

Chair
Adam Bertram
Vice-Chair
Bruce Keilen
Secretary
Tim Fair
Commissioners
Steve Musselman, Trustee
Dale Dailey
Marsha Zimmerman
Steve Gobbo
Abby Lorenzen
Kristen Krol



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Township Planner
Tory Niewiadomski

Township Planner
Brett Wittenberg

Recording Secretary
Linda K. Parkinson

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
MONDAY, January 5, 2015**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the DeWitt Charter Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Bertram.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was said by those present.

ROLL CALL by Secretary Fair.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Krol, Lorenzen, Bertram, Musselman, Keilen, Fair, Gobbo, Zimmerman.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dailey.

OTHERS PRESENT: Township Planner Tory Niewiadomski, Township Planner Brett Wittenberg and Recording Secretary Linda Parkinson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: **Fair moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Supported. MOTION CARRIED.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES **Fair moved to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2014 meeting. Supported. MOTION CARRIED.**

CORRESPONDENCE: Bath Charter Township – 2014 Master Plan Amendment was received and noted by the Planning Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Jeff Carpenter, 13225 Watercrest Drive, DeWitt, MI 48820 (Creekside Subdivision), expressed concern with a neighbor who has constructed an outdoor screening structure made from interior doors. The structure is allowed under current Township regulations. He asked that the Planning Commission review the Zoning Ordinance and possibly amend Section 42-883 Fences, Walls and Screens to more clearly define what materials are allowed to be used for outdoor screening.

Staff advised that the owner of the structure was made aware that a building permit was required due to the fact that it exceeded 6 ft. in height. The homeowner has since lowered the height of the structure so that no building permit is required. However, should the structure become blighted and in disrepair the Township can use enforcement under the IPMC.

Brief discussion followed regarding whether Creekside Subdivision had deed restrictions that would prohibit such a structure.

Carpenter advised that Creekside Subdivision does not have an active Homeowners Association at this time.

Township Planner Niewiadomski stated staff could place this item on a future Planning Commission Agenda for discussion of a possible Ordinance Amendment to Section 42-883.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

I. **Proposed Ordinance Amendment O2015-1-7 (formerly 42.5) – Complete the Streets – Discussion**

Township Planner Brett Wittenberg reviewed the results of a recent survey entitled “Sidewalk Ordinance Survey Input”. He noted that the survey results are very similar to the previous discussions of the Planning Commission. The next step would be to take comments this evening, work with the Township Attorney to obtain a finalized draft of the proposed ordinance, and bring it back to the Planning Commission for final review at the February 2, 2015 meeting. There is no hard timeline for the adoption of the Proposed Ordinance. It is important to take into consideration all public feedback.

Chairman Bertram invited public comments.

Ken Schelb, 13875 Schavey Road, DeWitt, MI 48820, expressed concern that only 29 percent of the Township residents participated in the sidewalk survey. He noted that people don't get upset about things until it affects them personally. He feels shoveling an entire 10 foot wide pathway is too much. Perhaps everyone should be responsible to clear a 5 foot wide path.

Discussion followed regarding bicyclists use of public pathways/roadways.

Brief discussion followed regarding the fact that the Township Engineer is currently working on designs for the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to determine where public pathways would be feasible.

No action was taken on this item of business.

II. **Parking Study Information – Discussion**

Township Planner Tory Niewiadomski briefly reviewed staff's memorandum dated December 30, 2014 advising staff has conducted a parking analysis based upon various land uses within the Township (and outside the Township) during peak periods as identified by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). The analysis identifies that the average weekday and weekend parking counts of various uses was well under 50% of what the Ordinance requires. It should be noted that construction of parking lots can be extremely costly as the construction of one parking space could cost between \$1,000 and \$3,000. In addition, excess parking can have other negative impacts on the site. In some instances the site may not be large enough to accommodate the required parking or adding impervious surfaces can increase storm water runoff.

Niewiadomski stated the goal for conducting this parking analysis is to attempt to update the parking requirements based on actual need and possibly offer some incentives for parking requirements.

In closing, Niewidowski invited questions or comments.

Discussion followed regarding the specifics of what incentives may be offered in this proposed ordinance, such as land banking.

Gobbo suggested that staff keep in mind the potential for growth in the community when considering a reduction in the required parking spaces.

Bertram suggested staff take into consideration that the use of a property could change and the site may not have sufficient space for parking.

Lorenzen stated, based on staff's analysis she has determined the following:

1. 6 of the 13 sites used for the analysis had parking that was less than 25% utilized at their highest point.
2. 10 of the 13 were under 50% utilized.
3. 56% was the highest number of utilization for the remaining 3 locations.

Lorenzen stated reducing parking requirements at least 25% seems feasible.

The Commission Members requested that staff bring forth some potential amendments for consideration related to this discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

I. **Election of Officers for the Year 2015.**

Chairman Bertram opened the floor for nominations for the office of Chairman.

Musselman moved to cast a nomination for a slate of Officers as follows:

**Chairman – Adam Bertram
Vice Chairman – Bruce Keilen
Secretary – Abby Lorenzen**

There were no further nominations

Hearing no further nominations, Bertram moved to close the nominations for Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary and cast a unanimous ballot for the following:

**Chairman – Adam Bertram
Vice Chairman – Bruce Keilen
Secretary – Abby Lorenzen**

Supported.

ROLL CALL vote on motion:

AYES: 8 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1 (Dailey)

MOTION CARRIED.

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None.

REPORTS:

I. Trustee:

Musselman gave a brief report on business conducted and action taken at the regularly scheduled meeting held on December 8, 2014.

II. Zoning Board of Appeals:

Gobbo advised there was no Zoning Board of Appeals meeting held in December.

III. Committees: None.


IV. Staff:

Staff gave a brief update on the progress made on the DeWitt Township High Level Market Study being conducted by consultants Plante Moran.


DISCUSSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Fair moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Supported. MOTION CARRIED.



Linda K. Parkinson, Recording Secretary



Tim Fair, Secretary