



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF CHOCOLAY

PLANNING COMMISSION

2020 PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Planning Commission Actions

The Planning Commission took the following actions in 2020:

January

Meeting date - January 20, 2020

- Election of Planning Commission Officers

The Planning Commissioners elected officers for the 2020 calendar year. Those elected were:

- Ryan Soucy - Chair
- Cory Bushong - Vice Chair
- Donna Mullen-Campbell - Secretary
- Susan Maynard - Vice Secretary

- 2019 Planning Commission Annual Report

The Commissioners reviewed and approved the *2019 Planning Commission Annual Report* that detailed activities of the Planning Commission and the Planning Director.

- Proposed 2020 - 2021 Planning Commission Priorities

The Commissioners discussed priorities for the 2020 through 2021 calendar year. The priorities were submitted to the Board at the joint meeting on February 17 for discussion between the Board and the Planning Commission.

February

Meeting date - February 17, 2020

The Planning Commission held a joint meeting with the Township Board in February. The focus of the meeting was the priorities for the Planning Commission for 2020 through 2021.

Approved priorities included:

- Review and update the Township Master Plan

Review the master plan with the intent of presenting it to the Township Board as the five-year master plan direction for the Township

- Consideration for rewrite of the Township *Zoning Ordinance*

Review and revise the Township *Zoning Ordinance* with the intent to simplify the language and to bring the ordinance up-to-date



This rewrite process would include regular review of State-legislated language that may affect the zoning ordinance language.

- Further amend the Township ordinances to implement the *Zoning Plan* section in the *Master Plan, 2015 Edition*

Review master plan recommendations and reflect those recommendations in the Township *Zoning Ordinance* and non-zoning ordinances

- Determine ordinance status (opt in / opt out) for marijuana regulations in the Township
Determine if non-medical marijuana facilities should be permitted in the Township
- Address non-conformities regarding properties in the Agriculture / Forestry (AF) district
Determine regulations and changes required to reduce property non-conformances in the AF district
- Develop processes for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System implementation
Develop processes and potential zoning regulation additions or changes to accommodate the program implementation for flood protection and flood insurance cost reduction throughout the Township
- Update the *Chocolay River Watershed Plan* as part of the Community Rating System project
Update the watershed plan to reflect changes that have occurred in the watershed since the last document was written
The last update on this plan was completed in 1999, and the plan should be updated as a regional plan with local agencies and government units.
- Reconsider approach to private road regulation
Determine if existing language for private roads should be modified
- Plan for four-season transit facility
Provide a Township-located facility for the public to wait for Marq-Tran and ALTRAN public transit
- Consideration for Bluezone / AARP livable community design
Research quality of life design primarily directed toward senior citizens
- Coordination with Marquette County on the County 2040 master plan
Coordination with Marquette County on potential Township related items in the County 2040 master plan
- Development of an education plan
Development of an education plan for the Planning Commission both internally and externally



- Consideration for non-traditional homes

Review of Township *Zoning Ordinance* language for possible inclusion of non-traditional homes (under 800 square feet) as permissible primary structures in the Township

March

Meeting date - March 16, 2020

Items on the agenda were postponed to a future Planning Commission meeting.

April

Meeting date - April 20, 2020

The meeting was cancelled.

May

Meeting date - May 18, 2020

The meeting was cancelled.

June

Meeting date - June 15, 2020

The Planning Commission held a virtual meeting.

- Future Planning Commission meetings

Commissioners discussed the best format for conducting meetings in the near future. It was decided that the July meeting will be a virtual meeting, with the possibility of having an in-person / virtual meeting in August.

- Proposed Marijuana Establishments Ordinance

Commissioners discussed the proposed opening of licenses for marijuana growers in the Township. Much discussion took place on this topic and ended with the Commissioners requesting additional research for the next meeting.

- 2020 - 2021 Planning Commission Priority Order

Commissioners discussed the order of priorities that were set at the joint Board / Planning Commission meeting in February. Commissioners decided the best plan of attack was to address seven of those priorities over the next several meetings while looking into the remaining priorities as time permitted. The seven are:

- Review and update the Township Master Plan
- Consideration for rewrite of the Township *Zoning Ordinance*
- Further amend the Township ordinances to implement the *Zoning Plan* section in the *Master Plan, 2015 Edition*
- Determine marijuana regulations status
- Address non-conformities regarding properties in the AF district



- Coordination with Marquette County on the County 2040 master plan
- Development of an education plan

The remaining priorities are:

- Develop processes for the NFIP Community Rating System
- Update the *Chocolay River Watershed Plan*
- Reconsider approach to private road regulation
- Plan for four-season transit facility
- Consideration for Bluezone / AARP livable community design
- Consideration for non-traditional homes

- Public Engagement Methods

Commissioners were asked for ways to communicate with the public while working on the various priorities. Methods will be researched further to promote additional public engagement.

July

Meeting date – July 20, 2020

The Planning Commission held a virtual meeting.

- Proposed Marijuana Establishments Ordinance

Commissioners continued discussion on the proposed opening of licenses for marijuana growers in the Township. Commissioners requesting additional research for the next meeting.

- Township Master Plan Discussion

Commissioners discussed the method for reviewing the Township master plan for the five-year update. Commissioners decided to concentrate on the character area language in Chapter 7 of the plan first, with the intent of looking at language for three of those character areas at the next meeting.

