

**NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
April 16, 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 (arrived at 7:09 P.M.) |
| Kenneth Dignan   | Absent with notice             |
| 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**

- **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, that the agenda be approved as presented.  
**Motion carried 5—0 on a voice vote.**

**5. FIRST CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None present.

**6. CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**7. REPORTS**

**7A. Board of Trustees**

Chick reported the Board approved:

- Two civic event applications.
- The request to appoint a Planning Commission representative to the Parks & Recreation Board.
- The zoning ordinance revisions to Article 2.0, Definitions, and to Section 67.10, Violations & Penalties as recommended by the Planning Commission.

**7B. ZBA**

No report.

**7C. Staff Report**

Nothing to report.

[Darden arrived at this point].

**7D. Planning Consultant**

Lewan reported:

- Work continues of review of the zoning ordinance.
- Rhe-Tech will be submitting a site plan for an expansion on their site, possible for the May 16<sup>th</sup> agenda.
- The engineer for Regal Recycling, Kathy Kienath, was out of town for a while, but she is working on plans and they are waiting for some surveying work to be completed. He said he hopes a detailed engineering plan will be submitted soon.

**8. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

**9. OLD BUSINESS**

**9A. Article 26.0—MHP Mobile Home Park;  
Second Draft Revision.**

Lewan said this is another section of the ordinance in a series that the Commission has been reviewing. He noted that regulation of manufactured housing communities is mainly done at the State level, and the proposed changes incorporated model ordinance language from the State. He said one unique feature of these ordinances is that the State must approve any local standards that are stricter than the State's standards.

He noted that other changes include making sure terminology is used consistently through the ordinance and the addition of language on page 26-11 requiring open space. Chick asked if language regarding maintenance of landscaping should be included. Lewan said that can be done.

Darden recalled that at the last meeting Dignan had expressed concern about drainage areas being used to provide required open space. Cousino said drainage areas are not always filled with water; some of them have water only temporarily. Darden said the concern is making sure there is sufficient year-round exercise area. Chockley read the ordinance definition of open space and noted that it is quite broad. She asked if the

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Planning Commission would have an opportunity to review Manufactured Housing site plans. Lewan said it would, but the Commission does not have a lot of input. He said he will check into the open space issue and noted that a definition could be included in this section of the ordinance.

Chick asked if the outdoor storage referred to is required or optional. Lewan said it is optional.

Chockley recalled that Dignan had also been concerned about there being an appropriate location for a school bus stop, and she noted that language is included requiring that.

In answer to a question from Chockley, Lewan said it would be best to send the draft to the State for review prior to holding a public hearing. In answer to a question from Cousino, Lewan said there is currently no undeveloped land zoned MHP, and he added that no new areas for manufactured housing is indicated in the Master Plan.

**9B. Section 60.21—Open Space Ordinance;  
Review of Revision Prepared in 2010.**

Lewan explained that the zoning ordinance currently has sections concerning open space in both Articles 35.0 and Section 60.21, and this proposal combines those into a new Section 60.21 titled *Open Space Development Option*. He said the developments using these provisions are often called cluster housing and it is a requirement of State law that all zoning ordinances include this as a development option.

He said another key feature is inclusion of a density bonus of up to 150%—in the AR district only—if the developer provides amenities or design elements desired by the Township. He noted there are additional provisions regarding cluster developments in the AR, LR, SR1, and SR2as permitted and conditional uses.

He recalled that the development of this proposal was a long process, and he reviewed the proposed ordinance and made comments, including:

- The purpose section explains the concept of encouraging less cookie-cutter types of development.
- These developments are allowed in all residential zoning districts by right with at least 50% open space and with a conditional use permit (CUP) if there is less than 50% open space.
- Uses are the same as are permitted in the zoning district.
- Open space is required to remain open in perpetuity.

- What may be considered open space includes recreational facilities, stormwater detention areas, drainage fields, and farms, but rights-of-way, building setbacks, and stormwater and wastewater treatment areas that do not meet specific requirements are not.
- A parallel plan for the development using conventional zoning requirements must be submitted to determine the allowed density.
- Density bonuses may be earned in AR zoning by increasing open space, preserving more trees or wetlands, including extensive pathways, or providing specific design elements.

He said this is not a complicated ordinance and it has been simplified considerably from the original proposal.

~~Roman suggesting making it clear that the list of prohibited farm uses listed is not complete exhaustive~~ Roman suggested making it clear that the list of farm uses is not exhaustive; and regarding granting of density bonuses, he suggested that the language be changed to “may” be granted rather than “will” be granted. As an example he said there may not be agreement between the Commission and a developer about what would be a sufficient path system. Chockley agreed, but said some things—such as the amount of open space or percentage of trees retained—are measurable. Lewan said he agreed that some discretion on some of the items would be appropriate and said he will make revisions to that effect, particularly to E.5.c and E.5.d.

