operational.
- We are working on enforcement of A-frame signs as they are being displayed without permits.

**UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES (continued)**

Kathleen Jackson – Downtown Development Authority & Planning Department

- The road is coming along well. The completion date is scheduled for November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Supervisor Zoner, Jim Gotts and I had a good meeting with Dan Hunter, Manager, Planning and Economic Development, and Matt Gibb, Deputy County Executive for Oakland County.
- The Bike Week event went very well.

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None

**ITEM I: MASTER PLAN REVIEW**

Kathleen Jackson – The original master plan was initially adopted in 2005. Changes were made in 2006.

Staff does look at the master plan as the guiding principle behind rezonings and revisions to the Zoning Ordinance; however, the state requires that the plan be reviewed every 5 years. Therefore, 2011 is the time for us to review the plan. There are no specific requirements for the review; i.e. we are not required to notice it in the paper. The agenda is made available online, and the Township Board will have a say in this as well.

I have outlined relevant sections in the report.

**Chapter 2, Goals & Objectives**

Expansion of the hospital is a continual process. Senior Housing has been addressed. As for environmental storm water management, we are constantly involved in councils. Connecting land uses is part of the green infrastructure plan which is being utilized.

2-5 to 2-6, Residential

Kathleen Jackson – #7 has changed in the Zoning Ordinance to require certain standards in residential developments.

#8 is provided for within the Town Center Overlay District.

As for trailways, links and neighborhood parks; we have been consistent to guide these developments. Parks have been required within subdivisions.

#9 – code enforcement will always be an objective.

2-6 to 2-7, Commercial and Office

James – On #3, why does it specifically address Commerce and South Commerce Roads?

Haber – Is it because it's the main thoroughfare?

Kathleen Jackson – I will look into that.

**ITEM I: MASTER PLAN REVIEW (continued)**

Haber – On #1, will Martin Parkway be added as it is new?

Kathleen Jackson – This is generally directed at B1. That has been reflected in the Town Center Overlay, so it is covered.

2-7 to 2-8, Industrial

Kathleen Jackson – The new Zoning Ordinance reflects light industrial areas and/or the OR, Office/Research & Development, types of districts. This has been addressed along with the design standards.

#5 discusses developing new tools and techniques, and we have done that with the new ordinance as far as physical appearance, design standards and landscaping.

2-8 to 2-9, Recreation

Improvements at Dodge 5 tie into #2. #5 are goals shared with Parks & Rec. We should strike #6.

2-9 to 2-10, Transportation

#1 - The DDA has been instrumental in helping with Pontiac Trail and the corner at Welch. The Martin Parkway may alleviate congestion.

#2 - The Supervisor and I have an annual review with the RCOC. I will provide a copy of it to the Commission for review.

The east/west point at Cooley will be paved next spring. This is the entire gravel portion from Duck Lake east, almost to Carey Road.

2-10, Environmental Issues

We worked with Oakland County, Giffels-Webster and McKenna. A big part of this was with Dean Hay, Landscape Architect, and Joe Anderson. They were instrumental in making sure that the new Zoning Ordinance reflected the current environmental standards, including rain gardens, native species in landscaping, protection of wildlife, and high-quality water throughout the Township. A resident of the Huron Watershed Council gave a great presentation at the Township Board meeting.

2-11, Community and Public Facilities

#4 has been taken care of. Also #2 is being handled in a roundabout way with the Library and Township Hall.

2-11 to 2-12, Infrastructure

Loren Crandall at Giffels-Webster is taking a look at this. We will review it further at the next meeting. The objective to extend water and sewer service is being done gradually and logically. Storm water management is reflected in the Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan.

Haber – There was some previous discussion about a water tower.

Kirkwood – The discussion is still on the table.

**ITEM I: MASTER PLAN REVIEW (continued)**

Kirkwood – In the area of Commerce Lake, by Long's Farm, can anything be done to make it safer for pedestrians during apple season? It is dangerous.

Jones – A crosswalk?

Haber – Or a temporary signal?

Kathleen Jackson – I can contact the RCOC to inquire. Maybe the temporary signal from Welch and Maple could be reused to save on the expense.

**Chapter 4, Socio-Economics and Housing Trends**

Kathleen Jackson – The positive aspect of reviewing the master plan in 2011 is that the census data from 2010 is beginning to come in. As these are updated, the final numbers will be inserted. The SEMCOG community profile is provided with some of the latest census data.

