

NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of Regular Meeting September 16, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marlene Chockley at 7:00 P.M. at 8350 Main Street.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Roll call:

Janet Chick	Present
Marlene Chockley	Present
Brad Cousino	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Larry Roman	Present
Mark Stanalajczko	Present

Also present:

Township Manager Howard Fink
Mary Bird, Assessing & Building Assistant
Planning Consultant Leah DuMouchel,
Beckett & Raeder
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Stanalajczko asked to add a discussion of by-laws under Policy Review and Discussion.

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the agenda be adopted as amended.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Community Survey. Craig Warburton, 450 W. Joy Road, spoke in support of the current Master Plan and said there is no need to do a community survey. David Gordon, 5558 Hellner Road, said the proposed survey is unbalanced with more questions about development than open space preservation. Jim Mulcrone, 366 Glenmoor Drive, said he is a professional market researcher and the proposed survey questions do not work toward meeting the objectives stated by Cobalt.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Chockley recommended an the recent May/June 2015 article from the Michigan Association of Planners about the roles of Planning Commissions and Boards of Trustees.

7. REPORTS

7A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported the Board meeting on September 8th was adjourned early due to lack of quorum.

7B. ZBA

Dignan reported the ZBA approved a setback variance for a garage.

7C. Staff Report

Nothing to report.

7D. Planning Consultant

DuMouchel reported that a meeting about the Library site plan went well.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9A. Discussion of the Citizen Survey.

Chockley said she has requested input from the Recreation Commission and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

Leah DuMouchel presented her analysis of the 1996 and 2010 community surveys, noting both made valuable contributions. She said the top three priorities in both surveys were to (a) preserve natural features and agricultural use, (b) improve the appearance of the downtown "hamlet" area to make it more attractive and inviting to shoppers and visitors, and (c) improve recreational resources, but residential development is not highly ranked.

She said next steps would include gathering information about resources to be preserved or improved and making good choices about where to put efforts. She stressed that the level of community involvement must be commensurate with the plan's ambition.

In answer to questions, DuMouchel said:

- The analysis of the two past surveys was her own work without input from the Township staff
- She does not think an additional survey is needed at this point because the past surveys provide the information needed, and she is concerned that future public participation will diminish if the same questions are asked repeatedly.

Commissioners said the (greater) residential density allowed in other townships on the Township's

agriculture borders needs to be considered, accuracy of the past surveys are questionable since they were done using sampling, and the work done by Cobalt has been too complicated, confusing, and disappointing,

The difficulties of preparing the survey were discussed, including mixed messages being given to Cobalt, what the real questions facing the community are (what support is there for development, what type, and where should it be?), whether and how to proceed to get answers, what type and level of response would be indicative to the Commission of a valid response, and what the respective roles of the Planning Commission and Township Board should be in the process.

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Chockley supported, that at this time discussion of the citizen survey by the Commission be postponed indefinitely until such time as Commissioners have been able to consider information provided to them tonight, with discussion to resume at a time to be set by the Chair and Secretary.

In response to concerns about too much time elapsing, Dignan clarified that "indefinitely" is a Robert's Rules of Order term which would allow the discussion to resume at any time. He called the question.

Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

Chockley said she will contact Cobalt about their preferred method of developing the survey questions.

10. NEW BUSINESS

None.

11. MINUTES

August 19, 2015, Regular Meeting

- **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Dignan supported, that the minutes of the August 19, 2015, regular meeting be amended by replacing the last four paragraphs of the Green Infrastructure Survey discussion be replaced with, "Several Commissioners made comments and asked questions." **Motion carried 5—2 6—1 on a voice vote, Chick and Chockley opposed.**

- **Motion:** Dignan moved, Iaquinto supported, that the minutes of the August 19, 2015, regular meeting be adopted as amended and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

12. POLICY REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

A. By-Laws. Stanalajczo recommended fully revising the Planning Commission's by-laws.

- **Motion:** Chockley moved, Stanalajczo supported, that the Commission get guidance from the Township attorney on how to proceed to amend the Commission's bylaws. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

Stanalajczo asked that Commissioners send suggestions for by-law changes to Mary Bird and Ms. DuMouchel.

13. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Jim Mulcrone provided information and made suggestions about survey construction. Craig Warburton commented on the Master Plan revision process, DuMouchel's presentation, meeting minutes, and the community survey. David Gordon commented on DuMouchel's presentation, growth, preservation, and the community survey.

14. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners made brief comments.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

October 7, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

- **Motion:** Stanalajczo moved, Chick supported, that the meeting be adjourned. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 P.M.

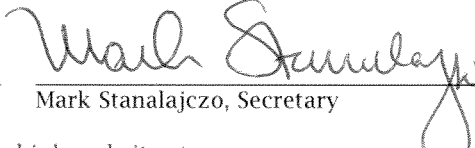
Prepared by Lisa Lemble.

Corrections to the originally issued minutes are indicated as follows:

Wording removed is ~~stricken through~~; wording added is underlined.

Adopted on October 7, 2015.


Marlene Chockley, Chair


Mark Stanalajczo, Secretary

Official minutes of all meetings are available on the Township's website at <http://www.twp-northfield.org/government/>