

VEVAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Joint Meeting with the Township Board of Trustees
Wednesday, March 4, 2015
Vevay Township Hall – 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members present: Jack Cady, Coe Emens III, John Lazet, Pattie McNeilly, Ilene Thayer, and Bruce Walker.

Member absent: Roger Cargill.

Other Persons present: Consultant Mark Eidelson.

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Thayer.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The audience joined the Commission in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Set/Amend Agenda

The agenda was accepted as presented.

IV. Brief Public Comment

Clerk Kean – thanked Mr. Eidelson for having recompiled the Zoning Ordinance, which is available on the Township website as well. Supervisor Howe – noted that the zoning map is in the process of being updated as well.

V. Pending Business

A. Master Plan Orientation Document – Prepared by Community Planner Eidelson

Mr. Eidelson - had previously distributed the orientation document. The goal tonight is to have everyone on the same page as the process moves forward.

Mr. Eidelson - law requires any community developing a Master Plan to send a letter of intent to all neighboring units of government as well as some other entities. For Vevay Township, this means all neighboring townships, the City of Mason, the Tri-County Planning Commission, the Ingham County Board of Commissioners, utilities and rail companies that serve the Township, and any other municipality that contacts the Township based on their interest in being informed.

Mr. Eidelson - law assumes that letters of interest and draft documents are delivered in hard copy unless the Township requests, and other units agree, to send and accept all communication electronically. If the Township asks to send communications electronically, it is assumed that we may do so unless another unit of government asks for a hard copy.

Mr. Eidelson - the proposed sample letter of intent he has drafted mentions that LANDPLAN is assisting the Township and may be contacting others, and may be contacted as well. As the proposed Plan is not an amendment, it would be considered a new Plan under the new law. He explained “preservation” as referring to the meaning as it currently has in the existing Plan.

Mr. Eidelson - “Township Board Approval Required to “Distribute” Draft Plan” - before a final proposal can be distributed to surrounding entities, the Commission must receive the approval of the Board for distribution. If the Board does not allow for distribution, it must advise the Commission of its concerns so they may be addressed and re-submitted to the Board for approval. He would encourage open and frequent communication between the Commission and the Board during the process.

Mr. Eidelson - “Master Plan Approval Authority” – law provides that adoption of the final Plan resides with the Planning Commission unless the Board votes to be the official approving authority. This allowance for the Board to be the final approving authority is part of the (relatively) new Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. (The Board discussed adding this to their agenda for discussion.) The Commission will need to approve a resolution adopting the proposed draft for distribution; LANDPLAN will draft this resolution.

Mr. Eidelson - “Master Plan Planning Process” – the Township has agreed to prepare a survey for residents, which will be developed and distributed as an early part of the process. LANDPLAN will meet with the Commission April 8, and intends to have a draft survey available at that time. At that meeting, the intent is to make any needed revisions so as to have a final version which could then be approved by the Commission in May and be available to the Township office for mailing. This timetable is more reasonable if the Commission is willing to meet a second time in April. Normally a two week time for residents to respond is appropriate. LANDPLAN will tabulate all responses received, and discuss the findings with the Commission, hopefully at the Commission meeting in June.

Mr. Eidelson - has some concern with sending electronic surveys, as an individual could coordinate a mass response. Question - Could a tool such as Survey Monkey be used? Chair Thayer – the more you ask people to do to enter a response, the less likely it could be to obtain responses. Clerk Kean – the Township email list is less than 20% of the households in the Township. She has heard from landowners who do not live in the Township that they have an interest in the process. Mr. Eidelson – if there are multiple persons at the same address, commonly they agree on responses. People could be directed to the Township to ask for another copy if they so desire. Clerk Kean – hopes to mention in the April newsletter that folks should look for a survey in the mail in May.

Mr. Eidelson - “Planning Commission Deliberations on Revision Issues” – several issues had been previously identified by the Commission; these should be discussed as well as the survey results.

Mr. Eidelson - “Preparation and Review of Initial Draft Master Plan” - LANDPLAN will draft language based on these discussions, and will likely present drafts of each chapter to the Commission as they are prepared. Information that is to be provided by the Township would be appreciated as soon as it is requested. Once language meets the approval of the Commission and is approved by the Board for distribution, a public hearing can be scheduled, but not until at least

63 days after notice to surrounding entities has been sent. The proposed new Plan need not be sent to surrounding entities, just notice that the Plan is being considered.

Mr. Eidelson - “Public Hearing and Final Plan” – if public input leads to substantive revisions, LANDPLAN would recommend another distribution and public hearing. If the Board is the final approving body, changes still have to be made by the Commission, with the same notification requirements.

Mr. Eidelson - “Estimated Schedule” – the timetable assumes the Commission can focus every month on the Master Plan process. If other issues take up monthly meetings, the schedule may need to be extended. Likewise, if the Commission focuses on the task, the schedule could potentially be shortened. LANDPLAN is available to the Commission for its regular monthly meetings during the entire proposed timetable.

Mr. Eidelson - “Master Plan Revision Issues” – the Commission identified 11 issues they wanted to see addressed, from technical to policy issues. The map currently placed at the end of Chapter 3 is the most important map in the Plan. The updated law now requires a more detailed “Zone Plan” in the Master Plan to delineate how the Zoning Ordinance districts will implement the zone plan that currently is reflected in the Chapter 3 map. Comm. Walker – mentioned possibly adding the addressing of electronic media and provision of bandwidth given the new law that allows providers to drop landlines if other media are available. This might be added to the survey to determine the need or quality of cell phone coverage.

Mr. Eidelson - “Mail Survey Considerations” – discussed who should receive a survey. Options include landowners, property owners, renters, and/or registered voters. Currently the Township can pull addresses and names for all parcels, but not necessarily the residents. The Township has taxpayer names, but not renters’ names, and not for the trailer parks. Park management has previously assisted with distribution in the trailer park, and could again be approached. **The consensus was to send the survey to all parcels that have a resident, as well as to any open parcel with a non-resident owner, but without duplication, and with return postage affixed.**

Mr. Eidelson - “Mail Survey Considerations” – LANDPLAN anticipates the survey design to eliminate the need for envelopes either for sending or returning the survey. He would recommend obtaining post office approval of the design before printing up the final version, but his experience with other similar projects should lead to an acceptable design. Responses could include written comments as well. LANDPLAN would encourage a format that allows for easy tabulation, while still allowing for individual comments. Recommended topics include recreation possibilities or desires; whether there is a need for more commercial areas; and whether possibilities for senior citizens should be considered.

Mr. Eidelson - LANDPLAN will provide an electronic version of the survey for response on the website. He would recommend still mailing surveys as proposed, but allow for an electronic response.

COMMISSION – **scheduled a meeting on Tuesday, April 21, at 6:00 p.m.** to discuss the survey, with the intent of having it finalized in time for a May mailing.

VI. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

John Lazet, Secretary