

ROBINSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
December 14, 2021

The special meeting of the Robinson Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:07 PM at the Robinson Township Hall.

Present	Absent
Shawn Martinie	Steve Young
Bill Maschewske	Lydia Brown
Travis Vugteveen	One Position Vacant
Michelle Gillespie	

Also present were Zoning Administrator Brian Werschem, Planning Consultant Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning, Mark Sloothaak, and one additional member of the public. The attendance sheet is attached.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to approve the agenda as written.
The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to approve the Planning Commission minutes of the November 23, 2021 meeting as written.
The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

Chairperson Martinie inquired if there were any questions from the public and there were none.

Master Planning

Gregory Ransford of Fresh Coast Planning gave a brief introduction regarding the current status of updating the Robinson Township Master Plan. To be discussed at this meeting are the review of the changes requested to previously distributed and reviewed drafts of the Preface and Chapter 1. Additionally, drafts of Chapter 2, Agricultural Uses, and Chapter 3, Residential Uses were to be reviewed at this meeting. Mr. Ransford also inquired if the Planning Commission was interested in trying the concept of a Growth Boundary.

The consensus of the Planning Commission was that more information would be necessary to make a decision regarding Growth Boundaries. Concern was expressed that if the adoption of a Growth Boundary involved losing any area currently planned for Agriculture, the Planning Commission would not be interested in utilizing this concept.

Chairperson Martinie called for comments regarding the reviewed and revised copies of the Preface and Chapter 1.

Travis Vugteveen – Preface, Intent and Purpose, third paragraph: Questioned the use of the word “guides”.

Following discussion, it was agreed to not make any changes.

Bill Maschewske – Chapter 1, Findings, Residential Interests: The words “as open spaces themselves” was correctly deleted from the marked-up version but not from the clean copy. This would need to be corrected.

There being no more comments on the Preface and Chapter 1, the Chairperson called for comments on Chapter 2.

Chairperson Martinie – Chapter 2, Recommendations: What does “Encourage crop production and livestock use to minimally impact existing open spaces.” mean?

Following discussion, it was agreed to change “open spaces” to “natural resources”.

Travis Vugteveen – Chapter 2, Recommendations, bullet point 5: What is the “no-cut zone”?

Gregory Ransford – It is not cutting trees and vegetation in the road right-of-way and ditch banks.

Bill Maschewske – Encouraging no-cut zones and encouraging bicycle paths in the Agricultural District seem inconsistent since the bicycle path typically goes in the right-of-way, clears trees, and is an impermeable surface.

Gregory Ransford – The no-cut zone could apply to a PUD and encourage trees to be left in the right-of-way and along drainage courses. He would also change “native drainage” to “natural drainage”.

No changes were made regarding no-cut zones.

Chairperson Martinie – Was a Growth Boundary discussed with the stakeholders? Would it prevent a landowner from gifting a parcel to a son or daughter?

Gregory Ransford – The stakeholders wanted the ability to exit farming, generally many years down the road. The Growth Boundary would not prevent creating a parcel for a son or daughter. The Growth Boundary might be determined by where Prime and Unique soils exist.

Bill Maschewske – It is difficult to tell if a Growth Boundary is a good idea without more information.

Bill Maschewske –Chapter 2, Introduction, second paragraph: “However, it must be recognized that farming is as much of an industry as manufacturing.” Recommended changing “is” to “can be”.

Additionally, Chapter 2, Strategies: Should “Wedding venues” be included?

A discussion regarding wedding venues followed and this was left unchanged as the previous agreement was to not outright permit them but consider allowing them with conditions in the Zoning Ordinance. This text was left unchanged.

Travis Vugteveen – Chapter 2, Strategies, bullet point three: Should we reduce or eliminate setbacks? It was agreed this should be changed to “Investigate reducing or eliminating ...”.

Bill Maschewske – Chapter 2, Recommendations: Add the text from Chapter 4, C, (5) (d) from the existing Master Land Use Plan “Encourage proper soil management, to ensure soil conservation and to prevent erosion and sedimentation.” Also, add a reference to the aquifer recharge area map regarding avoiding development within these areas. Additionally, Chapter 2, Goals: Correct “asfarms” to “as farms”.
The above were agreed upon to revise.

Review concentrated next on draft Chapter 3, Residential Uses.

Travis Vugteveen – Chapter 3, Introduction, first paragraph: Noted conflicting design standards regarding clustered developments and large lots.

Bill Maschewske – Chapter 2, Agricultural Uses, Introduction: Stated this section was missing the Citizen Survey input as was included in Chapter 3, Residential Uses. Chapter 2, Introduction seems to focus on input primarily from the several stakeholders who participated in the Agricultural Stakeholder meeting and there was almost no Citizen Survey input.

Following discussion, the Planning Commission agreed to have Gregory Ransford rewrite the Introduction to Chapter 2, Agricultural Uses., incorporating Citizen Survey information.

Bill Maschewske – To help resolve the conflicting design standards noted by Travis Vugteveen above regarding preferences for both large lots and clustering, it was recommended that Chapter 3, Residential Uses, be broken into two sections, recognizing both Rural Residential Uses and more concentrated Residential Uses. This would include separate Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies for each residential classification. It was also recommended to remove the word “Glacial” from “Aquifer Recharge Areas”.

The above requested changes were accepted by the Planning Commission.

Travis Vugteveen – Chapter 3, Residential Uses, Goals, last bullet point: Stated the word “adequate” should be removed from the sentence “Provide adequate protection of groundwater sources...”

The consensus of the Planning Commission agreed with this change.

Chairperson Martinie –Chapter 3, Residential Uses, Recommendations, first bullet point: Insert the word “the” between the words ”within development”.

This change also received Planning Commission acceptance.

Bill Maschewske – Chapter 3, Residential Uses, Recommendations, seventh bullet point: The word “landscaping” should be changed to “landscape”.

For the next planning meeting, Gregory Ransford will provide a rewritten Chapter 3, Residential Uses, breaking it into two types of residential uses, a revised introduction to Chapter 2, Agricultural Uses, and also incorporate the changes to both chapters described above. In addition, two new Chapters are proposed to be ready in draft form for review.

New Business – None

Old Business – None

Pay Bills

A motion was made by Michelle Gillespie and seconded by Travis Vugteveen to pay Planning Commission salaries for December 2021 (one meeting, two members absent, one position vacant).

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

Announcements

Chairperson Martinie reported that Zoning Administrator Werschem had resigned to accept a full time position at Muskegon Charter Township. Previous Supervisor and Zoning Administrator Kathy Kuck was asked and accepted the Zoning Administrator position temporarily while a search is conducted for a permanent Zoning Administrator.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Travis Vugteveen and seconded by Michelle Gillespie to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:44 PM.

The motion carried unanimously with two members absent and one position vacant.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Maschewske, Secretary
Robinson Township Planning Commission

Attachment: Attendance Sheet

