

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes
July 1, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair
Marlene Chockley at 7:00 P.M. at 8350 Main Street.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Planning Commission:

Janet Chick	Present
Marlene Chockley	Present
Brad Cousino	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Larry Roman	Absent with notice
Mar, Stanalajczo	Present

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink
Assessing & Building Assistant Mary Bird
Sharlan Douglas, Douglas Communications Group
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioners added the following items: Under New Business, *Discussion of the Interview Process for the New Planning Consultant*, and under Policy Review discussions of *Meeting Cancellation, Van Curler Property*, and *Two Acre Zoning*.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Stanalajczo supported, that the agenda be adopted as amended.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Nowatzke Site Plan. Dale Brewer, 11548 East Shore Drive, referred to an email he sent to Board members about the Nowatzke site plan approval. He said conditions of that approval have not been met including an approved spill control plan and sediment and erosion control plan. He said Nowatzke also has only two sewer taps and needs 12, and the Township has filed a complaint for his non-payment of past sewer usage fees.

Master Plan/Community Survey/Planning Consultants. David Perry, 9411 Earhart Road, said he

is content with the current master plan and believes it should stay in effect until 2017. He said there is a silent majority that agrees with him. He asked the Commission to look at questions used in the last community survey about preserving open space. He said valuable farm land here should be preserved.

Perry also said the letter of resignation from planning consultants Carlisle Wortman seems to indicate a difference of opinion about planning issues, and he asked the Township to make public the nature of that disagreement.

Sally Lewis, 6015 Sutton Road, said she is also part of the silent minority and asked the Commission to keep the current Master Plan. She said she wished there was some way to ask questions of Commissioners, and said she does not understand why Carlisle Wortman is resigning as planners for the Township. She said she is for very responsible development, now sprawl. She asked what the Commissioners' ancestors would like to see for the Township. She said she has been relying on David Gordon to speak for her viewpoint and said she hopes the Commission is listening to what he says.

Joann Martila Pearson, 5756 Earhart Road, expressed dismay at the resignation of Carlisle Wortman, particularly because of the statement in their letter that the Township seems to want to move in a different direction, so they will step aside to allow that to happen. She said they are the very best planners, and because of the actions of a few the Township has lost them. She said development should be in the hamlet where the infrastructure is, and the lovely, rural open spaces should be preserved. She encouraged all citizens to be on alert and said information is available at northfieldneighbors.today. She thanked the Commissioners for their service.

Jim Nelson, 7777 Sutton Road, said the bias of the Planning Commission and Township Board will show up in the survey Cobalt will be preparing. He said framing the debate as growth vs. no-growth shows that bias. He said the issue is smart growth vs. stupid growth; it's where and when the growth will be.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Carlisle Wortman Associates, Inc. Iaquinto said the Township Board is asking for bids from planning consultants because Carlisle Wortman informed the Township of a rate increase. He said bids have not been sought in over six years, and Carlisle

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Chockley suggested including questions about what basic services residents would like to see, such as municipal water and public transit. Dignan suggested including garbage pickup. Stanalajczo said residents should be asked if they would support a millage to preserve open space. Iaquinto said the same should be asked about recreation services. Chockley, Dignan, and Chick said residents should be asked whether they want amenities such as a waterfront park, other recreation amenities, or economic growth support for the downtown to make it a vibrant place.

Douglas said she has reviewed the community surveys done in 1999 and 2009, and she could include questions in this survey that allow them to measure how opinions on some issues have changed. Dignan questioned whether it would be worthwhile to ask questions about US-23 since so much about it will be changing in the next couple years.

Chockley said she would like to know what kinds of businesses residents would most like to see and not to see in the Township. Dignan said the emphasis should be on the positive—what kinds of businesses the Township should work to attract.

Chockley said she would like questions about the value people put on preserving open space and farm land, whether they think there is enough commercial and industrial land, and what they think housing densities should be. Dignan said in addition to asking about purchase of development rights to preserve land, there are also proposals about allowing limited access to such lands, such as for connecting trails.

Douglas suggested adding as an objective testing of the public's tolerance for paying for what they want. She said this can give Trustees confidence in proposing spending or taxes for things people say they want.

