

SPECIAL MEETING
CHOCOLAY TOWNSHIP BOARD
CHOCOLAY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

June 9, 2014

A Special meeting of the Chocolay Township Board and Chocolay Township Planning Commission was held on Monday, June 9, 2014 at the Chocolay Township Office, 5010 U. S. 41 South, Marquette, MI. Supervisor Walker called the Township Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLIGIANCE.

Planning Chair Andy Sikkema called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

TOWNSHIP BOARD.

PRESENT: Gary Walker, John Greenberg, Max Engle, Mark Maki, Susan Carlson, Richard Bohjanen.

ABSENT: Judy White.

TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION.

PRESENT: Andy Sikkema, Tom Mahaney, Bruce Ventura, Eric Meister, Andy Smith (arrived at 7:25 pm), Richard Bohjanen (also on Township Board).

ABSENT: Kendell Milton.

STAFF PRESENT: Steve Lawry, Kelly Woodward, Mary Sanders.

AGENDA.

The purpose of the Special Township Board/ Planning Commission meeting is to discuss future land use planning and zoning, Chocolay Community Farm license, Recreation Plan project priorities, Open Burning, Junk and Blight Ordinance revisions and Planning Commission priorities and performance.

Engle moved Carlson seconded to approve the agenda as amended and move Assignment of Chocolay Community Farm License to the first item on agenda.

AYES: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1 MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

Amy Conover, Superior Sustainability introduced herself.

ASSIGNMENT OF CHOCOLAY COMMUNITY FARM LICENSE.

Trustee Maki had questions on identification signage for the Chocolay Community Farm. He also felt that this was an increase in intensity from the past use of one person planting and harvesting the entire parcel of land. He feels this should go to the Zoning Board of Appeals as a non-conforming use of the property.

Planning Director Woodward stated that if structures were added, it would need to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals. This is still being used as farming, so the use has not changed and there is no need to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Carlson moved Bohjanen seconded to approve the proposed license agreement with Superior Sustainability, which is a project sponsor for the Chocolay Community Farm Collaborative, as presented.

AYES: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1 MOTION CARRIED.

FUTURE LAND USE PLANNING AND ZONING.

Planner Woodward explained to the Board that the Planning Commission is at the point in the Master Plan that focuses on the future land use plan, which is meant to be a depiction of future (20 years or more) uses of land.

Township Board and Planning Commission discussion on future land use:

- This is a long range look at zoning and we need to decide if we want to make changes in zoning or keep status quo.
- Comments from the majority of Township residents have been to preserve the rural character. There does not seem to be a large push for additional commercial.
- This is the struggle the Planning Commission faces; residents would like to see some commercial growth on M-28 and U S 41, but not change the rural feel of the Township.
- Do realtors inform us that they hear of a need for more commercial property in the Township?
- Items that discourage business in Chocolay are the size and shape of available parcels, zoning, and infrastructure (lack of a water system).
- Plan for places to allow a small amount of change, which is inevitable unless you chase it away. This is needed to support revenues.
- We should look at allowing multi-use in the existing commercial district. Allow a business on the bottom floor of a building with apartments above. Also multi-family development in the sewer district.
- Comments from the survey show a wish to retain young people and retain retirees looking to move out of the family home. This would require more apartments/condos and a zoning change.

- The City of Marquette takes a proactive approach to attract young people, such as providing transportation options.
- Clusters of small businesses supported by the residents that live nearby can be considered.
- Light industrial needs to be looked at before it happens on its own without forethought.
- Form based zoning could allow Commercial and Light Industrial in the same building near residences. This supports businesses with increased activity. It's about progress that won't change character.
- We need to control the area for an Industrial Park off a major road. See how other communities are creating these areas.
- There are different scales and types of industrial activity. Fraco is a great example of Industrial near residential. It is very well buffered.
- Revisit the Future Land Use map of the 2005 plan to determine changes.
- Government is not a great economic developer; it should be driven by the private sector.

