

Colfax Township, Weldon Township and Village of Thompsonville  
Community Joint Planning Commission  
14731 Thompson Avenue, Thompsonville, MI 48683  
Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Sue Meredith followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present at roll call: JPC members Jack Richter, Shelley Greene, Sue Meredith, Marty Lonn, Don Suchocki, Debra Franke, Pat Workman, Eugene Allen and Zoning Administrator Craig Meredith. Absent: Bryan Matthews (excused). Peggy Minster arrived at 7:20pm. Guests: Mark Eidelson, Scott Gest, Irene Dunham Thayer and Ron Evitts.

Citizen Matters. None.

Public Comment. None.

Agenda Additions/Corrections. Franke moved, seconded by Suchocki to accept agenda as presented. Ayes: all, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes. Richter moved, seconded by Franke to accept the February 16 meeting minutes. Ayes: all, motion carried.

Joint Zoning Ordinance. Mark Eidelson of LANDPLAN opened with the concept of zoning districts to be discussed but first wanted to address the three Zoning Boards of Appeal provided for in the Joint Ordinance. He stated separate boards are not prohibited by law but he was not aware of any under joint zoning ordinances, which are rare in Michigan. It was his opinion there are practical reasons not to have separate ZBAs. He gave an example of a ruling on an interpretation and the impact it could have on the ZA's role. If the JPC contemplates a change, Eidelson suggested it be done soon.

Eidelson led discussion on zoning districts as follows:

Planned Unit Development District. Eidelson said a PUD District gives the property owner greater flexibility than they would have in the district for which it is zoned. Current Weldon zoning is one dwelling per 15 acres in a Forest/Residential District. He gave an example of a request to build four townhome buildings with four units each on 20 acres and 280 acres set aside in a conservation easement in perpetuity. An application with site plan would be presented for consideration under a PUD District. Eidelson stated Weldon's zoning treats a PUD as a Special Land Use which is an administrative decision subject to a site plan and public hearing. However, a PUD can also be addressed through the legislative process by petitioning to rezone the property to a PUD District tied to a site plan. He explained the differences in court challenges for PUDs and SLUs. PUDs are negotiated ideally ending in a win-win and requires rezoning with conditions specific to that property. S. Meredith asked about the municipalities; Eidelson said all three entities must approve the rezoning because it changes the JZO. Richter asked about the zoning map; Eidelson said PUD District would appear in the legend to indicate application may be made to petition for the rezoning of specific property. Allen asked about the appearance of an approved PUD on the map; Eidelson said it would be colored in and tied back to the meeting minutes and site plan for the project. Questions were raised on minimum acres; Eidelson said each application must be reviewed for its specific merits and none are identical. The JPC agreed to authorize PUDs as a separate PUD District and not by special land use approval.

General Zoning District Structure Issues:

Agricultural Area. Discussion held on implementation of this area that "could be" one dwelling per 40 acres. The JPC's intent was to include, not exclude, areas that had been or are currently used for ag and recognize their presence and show support for them but not necessarily develop a restrictive plan. It was agreed to rely on Weldon's current F/R Forest/Recreation District (15-acre minimum required) to implement the Agricultural Area.

Rural Residential Area. Discussion held on required acreage per dwelling and transition from higher densities near the Village to low density Forest/Recreation. Greene stated there are areas with

relatively small lots surrounded by large acreage parcels. Allen asked about splits to smaller parcels in a Forest/Recreation District; Eidelson said rezoning would be required. He also said the purpose statements would address specifics on Rural Residential Districts. The JPC agreed to utilize strategies of F/R Forest/Recreation (15 acres), RR Rural Residential (2 acres) and authorize minimum lot areas between R-1 (5 acres) and F/R (15 acres) with the understanding that districts with densities greater than F/R would be closer to the Village. The JPC also agreed to not require PUD approval for a single use on a parcel, as the current WTZO states, if zoning allows it by right or by Special Land Use. Lastly, the JPC agreed to a minimum RR District lot width of 150' to ensure compliance with the Land Division Act and that all districts in the JZO maintain the site development standards in the LDA for lot area/width.

Neighborhood Residential. Discussion held on the variety of lot sizes within the Village and consideration of neighboring properties. The JPC agreed to the basic conceptual district structure of 1-Family Residential (min. 15,000 sq. ft. similar to R-2 District of WTZO), 1 and 2-Family Residential (min. 10,000 sq. ft. similar to R-2 District of Village Ordinance) and 1-Family Residential (min. 6,000 sq. ft. similar to R-1 District of Village Ordinance).

Urban Edge Area. As a district, the JPC supported a one-acre minimum lot size 150' in width to transition between districts requiring two acres and 1/3 acre. Additionally, the WTZO currently authorizes mobile home parks by Special Land Use. Eidelson said the Mobile Home Commission oversees manufactured housing and the DEQ and county control water/septic issues. The JPC agreed in concept to not zone actual parcels for such development until a petition is submitted for consideration.