Cousino said E.5.d would be very difficult to enforce from a developer’s point of view because another entity will be building the houses and what is fashionable this year is not the next year. Roman recalled that it took a long time to develop the list of desired design elements. Lewan said a developer would not have to use this section to get to the maximum density bonus, but deed restrictions can be used to assure compliance if use of this section is proposed. Cousino said it seems like it would be an administrative nightmare. Lewan confirmed that a 150% bonus would mean 25 homes would be allowed on a parcel that would allow only 10 homes on the parallel plan.

Cousino asked—since density bonuses are available only in AR districts—what the benefit is to a developer for using the open space option in other residential districts. Lewan confirmed that it allows for more design freedom and development potential.

It was agreed a public hearing should be scheduled.

## 10. NEW BUSINESS

### 10A. Appointment of Representative to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Chockley noted that the Parks and Recreation Commission meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Iaquinto noted they are working on a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

- ▶ **Motion:** Darden moved, Roman supported, that Sam Iaquinto be appointed as the Planning Commission representative to the Northfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

### 10B. Article 69.0—Public Hearings; Revision of Sign Posting Requirements

Lewan said this ordinance would require posting of a sign on the subject property for requests for rezoning, special land use, or planned unit development, but would not be required for variances, administrative appeals, or text amendments. He said the previous language seemed to imply that two signs would be required, so he clarified that only one sign is required.

He noted that the required size is 4' x 8', it must be put up at least 15 days prior to the public hearing and removed within three days following the hearing, and details regarding lettering and placement are specified.

Iaquinto noted posting of a sign is not required by the State. Chick said she thought the Commission had agreed that the required size of the sign should be reduced. Cousino recalled that someone had suggested that the Township website be included on signs as a place where more information could be found. It was agreed that a 4'x4' sign would be large enough to include sufficient information.

It was agreed this should be scheduled for public hearing.

### 10C. Article 51.0—RTM Research/Technology/Manufacturing

Lewan said a request has been presented to the Township to possibly locate a church in the RTM district, but that is currently not an allowed use. He said the current proposal adds places of worship and cemeteries. He said many churches are quite large and use open-design buildings of the type found in this type of district. He said traffic would not conflict with business uses in these developments. He said making houses of worship conditional uses would allow protections for businesses that might produce noise or vibrations that could conflict with religious services.

In answer to a question from Cousino, Lewan said it is likely that church ownership of one of these properties would remove it from the tax rolls.

Chockley and Darden asked whether the floor area ratio (FAR) requirement should be retained. Lewan said he would look into that.

In answer to a question from Roman, Chockley said the only RTM district in the Township is along North Territorial Road. Roman said the RTM district should be retained for manufacturing and expressed concern that allowing houses of worship could have an effect on the future development of the area. He said while everyone wants this development to be filled out, he does not want to adjust ordinances for individual requests. Iaquinto said allowing churches with a CUP does not guarantee approval. Roman said if the use is allowed with a CUP there would have to be a good reason for a denial.

Lewan said he does not know for sure, but he has a feeling that allowing churches in industrial districts is not uncommon and he can research that if the Commission desires. Iaquinto said he and Dignan are members of the church considering using an existing building (Jomar) in this development, and he said the church is considering leasing out some of the space for business use Monday through Friday. Darden said it is possible in that case taxes would be levied.

Roman said a church as large as Northridge, which is quite massive with huge parking areas, would completely change the character of this development. Chockley recalled that the Jomar property is only about five acres. Roman said there is a potential for expansion.

Lewan said he can research this issue by the next meeting.

Chick noted that this ordinance refers to a Fire Marshal, but the Township does not have one. Chockley noted there are other housekeeping types of changes to be made as well.

## 11. MINUTES

### March 19, 2014, Regular Meeting

Chockley made one minor correction.

- ▶ **Motion:** Iaquinto moved, Chick supported, that the minutes of the March 19, 2014, regular meeting be approved as corrected, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

### April 2, 2014, Regular Meeting

- ▶ **Motion:** Darden moved, Chick supported, that the minutes of the April 2, 2014, regular meeting be

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approved as presented, and to dispense with the reading. **Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

**12. POLICY REVIEW & DISCUSSION**

None.

**13. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS**

No comments.

**14. SECOND CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None present.

**15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING**

**May 7, 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:** Iaquinto moved, Roman supported, that the meeting be adjourned.  
**Motion carried 6—0 on a voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

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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 May 7, 2014.

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Marlene Chockley, Chair

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Kenneth Dignan, Secretary

Official minutes of all meetings are available on the Township's website at  
[http://twp-northfield.org/boards/planning\\_commission/Minutes](http://twp-northfield.org/boards/planning_commission/Minutes)