

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MINUTES**

APPROVED

APRIL 23, 2012

**5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864-1198
Town Hall Room, 517-853-4560**

PRESENT: Chair Deits, Vice-Chair Jackson, Commissioners Honicky, Cordill, Hildebrandt, Norkin,
Scales and Scott-Craig
ABSENT: Commissioner Goodale
STAFF: Principal Planner Gail Oranchak
PUBLIC: None

1. Call meeting to order

Chair Deits called the work session meeting to order at approximately 7:10 P.M.

2. Approval of agenda

3. Public Remarks

None

4. Discussion

A. Computer use and public meetings

- Create and adopt policy for computer use at meetings
- Restrict internet use during meetings
- May look as if Commissioners not paying attention
- Consult Township Board before using at public meetings
- Do the bylaws already restrict use?
- Possibly amend Bylaws
- At the beginning of the meeting, the Chair convey to public Commissioners are not using the internet but have adopted a policy to receive reports electronically in lieu of hard copies, cost saving and environment preserving
- Electronic site plans could replace costly paper plans in some situations
- Site plans may lose detail if only viewed on screen
- Ability to enlarge area-by-area
- Start with small format reports and things that come on 8 1/2 x 11 now
- Planning staff will be required to convert to platform compatible with Commissioner devices
- Eliminates need for police cadets to deliver packets
- Option for Planning Commissioner to pick up packets at the office
- Option for mail delivery; expensive
- Use of Google Earth and Google Maps less costly
- Individual commissioners decide whether to accept electronically
- Policy to cover packet delivery and computer use
- Transmit staff reports as Word documents; allows for editing by Commissioners

- Flexible policy, discretion of Commission or Chair based on the case
- Policy should give Chair discretion to require computers be turned off for a period of time
- Logical eventuality of computer installation on the Town Hall Room dais
- Word files vs. .pdf
- Staff frame the debate by drafting a policy

B. 2005 Master Plan Update

- Staff provided a history of the Planning Commissions actions related to updating the 2005 Master Plan
- Revised Goals and Objectives sent to the Township Board on Nov 14; the Board has not reviewed them in entirety; only USB portions
- Make documents available to the community on the Township website when distributed to required agencies to prepare the for future public hearing
- In the meeting minutes report the Planning Commission's progress toward completing the 2005 Master Plan update and advising the public that working documents are available on the Township website for review and comment
- Remind Township Board they have received complete Goals and Objectives to review for distribution
- Preliminary decision to look at commercial, infrastructure and implementation chapters
- Status of economic census data, come back to at a future date
- Decisions to build schools and housing and preparation of the 2005 Master Plan reflect demographic data available at the time
- Changing circumstances highlighted in 2010 census of population data
- Long form census eliminated after the 2000 census
- Experts in demography question data resulting from the Census Bureau's current practice of collecting socio-economic data
- 2010 census data showed Master Plan population projections were very optimistic
- 2010 census data reflected in changes to Goals and Objectives
- Respond to changing demographics by focusing on infill, redevelopment, walkability, as opposed to new housing, new schools, physical infrastructure in past plans
- Update the 2005 Master Plan demographic data
- Identify economic development issues to pursue
- Impact of increasing numbers of foreign students with positive economic impact who are not being captured in census
- Socio-economic class of foreign students expect high quality housing
- U.S. government policy proposal to issue green cards for investment and job creation
- MSU active recruitment of overseas students to address drop in state high school graduation rates
- Financial benefit to attract out-of-state and foreign students who pay out-of-state tuition
- Regional policy discussion: retain foreign graduates by connecting to U.S. employers to eliminate competition from outside the country
- Lansing won't keep them unless high end commodities are available locally not via on-line
- Capstone is an example of adapting to this market, BMW dealer, DTN Management practices
- Clean air, clean water and no one-child policy will keep them here
- Long-term regional implications of MSU's policy to attract wealthy foreign students
- Lodges I & II visits by Commissioner showed students don't know where they live or the services available in Meridian Township
- Grocery store nearby; improved marketing needed

- Focus not necessarily on students but graduates and parents
- Meridian Township can do a much better job marketing itself and its attractions to students and others in East Lansing
- Capstone residents do not know where they live—East Lansing, Okemos, Meridian Township
- Sync Master Plan with the communities' economic development initiatives
- Meet with economic development counterparts before finalizing updates to an economic plan
- MSU students will find Meridian Township organically
- Marketing opportunities like business flyers/cards stuffed in SBS bags
- Flyers in community buildings about Township website to inform about activities in Meridian
- Tweeting to #MSU to inform; HOM-TV responsibility
- Demographic shifts exposed, population aging, actions considered by the state to reverse the trend of young people leaving
- Fitting the economic piece into the Implementation Chapter
- Update the demographics for now or go further
- Implementation requires both demographic and economic information but requires a framework based on goals and objectives
- Work on implementation while waiting on economic data based on demographics as we know them now and revised goals and objectives
- What is the impact of actual slow growth on the Master Plan
- Other chapters have materials that need to be updated
- Staff can do data and map updates where information is available
- Planning Commission homework for the May work session, read through the Future Land Use and Implementation Chapters with tonight's discussion in mind identify where change is needed and how to get creative and embody change in the chapters
- HUD Sustainable Communities Grant kickoff on Monday April 30

5. Public remarks

None

6. Adjournment

Chair Deits adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail Oranchak, AICP
Principal Planner