

Minutes approved 3/14/05

# *Bridgewater Township*

Planning Commission  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
February 14, 2005

- Location** Bridgewater Township Hall, 10990 Clinton Road, Clinton Michigan
- 1. Call to Order** Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM
- 2. Roll Call** Present: Glen Finkbeiner, Jim Fish, Mark Iwanicki, Amy Riley, Jim Tice and Dave Woods.  
Absent: Glenn Burkardt and David Faust.  
Also present: Shelly Pike (as substitute Board Representative)  
Wanda Fish, Administrative Assistant, Carlos Acevedo, Doug Frey and Derek Niethammer
- 3. Review Agenda** Chair stated he would add Bridgewater Estates and Bridgewater Farms as items under "Other Business."
- 4. Review Minutes** The minutes of January 10, 2005 were approved as prepared.  
Woods asked if Peter Moilenan's concerns had been pursued. Wanda Fish said that she had sent him material, referred him to websites and had outlined ways that he could request specific changes in the Zoning Ordinance. She said she had received a reply from him that he was too busy to undertake the effort at that time. Finally, she stated that she had indicated the Planning Commission would be undertaking various reviews of the Zoning Ordinance and would probably be looking at issues involving flag lots.
- 5. Public Comments** None
- 6. Establish Priorities for Planning Commission Achievements in 2005**  
Background material attached to the record  
Chair said he had an initial conversation with the Township planning firm regarding some of the procedures and costs. Need to establish some kind of work plan.
- A. Implement Wireless Plan  
Chair stated that he had received an estimate from the planner for language to amend the Zoning Ordinance would run about \$1000, assuming it would not be necessary for the planner to attend any meetings. Chair also stated that he expects there will be more requests for cell tower locations due to the consolidation of wireless telephone companies that would want to provide total coverage on highways. Also said that county is looking at southwest Washtenaw County for Wi-Fi internet project.
- B. Review Flag Lot and Access Ordinance Sections  
Woods: Note that the Zoning Administrator is getting calls from people interested in development, and believe we should move to tighten up and review all the ordinance, including flag lots and access issues.
- C. Master Plan  
Discussion of the state requirements for Master Plan and the steps that had to be taken.

Chair said that new plan or reaffirmation of the existing plan has to be completed by December 2006. Per consultant, first step is to update the existing conditions section of the plan, now a 25 page analysis of the conditions found in the Township. Then, based on the findings of the review of existing conditions,, the members can determine what portions of the existing plan should be updated or redone. You can go through a process to again validate the existing plan.

Woods: Any idea of the time that will take? Chair: Not specifically. Woods: Would make the most sense to begin the review of existing conditions. Chair: We could get that done by the end of 2005. The review process alone is around six months, because the plan is reviewed at so many levels, including the county and surrounding units of government. Glen Finkbeiner: Have to begin with an update and review of the existing conditions and then make a determination as to what has changed, look at the plan and decide. Chair: Agrees and indicates it is an extended process. Legislature's aim was to force the planning and require the coordination with other surrounding jurisdictions. Woods: What is the priority then? Chair: Lay out a process to complete it by October 2005, establish the budget to accomplish in two fiscal years. Question: What federal statistics come out that would make the timing better? Chair: Perhaps a census of agriculture and business that is updated more frequently, then the complete analysis of the demographics from the 2000 census. Bridgewater now participating in WATS. Carlos Acevedo: Saline has just completed a traffic study. Discussion of MDOT activities in area. Agreement that whole process should be completed by September 2006.

#### Commercial

Woods: Why has this not been passed by the Board? Chair: Not sure, we have completed the R-3. Nearly all existing commercial buildings in the Hamlet are not in conformance with requirements of the existing Zoning Ordinance. The proposed changes would have brought most into compliance. The document we sent forward covered only the non-Hamlet commercial in very minor areas, establishing parking to avoid strip malls. The Board assumed that if they adopted the new ordinance, there would be no commercial zoning in the Hamlet. Woods: Need to move forward for the next agenda. Decision the PC would review the proposed Hamlet commercial and the non Hamlet commercial, that the Administrative Assistant would check the record against the proposed Hamlet commercial to see if any changes discussed had not been made and then send both out for review by the Planning Commission members so they could decide at the March meeting. Woods: Asks if shouldn't do the Wireless Plan in March also. Chair: Assuming we have the funds because we need to use the planner.

