

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

December 8, 2020

The special meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:44 PM via Zoom (virtual meeting).

Present

Shawn Martinie  
Travis Vugteveen  
Bill Maschewske  
Lydia Brown  
Steve Young  
Rich Sibley

Absent

George Schippers

Also present were Zoning Administrator Brian Werschem and Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning. There were no members of the public present.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Rich Sibley to approve the agenda as written.

A roll call vote was taken.

Steve Young – Yes

Rich Sibley – Yes

Travis Vugteveen – Yes

Bill Maschewske – Yes

Lydia Brown – Yes

Shawn Martinie -- Yes

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

A motion was made by Rich Sibley and seconded by Lydia Brown to approve as written the Planning Commission minutes of the November 10, 2020 meeting.

A roll call vote was taken.

Steve Young – Yes

Rich Sibley – Yes

Travis Vugteveen – Yes

Bill Maschewske – Yes

Lydia Brown – Yes

Shawn Martinie -- Yes

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

## Master Planning

Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning was present and stated that one item he is looking for tonight is a list of Agricultural Stakeholders in Robinson Township.

Chairperson Martinie – Had earlier in the day emailed a list of the top thirty agricultural landowners in the Township by acreage, by taxable value, and by State Equalized Value.

Gregory Ransford – Stated that he was looking for the names of three or four people to interview and not as many as thirty. The Planning Commission would need to select the names.

Chairperson Martinie – Indicated that he wanted to diversify the list so that we have representation from the various types of agriculture in the Township.

Gregory Ransford – Stated he had updated the timeline flow chart and that the Agricultural Stakeholder meetings were scheduled for late spring and early summer.

Chairperson Martinie changed the subject temporarily to the pending Site Plan and Special Use applications for the M-231 Overlay District. He indicated that MDOT would not allow ingress/egress locations that comply with the M-231 Overlay District.

Zoning Administrator Werschem stated that the Ottawa County Road Commission would not approve curb cuts for the proposed Dollar General project similar to the Merle Boes filling station. It was noted that exceptions were made for the Merle Boes project since there were existing curb cuts for the previous commercial activity on the site. The proposed ingress/egress for the proposed Dollar General project is to access 120<sup>th</sup> Ave. south of M-45. The Road Commission concern is southbound traffic exiting the proposed Dollar General store might be blocked by northbound traffic on 120<sup>th</sup> Ave. that may be backed up from the stoplight at M-45.

Discussion returned to the Master Plan Survey

Bill Maschewske – Expressed concern regarding the integrity of the Citizen Survey on Survey Monkey. The previous survey in 1998 was sent one hard copy to each household in the Township. Survey Monkey could limit the number of responses per IP address, but multiple computers in one household could allow a household to submit additional responses.

Rich Sibley – Could parcel number be used to identify each survey submitted to limit the number of responses per household?

Chairperson Martinie – This would result in the loss of anonymity of responses.

Rich Sibley – We should allow two responses per household.

Chairperson Martinie – Agrees.

Gregory Ransford – He will investigate and report his findings regarding limiting responses.

Chairperson Martinie opened the discussion to a review of the Draft Citizen Survey questions proposed by Fresh Coast Planning and dated November 29, 2020.

Hearing no other comments, Bill Maschewske noted he had a list of questions and comments.

Section 1, Question 4 – The line items and the available responses do not seem to be compatible. Reference Question 17 in the 1998 survey.

Gregory Ransford – Agreed to modify the entire question to be similar to the original Question 17 in the 1998 Survey.

Bill Maschewske – Section 1, Question 6 -- Stated the question required additional background information such as who was paying for the service.

The consensus was the purpose of the question was to just get a general pulse of the feeling of the residents so it was left unchanged.

Bill Maschewske – Section 2, Question 3 – Would the Township have the authority to enforce a 50 foot setback from waterways?

Gregory Ransford – This would be a policy question. The question remained unchanged.

Bill Maschewske – Section 2, Question 4 – Questioned if multi-use pathways should be considered since they would be one more non-agricultural use taking up agricultural land.

Gregory Ransford – The question is generalized but could be limited in implementation to road right-of-ways so as not to use agricultural lands.  
The question remained unchanged.

Bill Maschewske – Section 2, Question 7 – Proposed adding a new question regarding if the Township should promote agriculture through agricultural friendly practices.

Following discussion, Gregory Ransford agreed to try to write the question and include it.

Bill Maschewske – Section 3, Question 2 – Questioned how residents would know what is currently planned for Residential Development since all they can evaluate is what they see developed.

It was agreed to eliminate the question since it was already asked in Question 1 above.

Bill Maschewske -- Section 3, Question 3—Can the Township require clustered developments vs. conventional developments.

Gregory Ransford – Yes and they can also encourage them by giving incentives to cluster.  
The question remained unchanged.

Bill Maschewske -- Section 3, Question 5 -- How do you get the developer to pay for off-site improvements to infrastructure since this cannot be required.

Gregory Ransford – This can be done by bonus density incentives.  
The question remained unchanged.