Chockley asked how confidentiality will be handled, noting this is a small community and some people may be concerned about their opinions being made public. Douglas said they will know the addresses the responses came from, but they are committed to confidentiality and will share only aggregate information with the Township to allow opinions in different zones to be compared.

Douglas said their preferred way for people to complete the survey is on-line, but a paper survey can be requested. She said surveying the entire community, rather than using sampling, will provide powerful results. She suggested doing publicity about it in advance. Iaquinto said an article can be published in *The Courier*. Chockley noted any such articles would be written by Cobalt.

There was discussion about whether to include any questions about the schools. Dignan, a school board

member, said he would ask the school board about this. Douglas said if that information is desired, it should be one of the objectives because that is quite a different direction. Dignan said if there were questions they should be about whether people think there are other educational opportunities that should be provided.

Chockley suggested a question about whether parents want kids to be able to walk to school. She said subdivisions built near schools would allow more children to do that. Dignan said the infrastructure would have to be there, and those things are very important. He said parents like it when their kids can walk safely and do not have to be on a bus for an hour. He said the Barker Road non-motorized path is very important to the school district.

Cousino asked if there is an optimal length of a survey, what they expect the response rate to be, and what response rate is considered high enough to get good data. Douglas said they see the optimal length as four pages, and 800 responses would provide for very reliable data.

Douglas said she would like action on the proposed objectives with the addition of "We will measure the tolerance for the cost of additional amenities that people list as priorities." It was agreed that objective 6 should read (addition underlined):

"Determine the relative strength of opinion about how people perceive they might benefit from development and preservation." "

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Dignan supported, that the *Proposed Objectives for Community-Wide Opinion Research* be approved, with the wording of item 6 changed to, "Determine the relative strength of opinion about how people perceive they might benefit from development *and preservation*." and the addition of "*We will measure the tolerance for the cost of additional amenities that people list as priorities.*"
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

Douglas said she will provide the draft list of survey questions next week, so the Board can review them at their July 14th meeting, and the Planning Commission can discuss them on August 5th.

10B. Discussion of Interview Process for Planning Consultant.

Chockley noted four proposals have been submitted, and the Township Board will interview all of the firms on either July 14th or 28th. She said the Planning Commission could also interview them, but the July 15th agenda is full. She said this could be done at a special meeting or on August 5th. Stanalajczo said he

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David Perry said he is in favor of maintaining the current Master Plan, but said there was a lot of good discussion about the survey. He asked Commissioners need to continue to be careful about wording of questions so they are clear. He said preservation and development are not four letter words, and it should be clear with the language used that people are making choices.

Carlisle Wortman Resignation. Joann Martila Pearson said it is disturbing to hear that the four proposals made are all proposing higher rates than Carlisle Wortman's.

Two Acre Zoning. Dale Brewer said this is a very good idea. David Perry said it might be good to include questions about this in the survey because this would have a big effect on the Township.

Zoning Enforcement and Follow-up. Brewer said he appreciated Dignan's comments about staff following up on Planning Commission decisions, but his point was that the Commission's directions are not being followed by staff.

Correspondence. Brewer said the email he sent to Commissioners—and all other correspondence—should have been listed under Correspondence.

Van Curler Property. Township Trustee Dockett said it would be a boondoggle for the Township to buy this property. He said people on the lake will not like seeing a beach and public access added.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Independence Day. Stanalajczo asked that everyone keep men and women in uniform in their thoughts.

Dignan noted the school district is hosting a community celebration July 2nd through 5th at the middle school

property, including a carnival and run. Iaquinto noted the fireworks display will be Friday night, July 3rd, and the parade will be Saturday morning at 10:00 A.M., and the festival of lights will start at 9:45 P.M.

Thank you. Chockley thanked Commissioners for the good discussion.

Public Comment. Chick noted that a lack of response from Board members about public comments does not indicate agreement or disagreement.

Support. Chick asked for support for a family injured in a car accident recently.

Planning Consultants. Chick said the only agenda that Doug Lewan of Carlisle Wortman had was the Township's, and she thanked him for his service to the Township.

Sound system/Meeting Room. Dignan said the acoustics in the meeting room are terrible for people in the room and viewing on television, and he asked the Board to make an investment in a proper meeting room.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

July 15, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

- ▶ **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chick supported, that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 P.M.

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

Adopted on _____, 2015.

Marlene Chockley, Chair

Mark Stanalajczo, Secretary

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