The Board consensus was for the Planning Commission to continue to look at Mixed Use Zoning.

RECREATION PLAN PROJECT PRIORITIES.

A Recreation ranking document for the Master Plan was presented. The Board has a deadline of July 21, 2014 to make comments on the Recreation Plan Project Priorities; the comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for the August 4, 2014 meeting.

OPEN BURNING, JUNK AND BLIGHT ORDINANCE REVISIONS.

Supervisor Walker presented a suggested Outdoor and Open Burning Ordinance for Chocolay Township. The thought is to have a separate Ordinance dealing with Outdoor Burning separate from the Zoning Ordinance. Public Safety, Police and Fire Departments would handle the enforcement.

Township Board and Planning Commission discussion on an Outdoor and Open Burning Ordinance:

- Will campfires be allowed at the M-28 Turn outs or just private beaches?
- Buckets could be available at the turn outs for extinguishing camp fires.
- Contractors have difficulty disposing of large stands of trees from excavating at building site.
- We could add a clause that would allow commercial burning by conditional use permit in AF district on large parcels where it would not disturb the neighbors. Buffers are more important than the parcel size.

The Board concurred to add language to the ordinance to include our Police Department and Fire Department for enforcement, to allow camp fires at the M-28 Turn Outs and to add wording to allow commercial contractors to burn logs taken from development sites. This will appear on the Township Board June 16, 2014 agenda and will then be forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Township Board and Planning Commission discussion on Junk and Blight:

- The current Ordinance allows any number of vehicles on a piece of property as long as they are licensed. There is a forever license plate that can be purchased for \$75.00 and can stay on a vehicle forever. This could cause problems to our ordinance as it stands.
- Cargo trailers are also becoming a problem and are not addressed in the Ordinance.
- Damaged and deteriorated structures also need to be dealt with. How long should a non-functioning building be allowed to stand? Should we consider demolition permits to help control this?
- This ordinance is hard to enforce. We need to make it easier to enforce.
- How many times have we gone to court over vehicle issues? The Board needs to see photos of situations that the Ordinance does not address. Bring a list of specific problems pertaining to this Ordinance to the Board before we can move on this issue. This might include the storage of multiple RV's on a property, multiple licensed trailers and vehicles, etc.

DISCUSSION OF PLANNING COMMISSION PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE.

Andy Sikkema, Chairman of the Planning Commission said they are trying not to take on so much, so they may not be able to take action just because someone asks in public comment. He presented the following priority list to the Township Board.

- 2014 Recreation Grant application
- *Finish the Master Plan update*, including prioritization of projects
- Finish unfinished proposed zoning ordinance amendments
- Reconsider the "Accessory Homesteading Activities" regulations after evaluating public input
- *Junk car and blight ordinance updates*
- Asset Management Plan for Township roadways
- Consider need to amend burn regulations
- Necessary updates to the Lot Split and Land Division ordinances

Comments made by the Township Board to the Planning Commission:

- The Planning Commission should address Private Road regulations. There are concerns about allowing four lots off one private driveway, even with the 66' easement requirement. There are no construction requirements. This is a safety

issue for Police and Fire emergencies, especially when properties are not appropriately addressed.

- Homes on private roads should have fire numbers.
- The Commission discussed concerns relating to seasonal rentals and site plan review not having a provision to notify neighbors.

Supervisor Walker thanked the Planning Commission for their thoroughness and consideration of issues. He very much appreciates their hard work. The Board agreed with his comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT.

Karen Alholm, Zoning Board of Appeals member introduced herself to the Board. She is running for County Commission District 6 (vacated by Greg Seppanen).

Tom Mahaney, Planning Commission member commented that we cannot get the Third Street business feel in Chocolay Township due to traffic speed on the business corridor.

Supervisor Walker adjourned the meeting at 9:45 pm.

Max Engle,
Clerk

Gary Walker
Supervisor