Bill Maschewske – Section 3, Question 7 – Questioned the wisdom of placing high density residential next to farmland. Offering higher density would just increase the need for utilities.

Gregory Ransford – If the event were to occur, this would provide input for mitigating measures.

The question remained unchanged.

Bill Maschewske – Section 3, Question 8 – I do not really see the comparison between the two pictures, however, the residential development next to farmland would not appear to be good planning.

Steve Young – He is also confused by the images.

Chairperson Martinie – The images need to be better to illustrate the two types of development.

Gregory Ransford – Agreed to provide new photographs that better illustrate the question.

Bill Maschewske – Section 3, Question 10 – This question is already asked in Section 3, Question 1 and should be deleted.

Gregory Ransford – It will be deleted.

Bill Maschewske – Section 4, Questions 3 and 4 – How do the residents know what is planned for both Commercial and Industrial? The amount they desire of both is already asked in Section 4, Question 7.

Gregory Ransford – Both questions will be deleted.

Bill Maschewske – Section 4, Question 10 – Image E is not a mixed-use building per the definition in Question 9.

Gregory Ransford – Image E will be re-evaluated.

Bill Maschewske – Section 5, Question 4 – Does the Township have the ability to increase the capacity of major roads?

Gregory Ransford – Probably not directly, but the intent is to get a feel for what the public wants. The word “traffic” needs to be added after the word “Additional”.

Bill Maschewske – Section 6, Question 2 – How would the Township realistically create additional undeveloped land?

Gregory Ransford – Delete the response of “Additional open land is desired”.

Bill Maschewske – Section 7, Question 4 – The original 1998 Survey question used 6 sections instead of 4. Suggest using 6 divisions of the Township for a direct comparison. Six sections also better matches primary uses in each area.

A discussion followed and Chairperson Martinie agreed to have six sections.

Gregory Ransford – Will revise the sketch to show 6 divisions with East-West dividing lines of the Township being Lincoln Street, Osborn, Bass Drive, and M-45. The North-South division line would be 120<sup>th</sup> Ave.

This concluded discussion of the Citizen Survey questions. It was noted that the next regular notice sent out by the Township would be assessment notices mailed in February 2021. This time frame would allow Fresh Coast Planning the opportunity to make revisions to the draft Citizen Survey per the above minutes for review by the Planning Commission at the January 12, 2021 Planning meeting. A newsletter with assessment notices could then state the Citizen Survey is active and request citizen participation.

The next item discussed was the list of Agricultural Stakeholders. Chairperson Martinie had previously distributed a list of the top thirty agricultural landowners in the Township by acreage, by taxable value, and by State Equalized Value. Gregory Ransford indicated that he did not want this many names but would like the names of three or four persons that could be interviewed. The following names were given by consensus of the Planning Commission.

1. Dave Reenders of Crossroads Blueberries representing blueberry farmers.
2. Dale Deppe of Spring Meadow Nursery representing potted flowering plant growers.
3. Rich Bramer of Northland Evergreen representing nursery stock.
4. John Bakale Jr. of Michigan Evergreen Nursery representing nursery stock.

Rich Sibley – After the Agricultural Stakeholder meetings, what is next?

Gregory Ransford – We will have a meeting with all Agricultural producers and discuss the issues that are presented at the Stakeholders meetings along with any other items noted.

Travis Vugteveen – Perhaps there is an advantage to including an older person that may be considering retiring.

Chairperson Martinie – Would like to add two names to the Agricultural Stakeholders list.

1. Robert and Debra Kamp
2. Gerry Geertman of Bluegrass Land Company representing field crops.

Zoning Administrator Werschem agreed to find the contact information for the names on the list of Agricultural Stakeholders.

The next Planning meeting was scheduled for January 12, 2021 to review the updated draft of the Citizen Survey questions and to receive an update from Gregory Ransford regarding Agricultural Stakeholder interviews.

### Pay Bills

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Lydia Brown to pay salaries for the December 8, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

A roll call vote was taken.

Steve Young – Yes

Rich Sibley – Yes

Travis Vugteveen – Yes

Bill Maschewske – Yes

Lydia Brown – Yes

Shawn Martinie -- Yes

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Chairperson Martinie – Inquired if Township Attorney Bultje was able to attend the December 15, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

Zoning Administrator Werschem – Stated he verified attendance of Attorney Bultje earlier in the day.

### Action Items:

1. Draft Citizen Survey to be updated by Fresh Coast Planning per these minutes for review at the January 12, 2021 Planning Commission meeting.
2. Agricultural Stakeholder interview update by Fresh Coast Planning at the January 12, 2021 Planning Commission meeting.
3. Fresh Coast Planning is to investigate Survey Monkey to determine if responses per household can be limited to no more than two for the Citizen Survey.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Rich Sibley to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 9:37 PM.

A roll call vote was taken.

Steve Young – Yes

Rich Sibley – Yes

Travis Vugteveen – Yes

Bill Maschewske – Yes

Lydia Brown – Yes

Shawn Martinie -- Yes

The motion carried unanimously with one member absent.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary  
Robinson Township Planning Commission