

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of Regular Meeting
May 21, 2014**

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
Andrea Darden	Present
Kenneth Dignan	Present
Sam Iaquinto	Present
Larry Roman	Present

Also present:

Planning Consultant Douglas Lewan,
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
Recording Secretary Lisa Lemble
Members of the Community

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chockley asked that item 10A be moved to follow Public Hearings.

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

5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No comments.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

7. REPORTS

7A. Board of Trustees

Chick reported that on May 13th the Board:

- Appointed Sam Iaquinto and Doug Wilber to the Parks & Recreation Board.

- Approved revisions to building fees, including eliminating the requirement for permits for projects considered to be maintenance.
- Approved ordinances regarding housing discrimination, off-road vehicles, the Michigan vehicle code, solicitation, and the Metro Act.
- Approved civic event permits for the 4th of July and German Park.

7B. ZBA

No meeting has been held since the last Planning Commission meeting.

7C. Staff Report

Nothing to report.

7D. Planning Consultant

Nothing to report.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8A. Section 60.21—Open Space Development Option.

8B. Section 2.03—Definitions

8C. Sections 12.02, 20.03, 21.03, and 22.03: Permitted Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2

8D. Sections 12.03, 20.03, 21.0-3, and 22.03: Conditional Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2

8E. Article 69.0—Public Notice

- ▶ **Motion:** Roman moved, Dignan supported, that the public hearings be opened on:

- Section 60.21—Open Space Development,
- Section 2.03—Definitions,
- Sections 12.02, 20.02, 21.02, and 22.02—Permitted Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2,
- Sections 12.03, 20.03, 21.03, and 22.03: Conditional Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2, and
- Article 69.0—Public Notice

Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

Chockley called for public comment. There was none.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the public hearings be closed.
Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10A. Case #JPC140002—Rhe-Tech, 1500 E. North Territorial Road; Request for Site Plan Approval for a 7,270 square foot building addition. Parcel 02-21-300-005; zoned G1.

Brent LaVanway with Rhe-Tech explained that this is a request for a small addition at the front of the existing building. He said this essentially squares off the building and no additional parking is proposed. He said building materials will be consistent with the existing building.

Planning consultant Douglas Lewan said this is a straight-forward project for a small addition to allow some additional manufacturing space. He noted that no conditional land use or rezoning is involved in this site plan request. He reported that a review meeting was held and the proposal was found ready to be considered by the Commission.

Lewan said the proposed addition meets setback requirements, no natural features are involved, and this is a logical extension of the building. He said there is plenty of parking, and added that site access and circulation do not change.

Lewan explained that no matter how large or small a site plan change is the applicant is expected to bring the property up to current standards, and for that reason elements such as landscaping, parking, lighting and site drainage are looked at.

He said approval of the site plan is recommended, subject to parking lot and transitional landscaping requirements being met, light poles being reduced to 16 feet in height unless at least 100 parking spaces can be shown, wallpack lights being reduced to 16 feet in height, and a photometric lighting plan being shown.

Chockley questioned why shorter light fixtures are not required regardless of the total number of parking spaces since the 100 existing spaces are not all in a single area of the property. Lewan said the ordinance does not address that distinction. Iaquinto said the number of spaces would be well over 100 if the truck parking—which was not included in the count—is added.

Jacob Rushlow, Township engineer with Orchard, Hiltz & McCliment, referred to his letter of May 12th. He said after the staff review meeting LaVanway provided the original plans for this site which had information about the design of the storm water retention pond showing

there is sufficient capacity to handle the proposed addition. He said the remaining issues can be handled administratively so he recommends approval of the site plan. In answer to a question from Chick, Rushlow said the best option for drainage from the building will be to connect underground to a catch basin in the parking lot in front of the building.

Cousino said it seems like there is always standing water in the ditch along the road in front of this building. Rushlow said there is a significant amount of sedimentation in that ditch and there is an ongoing dispute between the applicant and the County regarding maintenance of this drain.

In answer to a question from Chockley, Rushlow said items 4, 6, 8, and 9 in his letter have been addressed satisfactorily by the applicant.