August

Meeting date – August 17, 2020

The Planning Commission scheduled a virtual meeting; however, due to technology difficulties, the meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum.

September

Meeting date – September 21, 2020

The Planning Commission held a virtual meeting.

- Township Master Plan – Future Land Use Discussion

Commissioners discussed the character areas as outlined in Chapter 7 of the *Master Plan, 2015 Edition* and decided to proceed with the character areas as defined. Commissioners decided



the next step for the plan review should begin with the review of Chapters 7, 1, 2 and 3 of the plan.

- Site Plan Review - 1001 M-28 East (McDonalds)

Commissioners reviewed and approved a site plan for a second drive through lane at McDonalds on M-28.

October

Meeting date - October 22, 2020

The meeting was cancelled.

November

Meeting date - November 16, 2020

The Planning Commission held a virtual meeting.

- Proposed 2021 Meeting Dates

Commissioners discussed the meeting dates for 2021. Pending approval of the Township Board, the meeting dates and times for the Planning Commission in 2021 are:

January 18 – 6:00 PM	July 19 – 6:00 PM
February 8 (Joint at 5:30, PC at 7:00)	August 16 – 6:00 PM
March 15 – 6:00 PM	September 20 – 6:00 PM
April 19 – 6:00 PM	October 18 – 6:00 PM
May 17 – 6:00 PM	November 15 – 6:00 PM
June 21 – 6:00 PM	December 13 (7:00 after Board meeting)

- Master Plan Review - Section 7 (Land Use) and Related Appendices

Commissioners discussed the language in section 7 and the related appendices and requested changes to portions of the language, especially in relation to tiny homes, small scale wind systems, and additional uses of parcels in the AF district that are not related to agriculture. Commissioners requested a review of the language at the next Planning Commission meeting.

- Master Plan Review - Sections 1 through 3 and Related Appendices

Commissioners discussed the language in sections 1 through 3 and the related appendices and requested some changes to portions of the language. Commissioners requested a review of the language at the next Planning Commission meeting.

December

Meeting date - December 21, 2020

The meeting was cancelled.



Planning Director Activities

In addition to preparing agenda materials for Planning Commission meetings and attending the Planning Commission meetings, the Planning Director completed additional activities and attended training and seminars throughout the year:

January

- Participated in the Superior Trade Zone meeting in Rock
Discussions at the meeting centered around a planned development in Gladstone and the Michigan Launch Initiative.

February

- Attended an Army Corp of Engineers presentation in Marquette regarding the water levels in Lake Superior
- Participated in part two of the Coastlines and People workshop in Marquette
This three part workshop project was focused on ideas and directions for communities located on the Lake Superior shoreline. Speakers at the workshop spoke on the state of Lake Superior and the coastal planning initiatives in Michigan.
A potential outcome of this workshop is a drone study of the shoreline from Marquette through the Township to capture information regarding beach and dune erosion.
- Participated in the Marquette County Water Coalition meeting in Marquette
This project, directed by the Marquette County Planning Department, is a county-wide project with participation from other government entities and agencies in the County to study and make recommendations regarding water resources in the County.

March

- Began reorganization of Planning and Zoning related files in the vault.

April

As with the others working within the Township offices, the Planning / Zoning daily work was conducted from home. Citizens were calling and leaving messages with their questions at the Township, and those questions were answered offsite.

May

Primary focus during the month was zoning-related activities (such as permits) from home; no planning-related training or conferences were scheduled.



June

- Began the language updates for the Township master plan
- Reviewed communication methods with the Planning Commission

July

- Continued the language updates for the Township master plan

August

- Continued the language updates for the Township master plan
- Began researching subdivision plats for the master plan

Research included finding subdivision plat maps, determining existing parcels within those plats, and documenting known subdivision restrictions

Documentation will be used for development of the master plan as well as for zoning requests for those properties within the defined subdivisions

September

- Continued the language updates for the Township master plan; presented section 7 to the Planning Commission for consideration of direction regarding character areas and proposed land uses
- Presented a site plan review for 1001 M-28 East (McDonalds) to the Planning Commission
- Continued researching subdivision plats for the master plan
- Began a draft ordinance that combines and revises language for Ordinance 37A *Regulation of Nuisance*, Ordinance 55 *Vehicle and Trailer Parking and Storage*, and Ordinance 66 *Noise*

October

- Continued the language updates for the Township master plan
- Continued researching subdivision plats for the master plan
- Continued a draft ordinance that combines and revises language for Ordinance 37A *Regulation of Nuisance*, Ordinance 55 *Vehicle and Trailer Parking and Storage*, and Ordinance 66 *Noise*

Draft will be presented to the Planning Commission for consideration in 2021.

November

- Continued the language updates for the Township master plan; presented sections 1, 2, 3 and 7 to the Planning Commission for review
- Continued researching subdivision plats for the master plan



December

- Began working on language for a sign ordinance
- Began working on language for a fence ordinance
- Continued researching subdivision plats for the master plan

Township Plans and Ordinances

Ordinance	Type	Status
Township master plan	Update	Under Planning Commission review
Ordinance 70 <i>Marijuana Establishments</i>	New	Under Planning Commission review

