

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
REGULAR MEETING PLANNING COMMISSION  
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos MI 48864-1198  
517.853.4000, Township Hall Room  
Monday, October 7, 2024, 6:30 pm

PRESENT: Chair Shrewsbury, Commissioners Brooks, McConnell, Romback, Blumer, and Scales

ABSENT: Vice Chair Snyder

STAFF: Principal Planner Brian Shorkey

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Shrewsbury called the October 7, 2024, regular meeting for the Meridian Township Planning Commission to order at 6:30 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Shrewsbury called the roll of the Board. All board members were present except Vice Chair Snyder.

3. PUBLIC REMARKS

Chair Shrewsbury opened public remarks at 6:31 pm.

Debra Major, township resident, followed up with regards to her email communication in the packet. Ms. Major does not want to violate the Open Meetings Act and have a quorum at the visit to the property. Ms. Major encouraged members to contact her individually to come walk the property.

Chair Shrewsbury closed public remarks at 6:34 pm.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Shrewsbury asked for approval of the agenda.

**Commissioner Scales moved to approve the October 7, 2024, regular Planning Commission meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Blumer. Motion passed unanimously.**

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Shrewsbury asked for approval of the minutes.

**Commissioner Romback moved to approve the Minutes of the September 23, 2024, Planning Commission Regular Meeting as written. Seconded by Commissioner Brooks. Motion passed unanimously.**

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Debra Major re: REZ #24013 – Email

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. By-law Changes

Chair Shrewsbury opened the public hearing at 6:36 pm.

Principal Planner Shorkey reviewed the change made from reducing the number of members of the Planning Commission from nine to seven resulting in a change in the number for quorum. Originally, the by-laws stated five members constitutes a quorum and that has been changed to read the majority of the members. Also, under decisions, it has been updated to state 2/3 of the members.

Chair Shrewsbury closed the public hearing at 6:38 pm.

**Commissioner Blumer moved to waive the waiting period needed for this vote. Supported by Commissioner Scales.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE      YEAS: Commissioners Brooks, McConnell, Rombach, Chair Shrewsbury, Commissioner Blumer and Scales**

**NAYS: NONE**

**Motion carried: 6-0**

**Commissioner McConnell moved to approve the 2024 amended Planning Commission bylaws. Supported by Commissioner Blumer.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE      YEAS: Commissioners Brooks, McConnell, Rombach, Chair Shrewsbury, Commissioner Blumer and Scales**

**NAYS: NONE**

**Motion carried: 6-0**

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. MAP Conference Update

Principal Planner Shorkey highlighted the conference he attended. The session entitled Bridging the Affordable Housing Gap in Michigan focused on manufactured housing. Principal Planner Shorkey informed the Planning Commission that received his ethics credit at the conference. Principal Planner Shorkey said that he learned Detroit's population grew for the first time in 60 years and that he attended a great session on fact finding decisions.

Commissioner Brooks asked the definition of manufactured housing. Principal Planner Shorkey described manufacturing housing and the difference between trailers and manufactured housing. Principal Planner Shorkey said that he could research the question further if desired.

Principal Planner Shorkey reviewed a session from the last day of the conference on creating tree protection. Canton Township had a tree preservation ordinance that was struck down last year when two business partners bought a 16 acre property and clear cut it. It was suggested that the Master Plan have clear tree preservation goals and why it is important, individual assessments should be done, and a tree study conducted by an Arborist.

Commissioner Scales asked if we have any forested wetlands in the Township. Principal Planner Shorkey mentioned we have GIS records delineating different types of wetlands and he can look to see if we have any forested wetlands.

## 10. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### A. Township Board Update

None.

### B. Liaison Reports

Commissioner Blumer reported he attended the DDA meeting this morning, but there was not a quorum to hold the meeting.

Commissioner Scales reported that the EDC did not meet and the BRA meeting is Thursday.

Commissioner McConnell mentioned that the Environmental Commission study group is reviewing the 2004 Green Space Plan and presented its first findings at the last meeting. They are now working on scheduling a meeting with Staff to review GIS data. With the approval of the 2025 Township Budget, looking to hire an Environmental Engineer to assist.

## 11. PROJECT UPDATES

Principal Planner Shorkey reviewed the projects. At the next meeting, there will be a public hearing for a Special Use Permit for a drive thru at 4990 Marsh Road (former Wheat Jeweler) for a new Panda Express restaurant.

## 12. PUBLIC REMARKS

Debra Major, township resident, thanked the Commission for the update and stated the same email communication was also sent to Mr. Fedewa.

## 13. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Scales requested to speak regarding the communications item on the rezoning #24013. Principal Planner Shorkey explained that if a majority of the Commission visited the site at once, and any decisions were made, that could be in violation of the Open Meetings Act.

Mr. Scales mentioned it does not look good to have a group meeting, outside of the regular public meeting space, regarding the issue and appreciated the invitation to visit the property, but did decline.

Chair Shrewsbury did mention that she agrees and does not want to seem disinterested or dismissive to the invitation but would rather to have any meeting or discussion at a meeting in a public setting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Shrewsbury called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 pm

**Commissioner Romback moved to adjourn the October 7, 2024 regular meeting of the Planning Commission. Seconded by Commissioner McConnell. Motion passed unanimously.**