LaVanway said motorcycle parking spaces will be indicated, photometrics will be submitted, landscaping plans will be submitted showing four new trees in the buffer area, and the remaining items listed in Rushlow's letter will be addressed in the detailed engineering plans. Regarding the drain under the building, he said a couple of floor drain cleanouts will be added to provide access if needed in the future.

- ▶ **Motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, that based upon the information from the applicant and reflected in the minutes of this meeting, the Planning Commission finds that the site plan for Case #JPC140002—Rhe Tech, 1500 E. North Territorial Road, Whitmore Lake, Michigan 48189, Parcel Number B02-21-300-005—meets the required standards and findings for site plan approval pursuant to Section 64.045 of the Zoning Ordinance and recommends approval with the following conditions:
 1. Concerns noted in the Township Planner's review dated May 13, 2014.
 2. Concerns noted in the Township Engineer's review dated May 12, 2014.

Cousino asked whether a condition could be added to insure that the drainage situation along the road is addressed. There was discussion about what would be appropriate to require.

- ▶ **Amended motion:** Chockley moved, Chick supported, that based upon the information from the applicant and reflected in the minutes of this meeting, the Planning Commission finds that the site plan for Case #JPC140002—Rhe Tech, 1500 E. North Territorial Road, Whitmore Lake, Michigan 48189, Parcel Number B02-21-300-005—meets the required standards and findings for site plan approval pursuant to Section 64.045 of the Zoning Ordinance and recommends approval with the following conditions:

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1. Concerns noted in the Township Planner's review dated May 13, 2014.
2. Concerns noted in the Township Engineer's review dated May 12, 2014.
3. The applicant's design assures that there is sufficient outlet for the detention pond to meet the Township Engineer's requirements.

Amended motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9A. Section 60.21—Open Space Development Option.

9B. Section 2.03—Definitions

9C. Sections 12.02, 20.02, 21.02, and 22.02: Permitted Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2

9D. Sections 12.03, 20.03, 21.03, and 22.03: Conditional Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2

Lewan said all of these public hearing items are related to changes to the Open Space Development Option which is a proposal to combine two parts of the ordinance. He noted State law requires that all zoning ordinances provide for this type of option which allows homes to be clustered together to allow preservation of natural features and/or open space while maintaining the density of the underlying zoning district. He said this development option can produce great projects, and in Northfield Township they are allowed in the AR, LR, SR1, and SR2 single-family districts.

Lewan noted that uses permitted are those of the underlying zoning district, but the most significant feature of the proposal is the possibility of up to a 150% density bonus in the AR district if the development provides certain features desired by the Township. He said these include providing pedestrian and walking paths, superior architecture, and preserving mature trees. He said while no minimum lot sizes are set minimum setbacks and distances between buildings are specified.

Chockley noted that a reference to AR-2 zoning, which no longer exists, should be removed. She also noted that all density bonuses require the provision of paved streets.

Dignan asked how "excellence in design" will be determined as listed in E.5.d. Lewan said at least 4 of the 5 items listed in that section must be met.

- **Motion:** Darden moved, Roman supported, that the Planning Commission recommends to the

Northfield Township Board adoption of the amendments to Sections 60.21—Open Space Development Option; 2.03—Definitions; 12.02, 20.02, 21.02, and 22.02: Permitted Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2; and 12.03, 20.03, 21.03, and 22.03: Conditional Uses in AR, LR, SR-1, and SR-2.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

9E. Article 69.0—Public Notice

Lewan explained that this collects all public notice requirements from various sections of the ordinance into one section for clarity. He said posting of a sign is not required by State law, but it is being included in the interest of increasing public participation.

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Darden supported, that the Planning Commission recommends to the Northfield Township Board adoption of Article 69.0—Public Notice.
Motion carried 7—0 on a roll call vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10A. Case #JPC140002—Rhe-Tech, 1500 E. North Territorial Road; Request for Site Plan Approval for a 7,270 square foot building addition. Parcel 02-21-300-005; zoned G1.

[Heard earlier in the meeting].

10B. Mixed Use South Zoning District—Discussion of process, concepts, and zoning district language.

Lewan explained that a defensible zoning ordinance is predicated upon a Master Plan, and the Commission has already held one public hearing on a revision to the Master Plan which references the Mixed Use South Zoning District, and another public hearing on that will be held on June 4th.