#### Setbacks

Woods: Should plan on reviewing the setbacks as we work on the Master Plan, will know more by then about transportation planning. Chair: Agrees. Would just need to look again at the thoroughfare plan against the WCRC thoroughfare plan, and then look at setbacks. General agreement.

#### Kennel Ordinance

Chair: Township has two existing kennels, apparently no problems. Woods: The ordinance hasn't let us down so much as we have had enforcement problems. Chair: May want to look at the parcel size. The two existing kennels are on very large parcels. Woods: Then look at it in April or May, along with flag lot issues.

#### General Ordinance Review

Woods: Should be done as an ongoing.

Chair: Relates the schedule, asks the Administrative Assistant to prepare a schedule based on the discussion.

Clarification there should also be a time line for the Master Plan review process.

Pike: Asks if there has been discussion of open space or should be? Chair: Stated that since the implementation ordinance had been voted down, the Planning Commission had not readdressed how to further implement the open space requirements of the Master Plan. Pike: Asks if there would be another survey or questionnaire of the taxpayers, particularly regarding the open space. Chair: If the existing conditions haven't changed substantially, would not want to go back over all that ground with the costs involved. If there are changes, we may decide to do a major review and would probably want to include a survey. Pike: Asks for clarification. Chair: Substantial changes would indicate that people may have different perspectives on land use, and you may then see a need to cover more issues, including possibly a survey. Makes the point that a survey is expensive because you also have to educate people as to the need. Much more involved process than it appears.

Glen Finkbeiner: The survey for the last Master Plan had a very good response from the residents. If there isn't a lot of change, no need to recheck. Pike: Residents felt their opinions were valued. What will happen on the open space? Will you just let that sit? Chair: The township residents made a decision. The Board can bring it up again or ask us to do so. Woods: We had a good open space plan, so if the Board wants to address it again, they would need to provide good direction to us. Planning Commission worked hard on the Master Plan and especially the open space part and tried to implement what people said they wanted but the Board gave little support. If people want the implementation, they should ask for it.

#### **7. Zoning Administrator Report (Attached to the record)**

#### **8. Member Observations on Zoning Compliance**

Chair: Explains that members are requested to observe areas around them and alert the Zoning Administrator if there appear to be activities that are not in compliance such as building without a permit being displayed, significant digging, etc. Had instances where people were building on setback areas, for example.

#### **9. SWWCOG**

Chair stated that SWWCOG February meeting was with the Washtenaw County Road Commission and that the primary issue of concern had been the way the permit department interacted with residents.

The meeting on March 9 will be a briefing on Planning Requirements by Fred Lucas, an

area attorney who works with various townships and handle many appeals on behalf of townships. Asks all Planning Commission members to plan to attend.

**10. Zoning Board of Appeals**

Glen Finkbeiner reported that Jonathan Ringel, the Zoning Administrator, had asked him how quickly a Zoning Board of Appeals meeting could be convened, but he had heard nothing further.

**11. Other Business**

Chair reported:

A. Have received the preliminary plans for Bridgewater Farms and will look at them and then ask the planning firm to provide an initial reaction. The cover sheet from the engineering firm for Bridgewater Farms is attached to the record. Doug Frey: Asks they receive a copy of any report from the planning firm. Chair: Absolutely.

B. Also have had an exchange of e-mails with Carlos Acevedo regarding Bridgewater Estates who has retained Atwell Hicks as a consulting engineering firm. They plan to pursue a pre-application conference. Copy of emails included with the record.

**12. Public Comments**

Doug Frey asked if there would be a tour of the sewer facilities, stating he wanted to be included if there was going to be one. Short discussion. Woods: Concern over some aspects of the construction of the sewer, problem with settling soils on residents' properties. Chair referred the question to Shelly Pike.

Carlos Acevedo stated he would be available at any time to respond to questions about his proposed project.

**13. Motion to adjourn: Woods, second by Riley. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.**