

**CHOCOLAY TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

Monday, August 21, 2023 Minutes

I. Meeting Call to Order

Chair Ryan Soucy called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

II. Roll Call

Members present at roll call:

Ryan Soucy (Chair)
Donna Mullen-Campbell (Secretary)
Don Rhein (Board)
Stephanie Gencheff
Kendall Milton

Members absent at roll call:

George Meister (Vice Chair)
Rebecca Sloan (Vice Secretary)

Staff present:

Richard Bohjanen (Township Supervisor), Bill DeGroot (Township Manager), Dale Throenle (Planning Director / Zoning Administrator)

III. Additional Agenda Items / Approval of Agenda

Rhein moved, Milton seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

Vote: Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Motion carried

IV. Minutes

A. June 19, 2023 Meeting

B. July 17, 2023 Meeting

Soucy requested that both sets of minutes be approved together.

Rhein moved, Mullen-Campbell seconded to approve the minutes as presented.

Vote: Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Motion carried

V. Public Comment

None

VI. Presentations

None

VII. Unfinished Business

None

VIII. New Business

A. Joint Meeting Debrief

Commissioner Discussion

Soucy recommended the Commissioners start with the AF district discussion and asked for comments from DeGroot.

DeGroot stated that he was pleased regarding the amount of discussion on the issue. He added that it was time to ask the community about the future direction.

Soucy stated that feedback was necessary for the issue to be presented to the community. He asked for Commissioners for ideas related to the township hall meetings (such as charettes and maps).

Rhein stated that using maps needed to be done with the idea that the public would look at the maps as “final”, and that needed to be done with caution.

Gencheff stated that the maps would be important as the public would want to know what district they are associated with. Soucy stated that it would be better to ask what district they wanted to be in; Rhein agreed with the concept. Milton stated that information on the issue was readily available, and easy to understand. Gencheff asked what happens if only a few show up at the meetings; Rhein suggested that FlashVote be used to gain additional information, which would give additional sources for the decision process.

Gencheff stated that she had attended a Michigan Township Association meeting, and asked questions about getting the public involved in the process. She suggested sending FlashVote notifications with the tax bills. She stated she was not happy with the advertising cards that were sent out previously with the notice about FlashVote.

Commissioners discussed the use of email for notification purposes. Gencheff asked what the obstacles were concerning sending out emails; Throenle stated that sending out mass emails generally wound up in junk folders and that it was difficult to get people to sign up for the email process. Throenle added that the fastest way to get information out in the Township was word of mouth. He added that inserts with the tax bills were additional costs that would have to be considered. DeGroot added that communication methods were researched and reviewed in the past, and the communication issue that existed in the past and now is very similar. He suggested that the Commissioners address one issue at a time instead of trying to address all of them at the same time.

Throenle asked Soucy how he approached information while working with CUPPAD. Soucy responded that the primary method was word of mouth, followed by a post card sent to all the affected parties. Bohjanen added that residents do look at the posted agendas on the website, but it does not generate citizen input.

Gencheff asked about sending text messages; DeGroot suggested that staff would look at the methods to get the data out to the public. DeGroot also described the process of getting set up with FlashVote, including the negative response from the public when a text was received with the last vote that was sent out.

Throenle asked the Commissioners to consider the timeframe for the townhall meetings, especially since the time was short for those that would be leaving the Township for the winter. He suggested that the Township be divided into quadrants to gain public participation.

Bohjanen asked if a FlashVote question could be asked regarding attending a townhall meeting. DeGroot responded that the question had already been asked, and that participants generally stated that they would not attend.

Commissioners discussed the locations for the meetings. Locations discussed included the Township hall, Township public parks, Cherry Creek School, Lakenenland, and the casino.

Rhein suggested three meetings prior to the middle of October, at the Township hall.

DeGroot suggested that one meeting should be a later start time to accommodate those that have things to do at 4:30 through 6:00 PM. Commissioners decided that the meeting dates would be September 26 from 4:30 to 6:00 PM, October 10 from 7:00 to 8:30, and October 17 from 4:30 to 6:00 PM. The Commissioners decided that all meetings should be in the Township firehall with the ability for any resident to attend any session.

Maps were discussed as part of the presentation materials. Throenle asked Soucy to describe what the meetings should look like. Mullen-Campbell suggested that the meetings should be informal. Soucy added that an informational process should be available that directs the questions that the citizens might ask. Throenle suggested a pre-recorded presentation; Soucy suggested that it be one that could also be shared before the meeting.

Throenle asked what documents the Commissioners would like to be presented to the public as the "final draft." Gencheff suggested that a document that showed what was permitted and was conditional for the AG districts be put together. Gencheff asked if accessory dwelling units would be discussed; Rhein responded the focus should be only on the AF question.

DeGroot asked how fast documents could be produced on foam presentation boards to get the data for the public presentations. Gencheff responded she felt the boards could be finished in forty-eight hours.

Soucy asked the Commissioners to develop a list of suggested documents that would be used for the public presentations and that list would be discussed at the next meeting. Gencheff asked if information would be available to show citizens what zoning they are ready are in. Throenle stated the information could be available if the Commissioners wanted that.

Throenle changed the topic to accessory dwelling units and minimum square footage. He stated that the ordinance stated floor area and not footprint, and that a structure could be two floors at 400 square feet each that achieves the current 800 square feet requirement.

Gencheff asked about the 30 percent requirement for accessory dwelling units.

Throenle stated that was causing concern because of the size of the original structure. Gencheff asked that staff research how other communities addressed the issues, especially when considering owner-occupied and rentals.

IX. Public Comment

Richard Bohjanen, 140 Edgewood Drive

Suggested that a map be available for AF residents to put a pin on the map where they live to indicate the proposed zoning that they would be prefer. He suggested colored pins to represent the difference between AG 1, AG 2 and AG 3.

X. Commissioner's Comments

Rhein

Stated that there were great discussions, especially with the Board. He suggested that DeGroot's direction of one item at a time be followed.

Mullen-Campbell

Felt neighborhood canvassing was important.

Milton

Asked where the FlashVote information was on the website.

Gencheff

Expressed that she agreed with Rhein's comments.

Soucy

Thanked the Commissioners for a good job.

XI. Director's Report

Planning / Zoning Administrator Throenle

none

XII. Informational Items and Correspondence

A. Township newsletter – July 2023

B. Marquette County Planning Commission minutes 08.02.23 draft

C. City of Marquette Planning Commission minutes 06.20.23

D. City of Marquette Planning Commission minutes 07.18.23

E. Correspondence – Sanders

F. Correspondence – James

G. Correspondence – Mulcahey

XIII. Adjournment

Rhein moved, Milton seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Motion carried

Soucy adjourned the meeting at 8:43 PM.

Submitted by:

Planning Commission Secretary

Donna Mullen-Campbell