He said he is tentatively calling this area the Whitmore-Territorial Overlay District and he referred to a map showing the limits of this area and the existing zoning districts within it which include single-family residential, agricultural, residential/office, commercial, and industrial zoning.

Lewan noted the different zoning districts have different setbacks ranging up to 85 feet, but the Commission had discussed the desire to reduce setbacks in the overlay district to bring buildings closer to the road with parking at the sides and rear. He said required design standards should include

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shared access, uniform building setbacks, planning for pedestrian circulation, provision at key locations of community design features (artwork, sculptures, connections to offsite features, etc.), screening of rooftop utilities, etc.

Regarding allowed land uses, Lewan noted no existing uses will become non-conforming, and all underlying zoning will remain in place, but additional uses will be allowed in the overlay district. He noted that multi-family will be allowed only as part of a larger project, but within the commercial and industrial districts the Commission will have to decide which uses will be permitted and which will be conditional. Dignan suggested also listing during the discussion uses that will not be allowed.

It was agreed that Lewan will provide a starting list of uses for each district for Commissioners to consider individually before the next meeting. Chockley suggested that initial results be compiled before the next discussion.

In answer to a question from Dignan, Lewan said any new development on properties within this district will have to comply with the requirements of the overlay district, but whether existing businesses will have to comply at some point needs to be determined. In answer to a question from Chockley, Lewan said rezoning to the overlay district would not have to be requested, rather development would be determined according to the underlying district and the requirements of the overlay district.

Dignan asked why the RTM parcels south of Territorial are included in the district, but the RTM parcels north of Territorial are not. Chick questioned whether the district should be extended along Whitmore Lake Road further south of the new sewer assessment district. Lewan said that could be done in the future, but this is primarily a business district so the question is how big the Commission wants businesses to extend.

There was further discussion about the issue of uses allowed in the underlying zoning and as a result of the overlay district. Dignan questioned how parcels that are only partly covered by the overlay district will be addressed. Lewan said it is highly unlikely that those large parcels will not be divided prior to development. He said best efforts are made in zoning and planning and sometimes issues like that have to be addressed in the future.

Cousino said he is not opposed to seeing parking along streets, and requiring it to be placed elsewhere requires additional infrastructure investment by the developer. He said similar setback requirements in Ann Arbor resulted in a drive through lane not being feasible on a parcel he developed there. He said requiring connections with adjacent lots could also be onerous.

Lewan said not all front yard parking would be prohibited, and connections between properties is intended to eliminate the need for cars to pull out onto the main road to get from one business to another. Cousino questioned whether the overlay district makes development more or less attractive to developers. Lewan said this will open up properties to a significant number of additional uses without requiring rezoning, so he sees it as an advantage. Chick said this has worked in other communities. She and Chockley said it would be useful to see examples in other communities. Lewan gave the example of Panera, Comerica Bank, Discount Tire, and a credit union on Jackson road near Zeeb. He said they all have connecting drives, and in addition to allowing cars to drive between them, walking between them is safer so someone could drop off their car at Discount Tire and easily walk to Panera or one of the banks.

In answer to a question about the Meijer property, Lewan said the Township already has a good "big box" ordinance which a company like Meijer could use. He added that the development of outlots a business like that would sell would use the overlay options.

It was agreed to schedule further discussion of this on June 18th

11. MINUTES

May 7, 2014, Regular Meeting

Chockley corrected the votes on several motions (6—0, rather than 7—0 due to Chick's absence).

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Dignan supported, that the minutes of the May 7, 2014, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 7—0 on a voice vote.**

12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION

A. Conditional Use Permit Duration. Chockley recalled that Lewan had been asked to research the law regarding how long Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approvals remain in effect. Lewan said State law indicates that once approved a CUP can be changed only with mutual approval of the land owner and the governing body; therefore, in his opinion approved CUPs run with the land until a change is mutually agreed upon.

13. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

None.

14. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None present.

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

June 4, 2014, at 7:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Building was announced as the next regular Commission meeting time and location.

16. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 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 June 4, 2014.

Marlene Chockley, Chair

Kenneth Dignan, Secretary

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