

Lake Charter Township Planning Commission Meeting

February 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman William Geukes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present were: William Geukes, Mike Essig, Jordan Klint, Megan Bowen, Christin Rice, and Bill Shuler.

Absent: Jason Kading

Zoning Administrator – Richard Kubsch
MSU Extension – Tyler Augst
Township Trustee – John Wilk
1 - Guests attended

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda was made by: Christin Rice; seconded by: Jordan Klint; all ayes, motion carried.

TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT – reported by: Mike Essig:

1. The 4th reading of the amended Zoning Map for the RV/Trailer Park re-zoning was tabled, discussion is still being held on the master water meter.
2. Voted to approved the water rate increase of 5% to cover the increase in costs.
3. The firm of Kruggel Lawton was hired to perform the 2022 audit.

APPEALS BOARD REPORT – reported by: Mike Essig

1. Met only to approve minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the January 2, 2023 minutes was made by: Mike Essig; seconded by: Bill Shuler; all ayes, motion carried.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – Non-agenda – None

OLD BUSINESS

1. None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Master Plan

Rich Kubsch stated that he had received the unformatted draft and had points to discuss with the members. The draft was reviewed. Comments and input from Rich Kubsch and the Planning Commission members:

- Page 3 – Statutory Basis – insert Williams & Works as the professional planning consultant.
- Page 4 – Watersheds – all drains to not flow to Lake Michigan.
- Page 9 – Planning Implications - Noted the statements in the paragraph.
- Page 12 – paragraph above Figure 3.3 & Population Projections – Noted the racial make-up of the Township and the different approaches to provide the sense of future growth.
- Page 13 – Growth Rate – Noted the figures are higher than the County of Berrien.
- Page 14 – Median age for the Township – 20.1 years older than the national average and higher than the County of Berrien.
- Page 17 – Housing Quality – Strike the sentence “40 occupied households out of a total of 1,399 were identified as lacking complete plumbing and kitchen facilities in Lake Charter Township”. Noted the comparison of median household incomes/rents/mortgages and affordability.
- Page 19 – SEV’s and industrial uses – Noted the benefit of combining them. Also included the tourist economy and its effect on the Township verses the City of Bridgman.
- Page 22 – Planning Implications – Residential development drawing people into the community; and the decline in agricultural land uses.
- Page 23 – Residential – Noted the primary zoning category is residential-agricultural REZ/AG. Discussed cluster residential development in key locations.
- Page 24 – Table 5.1 Comparative Residential Zoning Analysis – Chart needs fact checking. Paragraph after table remove word “attracted” a mobile home park.
- Page 25 – Planning Implications – Remove the word “small” before pockets in last sentence. Also second paragraph on the page, last sentence “Creating a form-based code in this area is one possible solution to the conflicting uses” discussion was held on the need for more information on “form-based codes” and the number of references to it in the Master Plan and if form based codes is being made a requirement.
- Page 26 – Change the first sentence starting with “congregating many needs in one area will leave...” change “in one” to “in an”. Also addressed and discussed residential development encroaching on active agriculture.
- Page 28 – Hospitals – Change Lakeland Hospital to “Corewell Health” and a definition of “Deep Blowouts” needs to be provided.
- Page 29 – Planning Implications – Discussed the evolving population impact and the phrase: “Demand for educational services, emergency services, health care...”
- Page 30 – Public Water Systems – include the current water rate increase.
- Page 31 – Traffic Volume – Check the traffic counts for accuracy.
- Page 34 – Planning Implications – last paragraph, ending sentence beginning with “Managing these assets in a pragmatic way...: - noted and discussed.
- Reviewed the public survey information and noted the availability/quality of high-speed or wireless internet concerns.
- Page 42 – Industrial Development – Goal – “Limited commercial uses should be included as special land use where property fronts along the Red Arrow Corridor.” Discussed and reviewed.
- Page 48 – Paragraph starting with “Overall residential densities ...” change number “ten to “12” at end of sentence.

Zoning Administrator Report

Richard Kubsch reported on the following:

1. Presented the members with his notes for the ordinance review. Asked the members to read and suggest changes and revisions for the next few meetings.
2. Tyler Augst from the MSU Master Citizen Planner course, introduced himself and reviewed three handouts provided. The course will begin at Lake Charter Township on Wednesdays beginning March 8 through April 12, 2023. Also covered the Great Lakes Coastal Planning and Zoning Email Course and Capital Assets – Fiscally ready communities capital asset management and planning.

Audience Comments

Opened at: 8:38 p.m.

Shirly Meyer requested information on the availability of the Future Use Map and when the rezoning of Gast Road would occur to include or allow apartments to be built. In favor of having dense development around the high school.

Closed at: 8:45 p.m.

ADJOURN

Motion to Adjourn was made by: Mike Essig, seconded by: Christin Rice at 8:46 p.m.; all ayes, motion carried.

Next meeting March 6, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Christin Rice - Secretary

Date