

MINUTES

Cascade Charter Township Planning Commission
Monday, January 5, 2009
7:00 p.m.

- ARTICLE 1.** Chairman McDonald called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
Members Present: Hammond, Logue, McCarthy, McDonald, Pennington, Robinson, Sperla, Waalkes
Members Absent: None
Others Present: Township Planning Director Peterson, Lynee Wells of Williams & Works, Recording Secretary Hern, and Members of the Public.
- ARTICLE 2.** Chairman McDonald led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- ARTICLE 3.** Chairman McDonald requested a motion for the approval of the January 5, 2009 agenda with the removal of Article 4: Approval of the December 15, 2008 Minutes. The December Minutes were not included within the Commissions' packets. Chairman McDonald requested that Article 4 be replaced with a brief Public Comment period since there are members of the public in attendance this evening.
- Member Lewis motioned to approve the January 5th Agenda with the removal of Article 4: Approval of the December 15, 2008 Minutes and replaced with a Public Hearing, supported by Member Sperla. All in favor with none opposed, the motion carried.**
- ARTICLE 4.** **General Public Comment.**
Chairman McDonald noted there are no formal cases on the agenda this evening and the Planning Commission would like to present an opportunity to hear from the Members of the Public in attendance.
- Member Robinson motioned to open the Public Hearing, supported by Member Waalkes. All in favor with none opposed: Public Hearing opened.**
- There were no Members of the Public who addressed the Commission.
- Member Robinson motioned to close the Public Hearing, supported by Member Logue. All in favor with none opposed: Public Hearing closed.**
- ARTICLE 5.** **Presentation of the Septic Study from 2006**

Planning Director Peterson noted that during the Master Plan process, the 2006 Septic Study has been referred to frequently. There are many new members of the Planning Commission and Staff thought it would present the study to the Commission.

The Township reviewed the septic failures in the Township from 1994 to 2005 and at the time.

Approximately 82% of the households have septic systems. During this period we found 288 failures. These failures are determined as failures by the Kent County Health Department and averages approximately 25 failures in the Township per year.

Some of the other information we learned from the data included; the average age of a septic system at failure is 21 years. The Township has had failures in systems ranging in age from 1-year old to 50-year old systems.

Member Waalkes asked if the data includes households that had systems close to failing and elected to either connect to public utilities or put in a new system and Planning Director Peterson said the data only reflects actual failed systems.

The cost of a new septic system averaged approximately between \$3,500 and \$6,000. If it was a mounded system it costs between \$10,000 and \$12,000. Maintenance of a septic system is approximately \$300.

The approximate cost to connect to public sewer/water would be approximately \$10,000 including a plumber to connect the house.

Planning Director Peterson showed a map of the Township septic failures during the 1994 through 2005 period of the study noting that the different colors refer to the different ages of the failed systems.

The study has been useful over the years and is being cited in the development of the new Master Plan.

Planning Director Peterson also noted the Building Permits and the number of permits issued through 2003 to 2006 was 485. The Township is issuing more permits for homes with water and sewer than on well and septic.

Planning Director Peterson also referred to a map of the Township's current water and sewer lines.

Member Pennington asked if most of the public connections are driven by Special Assessment Districts or by the developers and Planning Director Peterson said developer driven extensions.

ARTICLE 6.

Consider Recommendation of Draft Master Plan to Township Board for Public Comment.

Planning Director Peterson noted the overview of the new Master Plan that was presented at the December 15, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting. The Commission has provided comments regarding the draft of the Master Plan and those comments have been included within the draft. At this evening's meeting, staff is requesting a recommendation from the Planning Commission to the Township Board to distribute the Master Plan to the surrounding cities and townships beginning the 63-day review period. Once the comments have been received from the surrounding communities, the Master Plan would come back before the Planning Commission for the Public Hearing that is scheduled for March 23, 2009.

Lynne Wells of Williams & Works was present and presented a Comments and Responses matrix to show how we have addressed the comments heard at the past meeting.

It is important to remember that the Master Plan is not completed, nothing is set in stone and there are opportunities to provide additional changes and changes can still be made this evening.