4-1 shows the current population at 35,874. Commerce is one of the top 5 communities with growth, which is shown at 18.2%.

Table 4.1 on page 4-2 will be revised to reflect our population as well as the other communities listed.

Kathleen Jackson – I can tell you that our Household Incomes have increased in 2010, but the figures only reflect 2000 as of now. Vacancy rates, have increased from 2000-2010 in many communities, while ours have remained nearly steady. 4.3 was the average in 2000, and in 2010 it is 5.3. This represents a stable housing market, and we may be stepping out of the recession sooner than others in Oakland and surrounding counties.

Employment will need updating. As for education, Oakland County shows high educational levels attained by residents. I'm unsure how we compare with the county, but when compared to the state and southeastern Michigan, we do have a high rate of college graduates and post high school education.

On 4-17, we will update the SEV as well. If there is any other information the Commission would like to see, we will certainly try to get it.

**Chapter 8, Future Land Use**

Kathleen Jackson – Future Land Use reflects the changes from 2006 that we made to map #7 for the single family residential district. Does anything need to be changed on map #7? It shows the northwestern quadrant with low density residential, although we do have higher density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre in the area around the Lake Sherwood lakefront.

We have provided for some cluster residential which is shown in dark green. That is just north and south of Oakley Park between Newton. I don't think that is inappropriate to have that remain as cluster. We also have Baypointe as a cluster. We did have a cluster PUD that came before us but was not received well by the adjacent landowners.

**ITEM I: MASTER PLAN REVIEW (continued)**

Kathleen Jackson – On map #6, these do not line up exactly with the districts. The community commercial, which is shown in red, should be revised at 14 Mile and Haggerty Roads so that it aligns more closely with B2 and B3. This refers to 10-30 acre parcel minimums. If someone came in to rezone to B2 or B3, this text lacks common sense as there are no tracts of land that size. This also refers to buildings that are over 100,000 but not larger than 300,000. We would like to see this changed to reference smaller 5-10 acre parcels. I will put some thought into it and bring it back before you at the next meeting with an analysis of potential redevelopment.

There were no objections.

Open discussion ensued as the Commissioners reviewed the maps and discussed state land, Township parks and recreation areas.

Kathleen Jackson – On page 8-12, this will be completely revised as it refers to the golf courses, M5 connector and Commerce Town Center. We now have the PUD in the Zoning Ordinance. I can strike this and rewrite it referring appropriately to development of the DDA.

James – On 8-10, it discusses the public boat launch. This is being relocated to Wise Road.

Kathleen Jackson – Noted. Also on the last line of 8-10, we did do a retail market study and had a meeting with the Union Lake business owners. Not that we couldn't use another, but it was completed.

McKeever – This could say "periodic".

**Chapter 10, Community Facilities and Utilities Plan**

Kathleen Jackson – Giffels-Webster is looking at the utilities plan, but this will be brief. This is another place that we need updates as far as the Township Hall location. 10-1 and 10-2 will be re-written.

Kirkwood – While they are looking at utilities, they should also look at things like Comcast and encouraging competition and alternatives.

**Conclusion**

Kathleen Jackson – These portions will be rewritten and brought back next month. We will then review Chapters 6, 9, and 12, and we will finish the utilities in Chapter 10. I will await information from Giffels-Webster, and will also forward the annual review from the RCOC.

**OTHER MATTERS TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

**September Meeting Date**

Due to scheduling conflicts, the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting will need to be rescheduled to September 19<sup>th</sup>. There were no objections from the Commissioners regarding this change and Kathleen will relay the change by email.

**Road Improvements**

Ray Golata, 1595 Vanstone Dr, Commerce Township, inquired about road improvements and extensions at Cooley Lake Road and at Oakley Park at South Commerce.

Kathleen Jackson explained that Tri-Party Funds are being reviewed.

McKeever inquired about why the RCOC does not put turning arrows on the (pavement) on the turning lanes. They are necessary at intersections such as Commerce & Glengary and Richardson & Martin Roads. The lack of arrows causes confusion for drivers as some are going straight when they are in the center lane. These arrows are prevalent in other communities.

Kathleen Jackson stated that she will check into this.

**The next regular Planning Commission meeting will be Monday, September 19, 2011 at 7:00pm.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by James, supported by Jones, to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Brian Winkler, Secretary