Mixed Use – Downtown/Urban Center. This is intended to provide for a mix of commercial, residential and light industrial uses. The JPC considered Eidelson's various approaches. A Single Mixed Use District would allow a broad scope of uses permitting the landowner to develop the property to any authorized use. A PUD District would enable a property owner to develop for mixed use (requires site plan). Individual districts of Residential, Industrial and Commercial are a traditional approach to mixed use. The latter two can be defined by language in the JZO. The JPC agreed to consider a combination of PUD and the individual districts.

Mixed Use – Resort Area. This is intended for the area in and immediately around Crystal Mountain Resort. The current PUD under Weldon's zoning could carry forward as a district. Craig Meredith has requested an updated master plan from Kirk Davidson.

Natural and Public Area. The WTZO includes a Natural River District which will be carried forward to cover Colfax Township as well.

#### Other District Issues:

Home Occupations. Some municipalities permit home occupations in accessory buildings while others limit them to dwellings or require special land use permits. Eidelson presented several scenarios for consideration regarding accessory buildings. He said a home occupation approved for a specific use with conditions should not develop into anything more. However, actual usage could change and result in unforeseen issues. Extensive discussion was held and opinions differed. Measures such as a site plan may provide a middle ground.

Lot Coverage (Building Coverage). This addressed the building portion that may cover a lot. The JPC agreed it is not a concern at this time.

Commercial Corridor Inventory. Scott Gest, NWMCOG, presented the project that is underway to map significant commercial corridors in the region for an upcoming Expo in April. Thompson Avenue from Second Street past Paul's Party Store was identified along with CR669 in the Village. Workman and Evitts noted Lindy Road is scheduled to be replaced and become a Class A road in the near future from M115 to Nessen City. Gest said there will be opportunity to revise at a later date. A questionnaire based on best practices is also part of the project but can wait until the JZO is in place.

#### Unfinished Business and Reports

- Insurance Renewal. Greene presented the bind request for payment of \$1,256 to renew the JPC insurance coverage.

- Action Plan. Greene said the township cleanup days are approaching. If there is interest, a community event could be organized to assist residents who need help. Issue will be revisited at the April meeting. Suchocki said he is now managing operations at the disposal site.
- GT Band Grant. No response received on status. Greene will follow up.
- County Parks & Rec. Greene reported that Ron Hitesman, Ron Evitts, Craig Meredith and she were appointed citizens at large for the area.
- Expense/compensation approval. Suchocki moved, seconded by Franke to reimburse Greene \$613.60 for expenses. Ayes: all, motion carried. Greene moved, seconded by Richter to pay Burnham & Flower \$1,256 for insurance premium. Ayes: all; motion carried. Greene moved, seconded by Franke to pay LANDPLAN \$1,926.98 for current invoice. Ayes: all; motion carried. Compensation form was approved. Sue Meredith provided copies of the expense statement, asked everyone to review it and let her know if there are questions.

#### New Business

- Meeting Schedule. Greene needs to publish the next fiscal year's meeting schedule and asked for confirmation on time and day. Earlier start time is problematic for Minister. Richter preferred the 6:30pm start. Schedule will remain first Thursdays of the month at 6:30pm except for July – meeting will be held on the 11th. Everyone agreed with Sue Meredith's suggestion to change meeting location to the Village Community Center. Franke will confirm availability and notify Greene.
- Annual Report/Budget. Greene received agreement to submit the report and proposed budget request to the entities in January 2014 rather than April to coincide with their budget preparation. A quarterly JPC statement received in January will provide current expenses for the report.
- Roll Call. Richter pointed out C. Meredith was not listed on the agenda as Zoning Administrator. Greene will correct the oversight.
- Zoning Administrator Update. C. Meredith said the Natural Rivers board will hold a public hearing March 14 in an attempt to condense 17 sets of administrative rules into one depending on the boards that oversee them. Kirk Davidson contacted Meredith so that Weldon Township was aware Crystal Mountain Resort (CMR) is contacting local businesses such as Smeltzer and Graceland about adding low income housing on its triangle parcel across from the airport's west end runway. CMR will meet with Weldon Township as well as the JPC when they have more information. Meredith mentioned several issues that would need to be worked out. Regarding AT&T, he finally got them to correct their plans to read Thompsonville as the location for the CMR tower; it is increasing to 4G. He will contact Mike McCall because the beacon is not listed on CMR's plans. Meredith said he and Greene are working with NWMCOG on the Betsie River/Crystal Lake watershed plan. Gest said it officially starts on April 1. Meredith also attended the fracking forum hosted by the Benzie Conservation District. Greene spoke with Jim Olson, environmental attorney, after the forum about his comments on zoning ordinances. He provided material from For Love of Water (FLOW); they will work on a fee basis with municipalities to address fracking related issues.

Correspondence. None.

Adjournment. Greene moved to adjourn at 9:30pm. Next meeting is scheduled for 6:30pm on April 4 at the Village Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Greene  
Secretary

*Minutes are proposed until approved at the next meeting.*