

**WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP BOARD AND PLANNING COMMISSION**
Approved Minutes of the Special Board of Trustees Meeting
7525 Highland Road
White Lake, MI 48383
March 15, 2012 @ 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Martinko called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called: Mr. Birkle and Mr. Woodhouse were absent.

ROLL CALL:	Steve Anderson	<u>Township Board:</u>
	Todd Birkle, Board Liaison - Absent	Greg Baroni, Township Supervisor
	Debby DeHart	Terry Lilley, Clerk
	Steve Martinko, Chairperson	Jay Brendel, Treasurer
	Sarah McNulty	Carol Burkard
	Peter Meagher, Vice Chairperson	Michael Powell
	William Pierson – Secretary	David Lewsley
	Gail Novak-Phelps	Todd Birkle - Absent
	Stan Woodhouse - Absent	

Also Present: Sean O'Neil, Community Development Director
David Birchler, Township Consultant
Lynn Lindon, Recording Secretary

Visitors: 13

Mr. O'Neil explained that the purpose of the joint meeting was to discuss amendments to fence regulations and digital text signs, and to review and consider implementing three new zoning districts, which can be tagged with the adoption of the new ordinance.

New Business

a. Review and discussion of Clearzoning

Mr. Birchler gave a brief overview of the content of the materials that were distributed to the commissioners and board members prior to the meeting. He demonstrated how the hyperlinking throughout the document would work. He noted that what's unique about the Clearzoning concept is that White Lake Township's ordinance would be available 365 days/year; 24 hours/day, which is attractive to out-of-state developers. Mr. Powell stated that he is excited for White Lake Township and to have professionals use this new tool.

Ms. Novak-Phelps explained to the students in the audience what the Zoning Ordinance is and how it helps development in the community.

Mr. Lewsley noted that eventually this concept will work, but in the meantime there are existing businesses in the 3 new proposed districts. He questioned the effect this would have on those businesses. Mr. Birchler referenced the new Pontiac Lake Gateway district and stated that the Master Plan proposes a hotel/conference center and restaurant uses for this area. The new zoning district allows those uses as well as multiple-family and retail/commercial uses.

The Neighborhood Mixed Use district is seen as useful to take an unregulated commercial area surrounded by neighborhoods and develop it into something special for that neighborhood, i.e., more personal services such as restaurants, hair salons, child care center, etc.

Ms. Burkard questioned whether there would be a news release in Oakland County that White Lake Township is one of the few communities implementing this. Mr. Birchler stated he has had informal discussions with Matthew Gibb at the county, who is encouraging the township to promote this. Birchler Arroyo can assist with preparing a press release if needed.

Mr. Lilley questioned whether the Planning Commission was asking the Board members to approve text within the ordinance. Mr. Birchler responded that there were minor typos that were fixed, but none of the language content was changed, only reorganized in the existing ordinance. They are hoping to hold the public hearing in April. Mr. Lilley asked if there was anything significant that was added or is changing.

Mr. Birchler continued that there was no change in the approval process, but there is a concept for a streamlined process for sustainable development, which will be presented to the board separately after Clearzoning is in place. The Sign section is new, there are revisions to the Fence section, and there is the proposed addition of the 3 new zoning districts.

With regard to Signs, the section on Portable Business Signs has all new content. Mr. Birchler reviewed the weekday versus weekend signs standards and requirements. Ambulatory signs were discussed in detail. They are still permitted, but with stricter standards. Also new is a section pertaining to Electronic Message Boards.

The group discussed standards and regulations for the brightness of the message boards during the day versus at night, and the concept for the changeable message sign. While the intent for a changeable sign is for the businesses on the site, many businesses offer non-profits opportunities to advertise a specific event.

Ms. Burkard asked if there were any exceptions for the Urgent Care facility being that it operates 24 hours/day. Mr. O'Neil indicated that the concern and issue is with changing of the text after certain hours. The interval that the sign changes and its brightness are important safety factors, the rest are aesthetics.

Mr. Martinko noted that the Teggerdine/M-59 intersection is dangerous. The township doesn't have control over the signs on the weekends, but he feels it has to set standards for weekday signage.

Resident Thomas Buckingham would like to see dusk to dawn limits. After more discussion, it was decided to set the standards based on sunrise and sunset and having the electronic eye establish those times.

Ms. Burkard wanted to address handicap issues at JC Penney. The doors currently do not stay open long enough for her to get her powered wheelchair inside. She has addressed this with management. Mr. Birchler felt this could be a building code issue and might be related for the store to save energy. Mr. O'Neil and Mr. Bonnavier will visit JC Penney tomorrow.

With regard to signage, Mr. Powell personally has a problem with the 15 second interval and feels it is too slow. MDOT's standard is 8 seconds at 70 mph. Mr. Birchler stated the township originally required 30 second intervals and the Planning Commission informally looked at 20 seconds, versus 15 seconds and felt 15 seconds was adequate to see 2 versions of the sign.

Mr. Powell thought the township was going to clean up multiple tenant signs and feels it would be fair to only have 4 changes in a minute if you're going to advertise who is there. Mr. Birchler doesn't think the signs should be used for identification, but rather for messages.

There was discussion on the township's commitment to support businesses in White Lake, but also provide safety to the residents of the township. It is clear that these types of signs are here to stay and the township has to strike a balance.

Mr. Powell questioned the backlighting on the sign. Mr. Birchler responded that for a permanent sign, the township doesn't allow the source of the illumination to produce glare for oncoming drivers. It has to be focused on the sign or coming from within the sign. With regard to electronic signs, the source

of the illumination is coming directly at the driver and can be overpowering. This is the reason for setting standards.

With regard to fences, the ordinance is being changed primarily to address the issue of not allowing 6 ft. privacy fences on corner lots. There are homes within the township that these fences all the way to their property line. The Planning Commission feels the current ordinance's intent was to say setbacks have to be met. If on a corner lot, setbacks in both yards have to be maintained. However, a 4 ft. chain link fence or shrubs would be acceptable.

There was discussion on a specific property that has this instance with fencing. The zoning ordinance requires a fence permit, but the building department does not. The township is leaning going back to requiring fence permits.

Mr. Birchler will rewrite this section and present it for consideration at a later meeting.

Ms. Dehart expressed concern with how one would go about changing the configuration of a pasture, if the landowner wanted to section off a 20 acre parcel into 2 10-acre parcels. This particular situation will be studied further as well.

Lastly, up for consideration is how to implement the 3 new zoning districts. The township has the ability to fulfill the goals of the Master Plan by incorporating the Pontiac Lake Gateway, Mixed Use Neighborhood, and the Town Center districts. From a planning perspective, now would be a good time to do this. If this is done as a process and map amendment, it would move quicker and be less costly, but there is the potential of upsetting some property owners that should be considered.

Mr. Lilley feels there may need to be a meeting with the residents explaining what the township wants to do. He suggested inviting the neighbors to a meeting prior to the public hearing. Mr. Baroni would also like more information and to inform the public prior to the public hearing.

Adjournment

Mr. Powell moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Mr. Lilley supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a unanimous voice vote. (8 yes votes)

I, Terry Lilley, the duly elected and qualified Clerk of the Charter Township of White Lake, County of Oakland, State of Michigan, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the March 15, 2012 special board meeting minutes.



Terry Lilley, Clerk
White Lake Township