

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING – AUGUST 18, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Chairperson Larry Shaffer.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Larry Shaffer, Lou Lundquist, Jenny Irvine, Christine Lundquist, Phil Bontrager, and Jeff Cuthbertson (via zoom).

AGENDA: Motion by Christine with support by Lou to approve the agenda as presented.

MINUTES: Motion by Lou with support by Phil to approve the minutes of 6/23/22. Motion carried. Christine noted that a reference to the township secretary in the July 28 minutes should be “administrative assistant”. Motion by Phil with support by Lou to approve the minutes with this correction. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Elise Cormier asked about three items in relation to the work on the Master Plan:

1. Will mapping be incorporated into the plan? It was clarified that she was not referring to zoning maps but rather items such as roads, natural resources, wetlands, technology, land use, water system, proposed sewer system, etc. The Commission members noted that some of these maps were already in existence. The concept of being able to overlay them was discussed. Larry indicated this would be reviewed with CUPPAD, but it was believed that at least some of this was already in the plan.
2. Prior Master Plans have several goals and objectives that are still being discussed. Elise asked what the process was for using the Master Plan once it is complete. She questioned why some of the issues were not previously addressed. Given that none of the current members had been involved with the prior plans, the commission couldn't address this.
3. Elise suggested that there should be a regular review of the Master Plan goals and objectives. The Planning Commission considered it reasonable to set up an annual review to consider where each item stands in the future.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE: Larry indicated he anticipated we would have some draft plan information from CUPPAD at the next meeting and anticipates their direct participation. Larry requested that members discuss items they would like to see included/emphasized in the plan being developed. The following items were discussed:

1. West Bay should have a prominent position in the plan. Items to be included would include at a minimum
 - a. Sand filling in the bay
 - b. Size and cleanliness
 - c. Water temperature and quality
 - d. Marina expansion
 - e. Limiting building height and not allowing trailers along the bay-shore area.
2. Affordable Housing – whether discussing affordable housing for the workforce or housing for the elderly, it was noted that at a minimum the Township may need to be able to provide land

in order to go after state or federal funding toward the building of facilities/homes. Jeff noted that the discussion of housing should also include the topic of short-term rentals as that created significant discussion at the prior meetings. He noted that we need to better define what we mean by “affordable housing”.

3. Sewer System – It was agreed that this needs to be a prominent discussion in the Plan to make sure the Township is prepared if funding becomes available and/or an issue causes an immediate need to implement a new system.
4. Economic Development and Job Creation – it was noted that we should try to identify things over and above “mom & pop” shops that may be possible to create sustainable jobs with benefits. It was noted that technology to promote “remote working” options should be included in this discussion.
5. Age Demographics and school system concerns – The need to provide more opportunities for younger people to live in the community was discussed. It was agreed that this is closely tied to economic development bringing in jobs and families, which could increase school enrollment.
6. Downtown Parking and Public Restrooms in the Downtown Area- It was agreed that these issues are ongoing and need to be considered in the plan.
7. Recreational Plans – These would include the proposed bike bath along H-58 east, trail systems, ATV and snowmobile issues, etc.

OTHER: Larry indicated that a conditional land use permit has been submitted by Mr. Peterson related to putting in a photo shop on Ridge Road. It is currently be reviewed by Calvin McShane and will likely come to the commission next month. Larry also indicated that the Coastal Resource Grant was approved for CUPPAD. The Commission discussed asking about this in relation to the monitoring of issues with West Bay previously discussed. Larry will ask if this can be reviewed at the September 29 meeting. Lou noted that the National Park has built a walkway and platform in the area that used to be the swimming beach at Sable Lake. It was noted that there had been a lot of discussion about the beach area during our meeting with the National Park manager earlier in the summer. We hope the Township can maintain ongoing dialog with them.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Elise emphasized the idea of requesting Coastal Use grant dollars for monitoring the Bay. It was noted that similar grant dollars are used in relation to monitoring Marquette’s harbor. She asked about needs, wants, and contributions by demographic category and what we could glean from the survey. It was noted that while the survey collected demographic information, the Commission did not believe the data was separable by demographic category. Larry will verify this. Elise noted the need to protect the water in all discussions of transportation and sewer systems. She asked if the process of updating the zoning regulations would include professional assistance from a specialist. Lou indicated that the Township has access to a list of organizations/professionals used by government entities. Elise indicated she would email Larry the contact information for someone she spoke to.

Phil talked about further discussion about alternative energy sources and that he was not satisfied with the presentation we received at a prior meeting the summer.

ADJOURMENT: Motion by Christine with support by Lou to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.