Ms. Wells reviewed the comments on the matrix:

Member Sperla asked if the Master Plan addresses storm water disposal, he did not see it. Ms. Wells said that concern did not arise amongst the various focus groups and committee meetings. Storm water is lightly addressed under Sustainability and could be controlled with new development with bio-swales, green roofs, etc. Planning Director Peterson suggested adding a reference to the Township's Storm Water Plan and under the Capital Improvement Program. Member Sperla also requested the reference be added under Utilities and Ms. Wells agreed as well.

Member Lewis asked if the concerns, such as: maintenance, capacity, safety factors, regarding cell towers and co-located antennas should be addressed in the Master Plan? Chairman McDonald believes the ordinance does control the issues and Member Lewis believes the ordinance should be reviewed. Planning Director Peterson suggested that we look at that in connection with the wind turbine issues that have come up.

Ms. Wells said she would like to add the information regarding cell towers, helipads, wind turbines under the section Amending the Zoning Ordinance on Page 101 and also under Sustainability on Page 111.

Member Sperla motioned for a recommendation to the Township Board to distribute the Master Plan for public comment, with the revisions and additions made this evening. All in favor with none opposed. Motion carried.

Ms. Wells clarified that the Planning Commission would be reviewing the Master Plan after the 63-day public review period.

ARTICLE 7. Work Plan for 2009.

Planning Director Peterson said he would like to use the new Master Plan as the basis for the 2009 Work Plan. Staff has outlined items they would like to begin working on and developing.

Staff is open to discussion regarding the 2009 Work Plan.

Member Lewis questioned if a building's elevations should be included and Planning Director Peterson said he would add that item.

Chairman McDonald stated it would be helpful to develop sub-committees for some of the items as they are worked on.

ARTICLE 8. Planning Department 2008 – Annual Report

Planning Director Peterson noted that the number of project within the Township is down. Some items not listed that have been completed are the grant application, the master plan, Centennial Park.

Member Robinson noted that there are two (2) secretaries listed in 2008 and Robinson should be changed to Vice-Chair.

Member Robinson also noted that some of the cases take more work than others such as complicated P.U.D.'s.

Member Hammond asked if there are any new projects coming into the Township and Planning Director Peterson said it has slowed down considerably. We do not have any new significant projects coming in right now, although we did just have a site plan

subcommittee for a new project that you will see at your next meeting.

Member Sperla asked if the Township has a requirement as to when a project be completed and Planning Director Peterson said no. Chairman McDonald noted that money is needed to complete the projects and the economy is a challenge.

ARTICLE 9. Election of Officers

Member Lewis submitted the following as Officers of the Planning Commission:

Member Robinson, Chairman

Member Waalkes, Vice-Chairman

Member Sperla, Secretary

Supported by Member Logue.

Chairman McDonald requested any other Officer nominations. There were none. **All in favor with none opposed. Motion carried.**

Member Lewis motioned that Member McDonald be appointed as the Zoning Board of Appeals representative, supported by Member Robinson. Member Robinson requested a vote. **All in favor with none opposed. Motion carried.**

Planning Director Peterson noted a representative needs to be appointed to the Village Design Review Committee.

Member Lewis motioned that Member Hammond be the representative for the Village Design Review Committee, supported by Member Sperla. All in favor with none opposed. Motion carried.

ARTICLE 10. Any Other Business

Chairman McDonald opened the meeting for any other business. There was no other business of the Planning Commission.

Chairman McDonald noted that Staff has distributed a Planning Commission roster and requested any updates to contact information be made to the document. Staff will update the roster and distribute the new information.

Chairman McDonald also noted that Member Koessel was an invaluable member of the Planning Commission and has dedicated himself to the Township. He recommended having a certificate or Resolution be made for Member Koessel. Member Lewis fully

supported Chairman McDonald's recommendation and Staff will develop.

Member Lewis thanked Chairman McDonald for his years of leadership as Chair of the Planning Commission

ARTICLE 11.

Adjournment

Chairman McDonald requested a motion for adjournment.

Member Hammond supported by Member Sperla moved to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Sperla, Secretary

Lisa Hern, Recording Secretary