Approved 01/09/2024 - CG

WHITEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR SPECIAL MEETING
with TOWNSHIP BOARD
December 13, 2023

Call to Order at 7:00 p.m.
Roll Call: DeYoung, Jacobson, Keaton, Slopsema, Wroubel, Steelman
Roll Call: Popp, Goss, Benak, Glenn, Vollmuth

Also in attendance: Planner Mielnik, Recording Secretary MacLean
Five on Zoom at the start of the meeting.

Set / Adjust Agenda: Set

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: None
Public Comment: None

Public Hearing: None

Special Meeting Business:

1. Master Plan (MP): Mielnik did a review of what has happened, including community engagement with survey, the open house and the workshop; where the project sits right now with the reports produced of the summary of information that was gathered from the community engagement. Going forward the final draft chapters will be released for comment. The plan is to have the full draft to the PC in April. Then there will be the formal process. No comments or questions from the Board members regarding the first four chapters of the draft MP that are mainly census data and historical information.

   Number of surveys mailed out?

   Downtown, support to develop a downtown, where will all of this happen? There will be changes that need to happen to implement. This is the public input. The PC has to take the information and address in the MP as possible to look to addressing zoning to reach the plan in the MP. The MP is a plan for the future.

   Is it possible to have the township purchase the land, put in infrastructure and sell to developers? The township would have to look to find out how interested the township residents would be to use township funds.

   A traffic study can be required by the PC for development. Can look at and address curb cuts and access management.

   A township needs study was done that addressed mostly buildings. Water and sewer is well into the millions of dollars. Currently we do not have the funds and we do not have the population to support.

   A Master Plan is a plan for 20+ years. Will look into funding opportunities in the future.

   In the public input there was a general statement regarding maintenance. Maintenance of what, roads, trails or what?

   The Board may be working on code enforcement.

   Address all zoning districts, increase R1 is stated. It is noted that the township needs more "affordable" housing. Neighborhood communities can be addressed. PUDs will be addressed. Getting more education on what choices are available and what would fit our area. Infrastructure will have to be addressed. Developers generally pay for those.

   Recommend getting a definition of rural character. Rural character means something different to everyone. Rural character is not just density / units per acre.

   Architectural design guidelines was geared toward industrial and commercial. What does a build out look like of the commercial district? Do we expand the commercial district? Do we expand the industrial district? What comes first to support expansion – infrastructure, etc. We have no development ready areas. We cannot afford what we need in the future to support development. "As funds and funding becomes available. . ." would be a statement in the MP regarding future development and infrastructure. The MP is a road map. Zoning is addressed after the MP is created. The MP defines how the community wants to change/grow.

Popp will present his full comment list to the PC.

Will need to review the zoning ordinance to meet the MP.

Resident Outreach Subcommittee (ROS) worked very well and accomplished what was desired. Looking to keep the ROS for future community input and review. Possibly add more people to the committee.

2. Zoning Ordinance clarification project is to review what is current. Described the goal of this clarification process. Also making a list of areas that need to be addressed more substantially. The PC is also addressing the zoning map. Zoning language has to be precise and clear. Mielnik described zoning maps and using GIS. The parcel layer is available through the county currently and is available on the county website. We know there are current problems, including the known issue with the industrial district. Discussion ensued regarding surveying, the legal descriptions, maps and interactivity (zoomability) of the maps, accuracy, discrepancies and certifying. Legal descriptions and current maps will always be part of the archive. The county and the assessors have maps and use the legal descriptions. The districts have their own legal descriptions. The township zoning will be layered with the county GIS and will be able to be zoomed in on.

   The township is currently working to get the Industrial District inconsistencies addressed. Recommend getting a registered surveyor to address the details, get a general amount that will be needed.

   Would like to get feedback on the rest of the zoning clarification. Discussion of sharing and commenting. Mielnik's redline version is complex.

3. Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget Discussion: Budget work starts the middle of January. How much detail does the Board want? Total amounts with detail, example: number of meetings that make up the wages line item.

4. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - Discussion ensued regarding the MPO document provided.

5. Anything else related to Planning Commission - None

Next meetings: Planning Commission Regular: January 3, 2024 and Township Board Regular: January 9, 2024

Public Comment: None

Commission Discussion/Comments:

Adjournment: 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Lois MacLean,
Recording Secretary