

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
Township Board
Joint Meeting with Planning Commission
Minutes
October 24, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 P.M. by Supervisor Chockley at 8350 Main Street.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE

Otto provided an invocation and Supervisor Chockley led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Township Board	
Marlene Chockley, Supervisor	Present
Kathleen Manley, Clerk	Present
Lenore Zelenock, Treasurer	Present
Tawn Beliger	Present
Janet Chick	Present
Wayne Dockett	Present
Jacki Otto	Present

Planning Commission	
Janet Chick	Present
Brad Cousino	Present (arrived at 7:27 P.M.)
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Cecila Infante	Present
Larry Roman	Present
Amy Steffens	Present
John Zarzecki	Present

Also present:
Township Manager Steven Aynes
Township Attorney Bradord Maynes
Zoning Administrator Vidya Krishnan,
McKenna Associates
Planning Consultant Paul Lippens, McKenna Associates
Members of the community

ADOPT AGENDA

- **Motion:** Chick moved, Manley supported, that the agenda be adopted as presented.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote

FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Robert McGee, 4585 Five Mile Road, highly praised many Township employees, especially Assessing & Building Assistant Mary Bird. Barbara Griffith, 438 Jennings, Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Chair, and David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, commented on the RFP for the North Village Area Plan.

BOARD MEMBER CLARIFICATIONS

Board members made comments about updating the accounting for North Village expenses, the recent Trunk or Treat Event, the upcoming County millage, park path plans, sewer expansion, and the November 4th Kiwanis Student Safety Seminar.

[Cousino arrived].

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

JOINT SESSION WITH PLANNING COMMISSION

1.

**McKenna Associates Presentation:
RFP Process for the North Village**

Planning Consultant Paul Lippens, McKenna Associates, reviewed the revised draft of the *Request for Proposals for a Qualified Development Partner for the North Village Site and Park Property*, emphasizing design objectives, phasing, selection process criteria, concept plan requirements, and financial and performance information. He answered questions and listened to comments about the area to be preserved for public use (14-15 of the 23 acres), Township Board involvement in review of proposals, possible phasing scenarios (including infrastructure), the schedule for submittals, potential construction issues, and who will pay for infrastructure.

2.

**Consider Authorizing McKenna Associates to
Issue RFP for the North Village**

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, to authorize the Township Manager to work with McKenna and the Township attorney to finalize and release the RFP for the North Village. **Motion carried 6—1 on a roll call vote, Dockett opposed.**

3.

**McKenna Associates Presentation:
Downtown Strategic Plan**

Planning Consultant Paul Lippens, McKenna Associates, referred to the written document and briefly reviewed the goals and strategies, including beautification, recreation, business and entertainment, celebration, and connectivity, noting that this plan addresses not only future development but also supporting existing businesses. He said this plan is consistent with zoning and master plan, but it provides additional detail. He recommended that this be incorporated in the Master Plan when that is amended in the future.

Chick said the Board adopting this plan would be showing support for the vision for the downtown area. Lippens said adopting the plan does not involve a financial commitment. Lippens noted the DDA has adopted this plan as a policy document. Zelenock suggested that the Planning Commission also adopt or recommend the plan before action is taken by the Board. There was a brief discussion about the history behind the decline of business activity in the downtown area and how this plan, along with the North Village plan, is intended to help bring revitalization.

4.

Consider the Downtown Strategic Action Plan as a development strategy for Whitmore Lake

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Otto supported, that the Planning Commission consider the Downtown Strategic Action Plan and Design Framework at their next meeting and bring their recommendation to the Township Board. **Dockett requested a roll call vote. Motion carried 6—1 on a voice vote, Dockett opposed.**

5.

McKenna Associates Presentation: Zoning Administration Process

Vidya Krishnan, Zoning Administrator, McKenna Associates, explained what the zoning administrator does for the Township and why it is important. She referred to the quarterly reports of her activities, noting that in 2017 she has approved 85 zoning compliance applications and denied six. She said her decisions are based on compliance with the zoning ordinance. She noted she works with staff and responds to calls from the public, but does not typically handle zoning enforcement or site inspections which are the responsibility of the code enforcement officer.

Krishnan explained the need for zoning compliance applications and how they are processed, and how ordinance violations are addressed, including issuance of citations and how properties can be brought into compliance. She noted no properties are being specifically targeted, rather some issues have built up over time, and the Township is now catching up. She said the rules must be applied equally and fairly to everyone with respect, and developers appreciate consistently enforced ordinances.

Board members complimented the excellent work done by Krishnan, said most Township residents support code enforcement efforts, and asked how the zoning ordinance might be improved. Krishnan said some regulations, such as in the waterfront district, need to be revisited, but overall it is a very good, reasonable ordinance that has enough flexibility to allow her to work with applicants to get to a resolution. She noted that owners of legal non-conforming businesses and sites also have rights.

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported to authorize the Township Manager explore with McKenna the costs involved in having regular office hours for the zoning administrator for half a day or a day, and to bring that information to the Board. **Motion carried 6—1 on a voice vote, Dockett opposed.**

6.

Discussion of Zoning issues for Planning Commission consideration

Planning consultant Paul Lippens reported that he will be bringing information to the Board about change of use requirements, the administrative review process, establishing standards for waivers of certain requirements, and revising conforming vs. non-conforming requirements.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGENDA ITEMS

1.

Interim Code Enforcement Officer

Township Manager Aynes recalled that the Board had authorized him to look into either hiring a new code enforcement officer or to hire a firm that could do this work. He recommended the hiring of a very qualified applicant.

- **Motion:** Beliger moved, Dockett supported, to direct the Township Manager to hire Genal Pratt as the Township Code Enforcement Officer, for up to 20 hours per week at the rate of \$25/hour, pending positive background check. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Dale Brewer, 11548 East Shore Drive, and Barbara Griffith commented on the area's "branding" issue (being known as Whitmore Lake vs. Northfield Township) briefly discussed earlier in the meeting, noted that tax increment financing funds will be collected by the DDA and reinvested in the community with any downtown development, and commented on infrastructure issues related to the North Village development.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board members commented on the area's branding issue and new lighting on the Eight Mile Road bridge, thanked presenters, urged support of local businesses, and urged residents to vote in the November election.

ADJOURNMENT

- **Motion:** Zelenock moved, Chockley supported, that the meeting be adjourned. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 P.M.

Submitted by Lisa Lemble. Corrections to the originally issued minutes are indicated as follows:
Wording removed is ~~stricken through~~; wording added is underlined.

Approved by the Township Board on _____, 2017.

Kathleen Manley, Clerk

Official minutes of all meetings are available on the Township's website at http://www.twp-northfield.org/government/township_board_of_trustees/