

MINUTES OF THE COOPER CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2016

A meeting of the Planning Commission of Cooper Charter Township was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2016, at the Cooper Charter Township Hall, 1590 West D. Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Members Present: Asselmeier, Boekhoven, Corke, Frederick, Janssen, Reynolds, Stehouwer.

Members Absent:

Also Present: Michael Homier of Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, attorneys for Cooper Charter Township; Russ Wicklund, Township Planning Consultant, and Guest, Rob Bricker.

Chairman Asselmeier called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Item

A motion to accept the Agenda as printed was made by Comm. Reynolds and supported by Comm. Janssen. Motion carried 7-0.

Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes of the September 13, 2016, was made by Comm. Frederick, supported by Comm. Stehouwer. Motion carried 7-0.

Citizen Comment

Rob Bricker, the future new Planning Commission member who will take office when Comm. Janssen assumes the office of Township Clerk, was introduced.

Citizen Comments closed.

Public Hearing on Rezoning Application by Richard and Denise Glas, parcel no. 28-355-010 from C-1 to R-3.

Motion made by Comm. Corke to open the public hearing, seconded by Comm. Boekhoven. Motion carried 7-0.

Public hearing opened.

No public comment.

Motion made by Comm. Janssen to close the public hearing, supported by Comm. Corke. Motion carried 7-0.

There was a short discussion as to why the Commission was seeing this application again.

A motion to recommend approval to the Township Board to rezone the property at 1418 West F. Avenue, parcel 28-355-010, from C-1 to R-3 was made by Comm. Reynolds, supported by Comm. Corke. Motion carried 7-0.

Master Land Use

Russ Wicklund discussed a number of items being worked on, including the Master Land Use Plan, which will be periodically updated. There will likely be additional zoning ordinance amendments which deal with agriculture. Most of this has been included in the update book. With respect to the sectional information, Mr. Wicklund discovered that in the 1900's, the number of parcels created and new housing developed through land division substantially reduced the number of larger parcels used for agriculture. Mr. Wicklund suggested including some of the older plat maps in the historical section. In 1913, there were over 20 parcels of 160+ acres; by 1925 there were only 15 parcels, and today, there are only 3 parcels of 160+ acres in the Township. Between 1946 and 1960, there were 30 new plats, spread all over the Township. Having plats all over the Township makes it more difficult to do the Master Plan. There are very few large parcels that would be considered agricultural and there are plats dotting the Township in every area other than the northeast corner of the township that were historically zoned R-3. In areas with larger parcels, there are plats that have lot widths of 75–90 feet. Under zoning, there are a number of areas of the Township that are zoned R-3, which is typically what is considered low to medium density residential. These are areas which might otherwise be considered to be AG or rural residential. This makes the Planning Commission's process of looking at how to compare the Master Plan with the underlying zoning problematic in the Township. In most of those situations, the Township created a Master Plan that called it AG or rural residential. If someone wanted to rezone property for new residential development on small lots that would be consistent with the old plats, the Township would have a difficult time with the process of whether or not it would approve it or not. The Township usually looks at the Master Plan first, but it also needs to look at the surrounding land use and zoning. If something proposed would be contiguous to one of the small plats, the Township would have to decide whether to rely on the Master Plan by not rezoning this to a more intensive residential use. This will be something the Township will have to work through. Within the last few years, the Township has transitioned to site condominium projects, which process does not require state approval. They are subject to the Condominium Act.

Original acts were zoning acts and then planning acts came along in the 1940's. Zoning was used as the Plan. An area that has a new plat in it could have been planned for more new plats in that area. Today, under the Subdivision and Site Condominium, lots or sites might be smaller than what zoning allows if sewer and water are available. One of the things to consider in the future is proposed areas of growth that have the capacity for public utilities to be extended.

A discussion regarding zoning and how it relates to GAAMPS followed.

Comm. Frederick expressed concern over large urban developments. He also commented that he does not want the Township to tax its residents to the point where they don't want to or can't live in the Township because of the high taxes.

At the November meeting, the Commissioners should go through Comm. Reynold's matrix and indicate what their priorities are; what items the Commissioners want to add to this Plan. The Commissioners should also look at the 1967 Master Plan. Mr. Wicklund suggested the Commissioners leave the future land use map as the final item because that is where the Planning Commission is going to find out how all the various pieces fit together.

The Commissioners were reminded that the next meeting will be on November 15 due to the Presidential election.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Comm. Boekhoven, supported by Comm. Janssen. Motion carried 7-0.

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